



Building A Strong Talk Proposal

If you hope to be speaking to groups of people, there's no doubt going to be a gatekeeper you have to win over: an event planner, a podcast host, a webinar sponsor, a professor, or someone else.

To help you do that, and to ensure that you're prepared with all the materials you'll be asked to provide, this worksheet will walk you through the process of creating a killer talk description.

This worksheet uses real examples of talk titles, descriptions, and key takeaways from the Content Marketing World 2023 agenda, where both Jay and Melanie spoke.

3 Key Elements of A Talk Proposal

1. **Compelling Talk Title:** The topic, theme, or headline, stated in a way that makes it interesting
2. **Detailed Talk Description:** A paragraph that shares what will be covered in the talk
3. **Action-Oriented Key Takeaways:** 3-5 bullets that explicitly state what attendees will gain from attending or hearing this talk

Creating Compelling Talk Titles

Strong talk titles:

- Make it **clear** what the audience will learn by prioritizing clarity over cleverness
 - *How To Build The Ideal Content Marketing Team*
 - *Content Marketing Department Structure: How To Build An Organization For Success & Scalability*
- Pique the audience's **curiosity**
 - *The 10 Best Customer Behavior Triggers You've Never Heard Of*
 - *497 Page One Rankings In 7 Weeks: How Pillar-Based Marketing Is Changing SEO*
- Use **subheadings, parentheticals, or questions** when they serve the audience
 - *Separating Hype From Reality: The Real Data Behind Marketing & Genai*
 - *9 Surprising Ways To Use AI (And 2 Ways You Shouldn't)*



- *Congrats, You're A Marketing Leader! Now What?*
- Make use of **consonance, puns or wordplay**, when useful and not forced
 - *From Likes To Loyalty: How A Social-First Video Strategy Creates The Brand Audience You Want*
 - *Shine Bright Like A Diamond: 7.5 Content Marketing Lessons From Rihanna*
- Use a specific **case study (or case studies)** as a hook
 - *Behind The Scenes Of A Wistia Product Launch*
 - *Sasquatch, Closet Pants And Hot Mics: 5 Tips For Launching A Podcast About An Unsexy Topic*

Creating Detailed Talk Descriptions

Strong talk descriptions:

- Are 1-4 paragraphs, customized to the event's attendees and/or theme
- Manage expectations by sharing what the session will cover
- Highlight why the talk content is important, relevant and/or timely
- Hints at benefits and outcomes (which may be more detailed in key takeaways)
- Might identify the presenter and/or their credentials

Here are some strong talk descriptions that meet many or all of the above criteria:

- *Up against copycat competitors, regurgitating robots, and an endless sea of "experts" competing for audience attention, it's easy for ideas to get lost in a sea of content sameness, depriving them of their impact. This session shares a method for identifying your content's primary source of value and assessing its level or originality, allowing you to plot a path out of the endless hamster wheel of commodity content creation, and toward the creation of content that's differentiated, memorable, and impactful.*
- *Every day, your audience looks for reasons to remove your content from their lives. When the world's biggest celebrities, brightest minds, and most inspiring storytellers all create content too, how do we ensure we make the shortlist -- and stay there? The good news: although we have to compete with the best, we don't need to BE the best. We need to be something else. Their favorite. In this inspiring, surprising talk, author and podcaster Jay Acunzo will have you thinking less about the volume of your content and more about its power. When your audience makes choices, they play favorites. The question is, are you one of them?*



- *Your team can't hit their targets if everyone is using a different playbook. Create greater efficiencies across your RevOps with three powerful brand tactics that align your people and processes. This session will empower you to work smarter and not harder by optimizing your ideal customer profiles, prospecting methods, and messaging structures so that your tools and tactics actually deliver results.*

Template to Write Your Speech Blurp:

Compare this template to speech blurbs on Jay's [site](#) (halfway down) or a full-time pro speaker's site like Andrew Davis (click into any of his talks currently on offer [here](#))

- 1. Align with the audience**
 - a. Considerations: who they are // what they're going through // where they feel pain
- 2. Raise the stakes**
 - a. Considerations: list of painful symptoms // open-ended questions // talk about what "a few" or "the best" or "others" are doing as what we want, too
- 3. Hint at hope**
 - a. Considerations: 1-2 short statements about what's possible if we made a change
- 4. Describe what the talk is about, in brief**
 - a. Considerations: 1-2 adjectives to describe the style of the talk (e.g. "fast-paced" or "hilarious" or "inspiring" or "practical") + 1 line about what you intend to do in the talk for attendees
- 5. Describe what you'll experience inside the talk, in brief**
 - a. Considerations: 2-3 "You will..." or "we will..." statements, meant to share high-level benefits, revealing data, mentality shifts, or a hint at signature stories
- 6. List of action-oriented key takeaways**
 - a. Considerations: no more than 3 "artifacts" they'll take with them (questions/prompts to ask, frameworks to use, or other practical artifacts like lists of steps and/or new abilities you'll have)

Creating Action-Oriented Key Takeaways

Strong Key Takeaways:

- Are specific and detailed instead of broad
 - *The key threats to Google that will impact you, and how to capitalize on them (vs "How Google works")*



- *The limitations of traditional content marketing approaches and the importance of challenging old-school tactics. (vs. “traditional content marketing approaches”)*
- Highlight outcomes the audience actually wants
 - *How to compete on the quality of your ideas, not the size of your budget*
 - *A practical process for developing your ideas to resonate deeper and create more passionate fans*
- Use verbs associated with learning, such as Recognize, Select, Distinguish, Solve, Develop, or Explain. (Consult this list of [Bloom's Action Verbs](#))
 - *Identify great, good, and poor leads by leveraging your brand's definition of what "ideal" looks like for your target audiences.*
 - *Learn how to navigate AI's dark side, protecting your audience's trust while optimizing your content creation.*



Create Your Strongest Talk Proposal

Copy this page as many times as needed, using one page for each unique talk.

My Compelling Talk Title Options:

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My Detailed Talk Description:

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My Action-Oriented Key Takeaway Options:

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