

Seven Levels of the Speaking Industry

What?

What are the Seven Levels of the Speaking Industry?

They are yardsticks for the Speaker's Journey.

One of the biggest mysteries in the speaking industry is the seven levels and criteria for development. This is solved by a 10-year marketing plan that will show you the journey from a part-time speaker to a full-time speaker in the industry.

This approach—referring to “fee ranges”—is quite acceptable. This has been the biggest mystery that incoming, aspiring speakers have faced. This outlines the possible accomplishments of a speaker during ten years in the industry. NSA professional speakers are found in level 3, 4, and 5.

This is an example of a systems design that shows you what one looks like and, at the same time, educates you about the Seven Levels. It is another example of a focusing system used to keep clients focused and on target to reach objectives.

Why?

Why is it important to know the Seven Levels?

Take the mystery out of the Seven Levels of the Speaking Industry.

Knowing the seven levels of the speaking industry helps you identify your current range level so that you may develop a three- to five-year business plan. You will be able to understand the major challenges or problems in each level and the length of time to achieve each level

How?

How do you identify at which of the Seven Levels you are?

Identify your fee range from the following chart.

Find the explanation pertaining to the level you identify with, and on the processing form check areas you've accomplished and circle areas you need to accomplish. Write them down in the space provided. From the information you write down, you will have the basis for a three- to five-year development plan. Summarize your findings on page 308.

Range Level Three

Advanced “Non-Professional” Speaker

Fee: \$1,000 – 2,000

Important Point for a Level 3 Speaker to Remember—

Spend time and build the proper momentum before advancing to the next level.

1. Profile of the Level 3 Speaker

Level 3 speakers are high achievers and identified leaders, stepping up in their companies. Beginning to go full-time into speaking, they are learning the ropes of the industry, constantly correcting their career course. This speaker will use some career strategy but is in need of more planning and focusing.

2. Credentials of the Level 3 Speaker

Credentials of the Level 3 speaker include being a consultant, leader, corporate trainer, industry speaker, sports figure, or corporate executive stepping up in the company.

3. Marketing Strategies of the Level 3 Speaker

Direct marketing is the strategy for the Level 3 speaker. The development of positioning marketing tools such as brochures and audio tapes is becoming necessary. This speaker should start the development of a video tape. The premise of a book along with writing articles should begin to dawn in this level.

4. Awareness Level and Mindset of the Level 3 Speaker

Beginning to make the transition of getting out of self and into mission, Level 3 speakers find out that the speaking industry is not there just for them to fill their ego or to stand on stage to make a lot of money. They think speakers bureaus want them—but they don't. They like the water—sink or swim—they're going to go for it. Level 3 speakers need some part-time staff.

5. Positioning and Time Spent as Level 3 Speaker

A speaker will remain in Level 3 for about three to five years. The Level 3 speaker must have many satisfied clients before moving on to the next level. Time must be devoted to building a satisfied client list and gaining momentum.

6. Do's and Don'ts of the Level 3 Speaker

Success Builders

Ask for help, mentors, part-time staff
Attend NSA National and winter workshops
Get involved in local chapter's showcase
Learn from mistakes—observe—learn from others
Make materials stand alone, have excellent manual content
Customize material, develop natural uniqueness
Develop message, continue training
Do research others do not do, work harder
Use humor
Invest in development

Hindrances

Too many topics, not enough focus—too many areas
Not doing as NSA experts say—trying to do it his way
Still tied to material—not tailoring material to audiences
Not enough preparation—often speaker does not know topics as well as he or she thinks
Must learn the value of preparation
Trying to do too much
Still unable to say NO—takes on anything paid
Deficit—not enough satisfied clients
Producing products too soon—or not soon enough

Range Level Four

NSA Professional Speaker—Full-time

Fee: \$2,500 – 3,500

Important Point for a Level 4 Speaker to Remember—

Referral business moves heavily. They need to know about you before you know them so you can break through the meeting planners' glass ceiling.

1. Profile of the Level 4 Speaker

Established as an NSA professional speaker, the Level 4 speaker is speaking full-time. Having a niche, he or she has established an image and makes fewer big mistakes. This speaker is more confident and maintains a business cash flow.

