



August 2010

The Education Institute

Neal-Schuman PEN (Professional Education Network)

INFORMATION FOR CURRENT AND PROSPECTIVE SPEAKERS

What is the Education Institute? (www.educationinstitute.ca)

The Education Institute (EI) is a distance learning program for the library and information sector. It started in Ontario in 2003, and is now an initiative of The Partnership of Canada's provincial and territorial library associations. Libraries are constantly challenged to reach new heights, be innovative in their use of emerging technologies, and to continue providing current and enticing programming for all age groups. The Education Institute was developed to respond to these challenges, and contribute to continuous learning for the library information profession.

Travel to conferences, workshops and face-to-face courses is costly, time-consuming, and more difficult to organize, making distance learning the preferred choice of many who are seeking professional learning. The Education Institute is available to sites/participants anywhere in the world. The program is marketed in the United States as the Professional Education Network, and is available through Neal-Schuman Publishers, Inc. (www.neal-schumanPEN.com).

We are pleased you are interested in contributing to the profession by sharing your knowledge and experience as a speaker/presenter in the Education Institute/Professional Education Network.

This document provides information to help you prepare your session; or, to decide if you would like to submit a proposal. It also has useful information about how the sessions actually operate. You are always welcome to contact Education Director, Liz Kerr, at lkerr@accessola.com to discuss participation in the Education Institute/ Professional Education Network.

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I decide which format to use?

- Audio and Web Conferences are one hour long and conducted in real time, permitting interaction between the speaker and the audience.
- The sound portion of either format is done through regular telephone connection.
- The web conference has the additional connection to the conference website, permitting additional functionality: interactive powerpoint usage,

- audience polling, chatting, desk-top application-sharing. Neither web-cam video nor full motion video is used at the current time.
- Speakers consider their content, and their ease with technology when deciding which format to use.
 - Audioconferencing is a tried and true delivery system for distance learning, and despite the availability of wonderful new tech tools, it will still be around for many years to come! There are still areas of Canada where internet speed and performance are slower than desired.
 - When the choice is web conferencing, we offer a brief tutorial with our tech support staff person in advance of the presentation, and that person is part of each live web conference to handle any tech support issues – which is infrequent!

Do I need to be at a special location to deliver my session?

- Speakers do not need to go a special studio, but they should be in a quiet room without background noise.
- The use of a land line telephone is preferred over portable or cell phone.
- A toll-free number to connect to our conferencing service is provided.
- We have experimented with the use of Skype and found it doesn't provide the consistent clear audio reception that is required.
- In the case of a web session, the location should have high-speed connection to the internet.
- If hands-free operation is desired, the use of a head-set connected to the telephone should be used – this gives the best audio quality.

What materials should I provide?

- In most cases, speakers provide materials to support the presentation, and the audience normally expect them and find them useful both during and following the session.
- Materials could include any or all of the following:
 - Powerpoint presentation: this is probably the basic material as it serves to organize and flow the material; and you might consider inserting a photograph or two of yourself at the beginning – just to make a visual connection!
 - WORD or PDF document(s) (agenda, outline, background materials referenced in the session, bibliographies, etc.).
- If the file sizes are large, we provide a method to get the files to us; and a link from which the participants can download the materials.
- The sites use the materials in many ways:
 - Some provide articles to the participants in advance, as background reading
 - Some make handouts from the ppt file so participants can make notes as the session progresses
 - Some keep the materials from the EI sessions they take participate in for future reference

How does the Audio or Web Session proceed?

- Speakers are asked to call the toll-free number about 5 minutes prior to start time for audio conferences, and about 10 minutes early for web conferences.
- The conference operator will greet the speaker, ask which conference the speaker is calling in for, and then place the speaker into a separate “ante-chamber” along with the convenor of the session.
- For web conferences, the tech support person will also be in the “ante-chamber”. He will turn control of the website over to the presenter and ensure everything is ready to proceed.
- When it is time to start the session, music is played while the conference operator connects the speaker line to the participants’ lines, and no one speaks during this time.
- The conference operator welcomes the audience and turns the call over to the convenor, who introduces the speaker.
- The speaker then welcomes the audience and begins the presentation.

How should I structure the one-hour session?

- Some speakers choose to speak for 40-45 minutes and then take questions.
- Others talk for 25 minutes, take questions, and then resume talking until close to the end, leaving time for more questions.

What tips should I consider when preparing the content?

- Materials should be clearly titled and paged for easy reference. Time goes by very quickly during the session, and speakers do not have the benefit of seeing if the audience is finding the appropriate pages.
- The old adage “tell them what you are going to tell them, tell them, and then remind them of what you’ve just told them” is more important in remote learning! In other words, summarizing can be helpful.
- Distance learning can be quite passive. Encourage more active participation by:
 - asking a question, pausing for 15-20 seconds ‘think time’, then answering the question/giving options, etc. -- open-ended questions work well – and lead to more thinking
 - including a short pre-session activity as part of the materials sent to sites in advance.
 - including a follow-up discussion guide which sites can use following the live session

What tips should I consider in delivering an audio and/or web conference?

