

Want to Present at Conferences?
Tired of Rejection Notices?

Six Concepts

to Improve Your Congress Selection Chances

This month is PMI® Global Congress 2009—North America, one of the largest project management conferences of the year. Many attendees will be inspired to present and share their knowledge at future congresses. Others have tried in the past to become presenters, only to find their submissions rejected.

Here are some hints that will help improve the chances that your next conference speaking proposal will be accepted. After you read this article, be sure to check out <http://congresses.pmi.org/introduction.cfm> for information on how to become a PMI congress speaker. The call for proposals for the 2010 North America congress opens approximately 19 October and closes on 21 December.

1] Know the audience

A conference serves an organization's educational needs. Some accept "sales" proposals, while others accept only knowledge-based presentations. Before submitting, review the audience profile and the organization's goals, or contact the individual responsible for the submission process. Are there any published industry standards? If so, connect your proposal to one or more of the standards.

2] Follow submission requirements

Read all requirements completely: what is requested, format, size limitations, and personal or reference information. Adhere to all requirements and deadlines provided. Provide only what is requested. Excess information may be considered overkill and may not be reviewed.

3] Write clearly

Reviewers may not be as familiar with your topic as you are. Write at the level of the average audience member. Remember, you are trying to convince a nonexpert that your topic has value. Consider the reviewers' fluency in your language or your fluency in the language of the conference. If you are not sure you are being clear, ask someone familiar with the conference language to proofread your proposal.

4] Regarding references

References should be aware that you are providing their names and should agree to respond if requested. Omit references who will not benefit you. If an example of your speaking, such as a video clip, is requested, submit it in the specified format. Web links to your previous presentation can be used. If you provide previously earned evaluation scores, include the range of possible scores.

5] Provide timely answers

If more information is requested, adhere to the response date and method of response provided. Check your e-mail frequently for any such requests.

6] Verify contact information

All organizations use e-mail or telephone for speaker contact. Always verify your contact information before submitting. Check for typo-

graphic errors in your e-mail address and provide a full phone number. If your information changes, notify the organization.

While these suggestions will not assure selection, they can improve your chances. Good luck on your next submission.

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