

# Preparing for a Q&A Session

by Sophia Tutorial



## WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, you will learn about what to expect during the Q&A portion of your speech. Specifically, this lesson will cover:

1. Q&A with In-Person and Remote Audiences
2. Rehearsing for Q&A
3. Receiving Questions Prior to the Speech or by Using Backchannels

## 1. Q&A with In-Person and Remote Audiences

Questions and Answers (Q&A) is a part of many speaking events. During Q&A, the audience can ask questions and the speaker(s) will answer the questions. Although questions could occur at any time during the event, traditionally Q&A occurs at the end of the speech.

If you are speaking directly to a live audience, you can allocate time at the end of the presentation to answer questions. You may have audience members stand or move to a microphone to ask a question.

Or, if you have a large audience or remote audience, you can solicit questions before, during or after the speech via Twitter or SMS, or create a "**backchannel**" to display questions at any time during or following the presentation.



### TERM TO KNOW

#### **Backchannel**

The practice of using networked computers to maintain a real-time online conversation alongside live spoken remarks.

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## 2. Rehearsing for Q&A

You can never anticipate all the questions of audience members may have. But you can anticipate some questions and prepare a response ahead of time.

Audience members are likely to ask the following types of questions.

To find out information from an expert: You are perceived to be the expert on your topic and the audience

may ask a question to find out additional information.

For clarification: You may have presented an explanation but an audience member may need additional clarification to fully understand the idea.

Interested and want more: You may have piqued the interest of an audience member with something you said and the audience member will ask a question to find out more, or for a follow-up resource.

Agree or disagree with opinion: You may have stated an opinion and the audience member either wants you to agree or disagree with related opinions or a course of action.

How to do something: You may have convinced the audience that your opinion is right. Now the audience wants to know what course of action to take as follow-up.

Prepare possible answers to these types of questions and rehearse with a colleague or coach before the speech.

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## 3. Receiving Questions Prior to the Speech or by Using Backchannels

Email: You can solicit questions prior to or during the speech by creating a unique email address such as Myspeech1212@gmail.com. You can include answers during the speech or collect them for a Q&A period at the end.

Twitter: You can create a unique **hashtag** on Twitter for the event, such as #myspeech1212. You can use the hashtag as a backchannel during the presentation, or to collect questions to be answered at the end. When audience members add the hashtag to their **tweets**, the speaker or attendees can search Twitter to review all the tweets related to that event. A colleague can collect the questions so that you and the audience are not distracted. Tweets are publicly visible by default; however, you can restrict message delivery to just your followers. Your audience can tweet via the Twitter website, by compatible external applications, or by Short Message Service (SMS). You can also display all the questions with your event hashtag using TweetDeck. TweetDeck will allow you to receive and display tweets, is compatible with most operating systems, and can be installed as a smart phone app.

Using any or all of these methods to solicit and answer questions allows you to create a direct interactive experience with your global audience.



### TERMS TO KNOW

#### Hashtag

A tag embedded in a message posted on the Twitter microblogging service, consisting of a word within the message prefixed with a hash sign.

#### Tweet

(Noun) An entry posted on the microblogging service, Twitter; can be a post or status update; (Verb) to post an update to Twitter.



## SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned how to facilitate a **Q&A with both in-person and remote audiences**. If you are speaking directly to a live audience, you can allocate time at the end of the presentation answer questions. You can solicit questions before, during, or after the event via Twitter or SMS, or create a backchannel display during or following the presentation. When **rehearsing for a Q&A**, you can anticipate questions that will be asked and prepare responses ahead of time. You can set up a Twitter hashtag for the audience to tweet questions during the presentation. You can provide a number or address for SMS texting during the speech so you can respond to questions during or after the presentation. You can **create a backchannel** for projecting tweets or text messages during or after the presentation to create a truly global interactive experience.

Source: Boundless. "Preparing for a Q&A Session." Boundless Communications Boundless, 17 Mar. 2017. Retrieved 1 Jun. 2017 from <https://www.boundless.com/communications/textbooks/boundless-communications-textbook/delivering-the-speech-12/managing-q-a-68/preparing-for-a-q-a-session-267-8391/>



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