- In the case of an audio conference, the speaker needs to verbally tell the audience when the slides are changing in a ppt presentation.
- Speakers need to be more their speaking voices in a distance situation. The telephone lines of the audience are not open during the actual presentation, thus no one is able to say “I didn’t hear that” or “can you

- please repeat that". A good rule of thumb is to speak more slowly, and enunciate more clearly than required in a face-to-face situation.
- A warm welcome to the "unseen" audience often helps to set the tone. Include one or two photographs of you/your workplace/your family/your pets in your ppt – whatever you feel will set a warm and responsive tone!
 - Some speakers have said they keep a photograph in front of them to remind them to speak "directly to the audience"!

How are audience questions handled?

- The telephone lines of the audience are closed during the actual presentation, and this is to cut out background noise in the sites.
- The lines of speaker, the conference operator, the convenor, and the tech support person [in the case of web conferences] are all open to each other at all times.
- When the speaker is ready to take questions, he/she tells the conference operator.
- The conference operator establishes the protocol for asking questions; sites queue their questions, and the operator introduces each site, opens that site's line, and takes the question.
- It is possible, although not recommended in most cases, to have all lines open.

What happens if no questions are asked?

- There are several reasons why questions are not raised:
 - The audience needs time to internalize the content and consider how it applies to their situations.
 - The sites are using speaker phones, and do not want to be disconnected when following the Q&A protocol (see notes below under Tech Notes)
 - Some sites perhaps feel their question(s) reveals perceived lack of understanding, etc.
- Convenors often ask questions if the audience do not.
- Speakers should be prepared with a bit of follow-up in case no questions are forthcoming!
- Most speakers invite sites to be in touch with them following the session, and provide contact information.

Can I go over the one hour mark?

- We have found that people plan for the session to start and finish promptly, and for that reason, we endeavour to be on time. However, if the session is a bit late starting for other reasons i.e. large number of sites connecting, there is no problem going for the full hour.
- And if there is good audience participation and several unanswered questions, the time can be extended by 5-10 minutes.

Who will convene my session, and what does that entail?

- The convenor is often the person who invited you to consider submitting a proposal, and sometimes members of the Education Committees in the library associations in Canada convene sessions. Liz Kerr, Education Director also convenes many sessions.
- The convenor will introduce you, and thank you at the end.
- He/she may also ask questions and/or make comments at appropriate points in the presentation.
If a speaker is normally fast-speaking, he/she will need to consciously slow the pace to ensure listeners grasp the content. Similarly, if a speaker is soft-spoken, he/she will need to speak more loudly.

Will I be compensated for preparing and presenting my session?

- Yes; the normal compensation is \$200.00 CAD or USD (depending on country of the speaker) per session. Some speakers request the equivalent in future EI/PEN sessions; some speakers do not request an honorarium; and other options can be discussed with Liz Kerr (lkerr@accessola.com)

I'd like to present with a partner. Is this possible?

- Yes, and the partner can be in the room with you, or can call in from his/her location.
- Multiple speakers in one session share the honorarium.
- More than two speakers isn't recommended, since the hour goes by quickly!

How will I know if my session was well-received?

- The convenor will remind sites to provide feedback via the online survey.
- We share the feedback with speakers. Many have commented on the usefulness of the comments in preparing future learning sessions.
- If you do not hear from us within 2-3 weeks, please email Liz Kerr [lkerr@accessola.com]

I'm interested in offering a 4-8 week online course. How should I proceed?

- New course instructors are welcome to contact OLA Education Director, Liz Kerr at lkerr@accessola.com to discuss further.

What happens after I fill in and submit the online Session Proposal Form?

- Within a few days you should be contacted by Liz Kerr. If two or more weeks go by without contact, you are welcome to contact her.
- The final date will be set, and any other questions will be covered.
- There is an agreement form to complete, which includes the following:
 - Commitment from the speaker to conduct the session
 - Request for Permission to permit resale of the recorded session for the EI-to-Go service
 - Amount of the honorarium to be paid
- You will need to send a digital photo for the web and print marketing

What happens after the details are all set and the session is posted?

- Various marketing and promotional efforts are undertaken. People register, and a class list is built.
- About two weeks prior to the presentation date, the speaker(s) is contacted by someone at the OLA Office to provide an update on the number of registrants, and to request the handouts for the session. The quick tutorial is scheduled if the session is a web conference.
- Experience has shown that people tend to register in the final couple of weeks before the date. We often discuss postponing if there are less than 10 sites registered.
- Two days before the session, handouts and connection information is emailed to all registered sites. We also send the speaker the class list and the connection information.

What is the EI-to-Go service?

Contact OLA Education Director, Liz Kerr, at any time.

lkerr@accessola.com

416-363-3388, ext 32

866-873-9867, ext 32

We welcome your participation in the Education Institute/Professional Education Network, and know that the library and information community will benefit from your knowledge and experience.