ABOUT YOUR ROLE AS MODERATOR

The Moderator’s role is critical in making the difference between a successful program and one that receives weak reviews. Even though the Moderator spends little time at the podium, he or she needs to actively manage the panel. This includes:

- Ensuring that all panel members understand how they fit in;
- Ensuring that materials are prepared and submitted on time;
- Ensuring good time management of speakers; and
- Ensuring meaningful audience participation.

Additional Responsibilities of the Moderator are:

Before the Meeting:

1. Prepare speakers for the session.
   - Share program outline with each speaker.
   - Communicate with each speaker his/her role in the program; be specific about the portion of the topic each person is to cover and the amount of time allocated.
   - Inform the speaker about the need for original outlines or papers as these materials are a valuable part of the program.

2. Coordinate preparation of session.
   - Hold a planning session by conference call to coordinate your session. Please contact, Jennifer Idrovo, at Jennifer.Idrovo@americanbar.org or (312) 988-5625, for a complimentary conference line.
   - Be sure each person knows what all other speakers have been assigned to present.
   - Establish the order of presentations.
   - Be sure each person’s written outline or paper reflects his/her oral presentation.

3. Coordinate the submission of materials.
   - Write an overview of the session which will become the introduction to the course materials for the session.
   - Review papers submitted online to be sure they reflect the speaking assignment; be sure page limitations (4-10 pages) are adhered to.
   - Build in lead time to review the papers prior to the ABA staff deadline for receipt of papers; attachments to the papers should be directly related and necessary to understanding the paper.
   - Written material should be uploaded online.
   - Collect and coordinate PowerPoint presentations, so that they are all uploaded to one laptop prior to the beginning of the session.

   Please note Laptop computers are not provided by the ABA. Please coordinate with your panel to determine who will have a laptop available for use during the session.
At the conference:

While each program is unique, success usually depends on:

- Controlling the time used by each speaker;
- Ensuring that later speakers get equal time; and
- Providing time for a dialogue between the panel and members of the audience.

“Role play” panels are more inherently interactive, but present their own challenges – particularly, ensuring that audience members have time to ask questions.

Therefore, all Moderators should:

- Stress time management issues with members of their panel, and be prepared to intervene aggressively;
- Use “Five minute/three minute/one minute/Time’s up” warnings;
- Guarantee at least 15 minutes for questions.

In addition, Moderators may want to use techniques such as:

- Presenting questions to the panel before turning to the audience for questions;
- Asking the audience at the beginning what they came to find out; and
- Providing a verbal transition between speakers, rather than simply reciting resumes.