



Moderator Instructions & Tips

Being a moderator for a panel or Q&A discussion can seem like an intimidating responsibility. However, remember that your only responsibility is to facilitate a conversation and oftentimes, you do the least talking! Below are some instructions on moderating successfully.

Q&A Discussion

A question and answer discussion takes place with you, the moderator, and the invited speaker. This is a more structured and facilitated discussion as opposed to a panel, where panelists speak about various points and thoughts. During a Q&A, it is your responsibility to basically ask the questions and use questions as a way to facilitate the conversation. Questions will most often come from audience members. You can either collect questions from audience members prior to the discussion and pre-select the questions you want to ask OR you can have audience participation as you host the discussion. Keep in mind there are pros and cons to each, but no right or wrong way to go about it.

Here's how to facilitate a Q&A Discussion:

1. *Introduction of you and the Q&A:* This is the beginning! Make sure to introduce who you are to the audience and your role as the moderator. Also, explain what the Q&A will be about and how questions will be facilitated (this would be the place to explain if you pre-selected questions from audience submissions or how you are going to facilitate questions from the audience).
2. *Introduction of the Speaker:* Next, it's time to introduce the speaker. Reading a short bio about them and highlight why they were brought to speak on this particular issue.
3. *Dive In:* After you introduce the speaker, get comfortable and keep it casual. Thank the speaker for coming and then dive straight into the questions.

Tips

Here are some things to keep in mind when moderating a Q&A discussion:

- Figuring out a good way to manage audience participation can be challenging. Use this [resource](#) to discover different ways of doing this.
- Feel free to ask the speaker to elaborate or ask follow up questions. Audience members are probably wondering the same things you are.
- Don't forget to keep track of time. You want to make sure you get answers to all the important and major questions you had in mind.
- Feel free to create a script with bullet points for your intros and have a list of your questions.



Panel Discussion

A panel discussion will typically involve 4-5 people: you and 3-4 panelists. A panel discussion is similar to a Q&A, for the role of the moderator. The main difference is that it may be a bit more challenging to moderate depending on the personality of your panelists. Some may like to talk more, respond to another panelists answers, etc. Here's how to facilitate a panel discussion:

1. *Introduction of you and the Panel* This is the beginning! Make sure to introduce who you are to the audience and your role as the moderator. Also, explain what the panel will be about and how questions will be facilitated (this would be the place to explain if you pre-selected questions from audience submissions or how you are going to facilitate questions from the audience).
2. *Introduction of the Panelists:* Next, it's time to introduce the panelists. Reading a short bio about them and highlight why they were brought to speak this particular issue!
3. *Dive In:* Now it's time to dive into the questions! Feel free to keep it pretty casual as the discussion will start to carry itself. Keep the following tips in mind.

Tips

Here are some things to keep in mind when moderating a panel:

- Figuring out a good way to manage audience participation can be challenging. Use this [resource](#) to discover different ways of doing this.
- If you feel that a panelist may be speaking significantly more than other panelists, propose your next question directly to another panelist who may not have had the opportunity to speak.
- Don't forget to keep track of time. You want to make sure you get answers to all the important and major questions you had in mind.
- Feel free to create a script with bullet points for your intros and have a list of your questions.