2. Credentials of the Level 4 Speaker

The Level 4 speaker is a successful consultant, corporate executive/corporate trainer, or an educator who has gone into full-time speaking. Speakers in this level can also be Ph.D.'s, established authors, leaders, CEOs, and salespeople.

3. Marketing Strategies of the Level 4 Speaker

Indirect marketing is beginning to be a good tool for Level 4 speakers. They are publishing books and articles and producing well-defined, niched brochures. These speakers now have very professionally produced demo tapes, audio learning tapes, and video demo tapes. They are beginning to produce video learning tapes.

4. Awareness Level and Mindset of the Level 4 Speaker

Speakers bureaus will begin to look at Level 4 speakers. They are now moving into mission rather than self and are passion-driven for the speaking industry. This is the greatest life these speakers have ever known, and they are in awe of what can be done. Becoming client-driven, this speaker is now doing custom-designed work.

5. Positioning and Time Spent as Level 4 Speaker

Level 4 speakers will spend about three to five years in this level. This is the most critical time for advancement to levels five and six and to becoming a specialist. Time in this level is spent on content development. A marketing person on this speaker's staff can qualify clients, however, the speaker does the actual selling. Content development and talent will carry the Level 4 speaker.

6. Do's and Don'ts of the Level 4 Speaker

Success Builders

Make materials stand alone, develop message
Do research others do not do, work harder
Continue to upgrade materials, make quality product
Give clients more than they expected, build rapport
Ask for help—mentors—staff
Customize material, develop natural uniqueness
Perfect the art, touch the audience's heart and soul
Use a values-driven approach, place client's needs over own
Choose one topic area in which to develop expertise
Become more selective about what is done and when
Associations—good markets—verbal marketing

Hindrances

Not putting products out sooner
Hiring too many staff members too soon
Not distinguishing self from other speakers
Not upgrading materials soon enough
Delaying adding office staff—not training, motivating staff
Not marketing actively to target audiences
Not developing enough products fast enough
Getting cocky about what dates to accept, being rigid on fees
Life gets off balance

7. Advice from Seasoned Masters

Focus—become excellent in one thing
Speakers bureaus will be more interested now
Study the trends and move ahead of time

Do research and stay current
Be ready for a new specialty in five years
Write a book and publish articles

Range Level 4 Processing Form

NSA Professional Speaker—Full Time

Profile/Credentials

- Sophisticated, well-advanced, developed authorities and specialists
- CEOs
- Authors
- Politicians
- Trainers
- Sports Figures
- Educators
- Best selling authors
- Career Achievers
- Entertainers
- Economic Advisors
- Sales Leaders
- Identified Leaders
- Industry Speakers
- Consultants
- Media Hosts
- Ministers

Marketing Strategies

- Positioned niched brochure
- Custom-designed manuals
- Audio demo tape and audio learning tape
- Video demo tape and video learning tape
- Staff involved in marketing
- Published book
- Published articles
- Marketing expanding to larger accounts
- All emphasis should be on indirect marketing for referrals, etc.

Awareness Level

- Mission rather than self
- In awe
- Client-Driven
- Doing custom-designed work
- Focused to become excellent in one thing
- Speakers bureaus will be more interested now
- Study the trends and move ahead of time
- Do research and stay current
- Be ready for a new specialty in five years

Time Spent

- 3-5 years

Dos

- Make materials stand alone, develop message
- Do research others do not do, work harder
- Continue to upgrade materials, make quality product
- Give clients more than they expect, build rapport
- Treat meeting planners as equals
- Customize materials develop natural uniqueness
- Perfect the art, touch the audience's heart and soul
- Become more selective about what is done and when
- Associations—good markets—verbal marketing

Don'ts

- Hiring too many staff members too soon
- Not distinguishing self from other speakers
- Not upgrading materials soon enough
- Delaying adding staff—not training, motivating staff
- Not marketing actively to target audiences
- Not developing enough products fast enough
- Getting cocky about what dates to accept, being rigid on fees
- Life gets off balance
- Not putting products out sooner

Your Profiles:

Your Future Needs:

Your Awareness Level:

How long will it take for you to advance?

What you must do:
