



THE ACADEMY FOR CHIEF EXECUTIVES  
*Experiential Business Learning®*



# Speaker's Handbook

**The Academy for Chief Executives**

*The profile of Academy members*

**The Academy Speaker's role**

*Within the Academy  
In an Academy meeting*

**The Academy Speaker process**

*getting on 'the circuit'  
before the day  
on the day  
after the meeting*

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# Introducing the Academy

## *Academy groups*

We meet in groups of up to 15 members for a day each month. Each group is run by a Chair who holds, or has held, a CEO or other senior position in a major organisation and who runs the group under a licence from the central licensor.

We provide a confidential learning environment for non-competing chief executives and managing directors from all sectors of industry, commerce and the not-for-profit sector.

## *The monthly routine*

Monthly, full-day meetings are held in turn at the premises of each member, providing an insight into the members' company and an increasing understanding of their business.

One half of the day usually has a Speaker who is a top-flight expert in their chosen field; this enables members to keep abreast of the latest developments in leadership, performance measurement, personal mastery, innovation, business strategy etc.

*“If I pick up just one golden nugget of learning, it has been time well spent.”*

The remainder of the day is for members to raise their own business issues in confidence; real problems, challenges or opportunities that they would like members' impartial views on. (The group acts like a powerful team of non-executive directors but without the hidden agendas!)

Between monthly group meetings each member meets with the group Chair for a performance coaching session.

## *The annual advance (or retreat)*

*“The Academy provides a unique experience, which includes an intellectual peer support group in addition to the excellent presentations from leading speakers with either a national or global profile who know how to drive performance in organisations.”*

There is also an annual 2-day retreat where each member presents and is challenged on his or her personal and business goals for the coming

year. The group then commits to helping each member achieve the goals, which are tracked during the year.

The Academy believes in encouraging a balanced lifestyle and fosters personal, family, community and environmental as well as compelling business goals.

Goal setting is a key discipline of successful leaders, so the development of truly compelling, challenging goals in all areas of life is central.

### *Types of membership*

There are three main types of group membership: Chief Executive Forums, Leaders' Forums and Directors' Forums.

Chief Executive Forums are open by invitation to chief executives, chairs, managing partners or business owners of companies usually ranging in turnover from £2m to over £200m.

Leaders' Forums are open by invitation for leaders of smaller organisations and senior managers and directors of larger organisations.

Directors' Forums are open by invitation as per Leaders' Forums but the meeting is structured around members' issues, and therefore there is no expert presentation.

### *Virtual membership*

The Academy encourages all our Speakers to become part of the wider Academy community by joining our Virtual Membership Programme.

Membership of **www.chiefexecutive.com** entitles you to a number of exclusive discounts and online learning experiences. It also provides a unique opportunity to build relationships with other members of the Academy community including Group Chairs, Members and other Speakers. Other benefits include the ability to display your own 'microsite' publicly, and also to view how you're doing on the speaker and workshop league tables. Yearly membership is £79 + VAT. (There is a three month money back guarantee of satisfaction.)

## The nature of Academy members

### *Selection criteria*

Besides being the leader of their business or organisational unit, Academy members are selected for two key criteria.

1. An ambition for greater success – however they define that. This is not always a financial measure; work-life balance, recognition and succession are other factors. This criterion rules out many leaders of ‘lifestyle’ businesses; at least until the time when success becomes equal to exit.
2. A realisation that for them to achieve that greater success, they themselves have to be even better leaders. This tends to rule out the stereotypical autocratic manager who could make a lot of money if only the staff, suppliers, customers and government weren’t getting in their way!

In addition a personal fit with the Chair and other members is critical to membership.

A final, essential rule is that no group can include members who would be held back in their discussions by a conflict of interest with another member. So members cannot be significant direct competitors and neither can they be a major customer or supplier of another member.

### *Business type*

Members come from a variety of types of business:

- One person businesses to billion dollar plus corporations.
- Private sector with some ownership of the business.
- Private sector with sole ownership of the business.
- Subsidiary MDs
- Senior partners
- Public sector CEOs
- Third sector CEOs.

*“I really appreciate presentations that make allowances for the range of business sectors and especially my size of business”*

## ***Business size and sector***

The majority of businesses are in the £2M - £200M turnover, 20-2000 people range, and with the 80:20 rule meaning there are more at the lower end of the range than at the top. No sector is dominant.

## ***Group variety***

Finally, it is important to realise that every Academy group is different both in sector balance, age range and personality. They are themselves influenced by the demographics of their area and by the character and background of their Chair.

*“We needed something different. I had spent a lot of time with my head down and I needed to look at it from the outside. I found it beneficial hearing how other people manage their businesses and how they overcome problems they encountered. It widens your outlook.”*

# The Speaker's role

## *Within the Academy community*

Speakers, the largest area of spend for our Chairs, are critical to the success of our meetings and are therefore key members of the Academy community. Consequently we invest a lot of time and effort in attracting, selecting, promoting and managing the quality of our Speaker database.

### *Four reasons for working with Academy Groups*

- 1. To keep yourself fresh. Professional speaking to large audiences can be quite a one-way process. Academy groups by contrast are usually small, senior and constructively challenging. CEOs and MDs tend to be this way anyway, and the ACE culture encourages that.*
- 2. For the relationships. The audience, by definition, are all decision makers themselves and consequently useful contacts.*
- 3. For the fee. The fee for a half day session is a professional one albeit not a top one.*
- 4. For the love of it. Some top speakers capable of commanding five figure fees talk to Academy groups simply because they love the interaction and love being part of the vibrant active community!*

*Some Speakers join an Academy group themselves to gain inspiration to help them develop their own business.*

## **Fees**

Current recommended standard fee rates for the Chief Executive Forum are £600 for the first booking, moving up to £750. Rates for a Leaders' Forum are £100 lower. Most Chairs will also pay reasonable within country travel & accommodation expenses, but please check this before incurring expenses in excess of 10% of your fee. Once up and running as a Speaker, the Academy chairmen will assume that the fee quoted on your Academy website page is correct.

*"I've listened to so many speakers, I always welcome something a bit different."*

## ***Within an Academy meeting***

The purpose of the Academy is to ‘Inspire Leaders’ and this is reflected in what makes a good Academy Speaker.

A good Speaker will:

- Be both interesting and useful. Being interesting or entertaining without valuable content is not enough – members can go out socially for that. Having valuable content is not enough as this won’t get through if you don’t engage and involve the group.
- Deliver on the Academy’s purpose. They will inspire members to go and do at least one different thing or one thing differently the next day. If members don’t make at least one small step forward the speaker has failed their mission to ‘Inspire leaders’.

*“I get bored just listening.*

*I have to be able to interact and I learn best through actively participating”*

The content and style of the session and the techniques you use are entirely up to you.

## ***Speaking, presenting or facilitating?***

The word ‘speaker’ may in fact be a misnomer since it is actually quite rare, and generally inappropriate, for the speaker to speak for the whole half day. And even where the speaker does hold the stage for all of that time, they inevitably spend a lot of time interacting with what is usually a quite small but vocal group.

*“I like to be stirred up and forced outside my comfort zone occasionally.”*

So speakers vary widely and indeed that is an attraction for members. Best practice is to discuss your plans with the Chair in advance as they can advise you of the particular profile of their group and the preferences their members have expressed in the past.

# Joining the Academy Speaker Circuit

## *The commercial structure*

It is important to remember that each Chair runs their group as their own business and whilst they have to comply with brand standards etc, they make their own decisions on who to use as Speakers.

The centre continually presents Chairs with new Speakers, provides a mechanism for seeing feedback from previous groups and facilitates the whole process. However it does not itself manage the booking of Speakers.

It is important therefore, for all Speakers to raise their profile with the whole community of Academy Chairs, and the centre manages a process to enable this to happen.

### ***Three steps to becoming an Academy Speaker:***

- 1. ATTEND A SPEAKER SHOWCASE as a guest.*
- 2. GO THROUGH A SELECTION PROCESS. This involves answering our TEN KEY QUESTIONS and putting forward a proposal for your intended workshop to Phil Jesson (Phil.jesson@chiefexecutive.com) who manages the process.*
- 3. If successful, PRESENT AT A SPEAKER SHOWCASE day and start to take bookings!*

## ***What is a Speaker Showcase?***

A Speaker Showcase is where 10 speakers pitch themselves as Speakers to an audience of other Speakers, guests and, most importantly, the 20 or so ACE Chairs who will be booking Speakers for the 30+ groups around the country. With the informal network between Chairmen underpinned by a central database of achieved Speaker ratings, it is a pretty tough, albeit positively managed, commercial market place. The Speakers that go down really well can end up delivering 30-40 sessions in a couple of years, some others do nothing, with many in between.

To attend a Speaker Showcase as a guest, simply email your request to **workshopleaders@chiefexecutive.com** and we will get in contact with details of forthcoming events (there are usually three per annum). There is a small fee for all attending to cover the costs of the day.

## ***What are the TEN KEY QUESTIONS?***

The ten key questions which help us understand more about your particular chosen subject are:

1. In a sentence, what is your area of expertise?
2. Why now – why is your topic of particular interest and relevance to Members today?
3. Are you the first in your field, the only person in your field or one of many?
4. Why you – how does your approach differ from others?
5. If you ran a session, what would your title and objectives be?
6. How would you achieve them?
7. By the end of your session what will members have acquired?
8. What would you expect them to do as a result of your session?
9. What tools would you provide to help them?
10. Three months later, how would you measure the value of your session?

## ***How else can I promote myself?***

You may like to consider Virtual Membership which provides you with a range of additional benefits (see page 4).

*“If you’re proactive, you don’t have to wait for circumstances or other people to create perspective expanding experiences.*

*You can consciously create your own.”*

*Stephen R Covey, Speaker, Author*

Also, once you have presented at an Academy showcase we will willingly forward any emails from you to the Chairs, to remind them of you and your session.

## Before the day

### *As you agree the booking:*

- You will need to confirm the date, rate, and if necessary expenses.
- You should agree a title for your presentation.
- Make sure the administrator has both your email and phone contacts.

*“I like to be clear about the goals for the session but the speaker has to be flexible about the means.”*

### *Two months to go:*

- You should receive confirmation of the booking.
- Consider whether you need overnight accommodation for the night before the meeting. (The Chair or their administrator can usually advise).
- Decide if any special equipment such as a data projector needs to be organised.
- Provide a paragraph or two to describe your session.
- Book a telephone conference between you and the Chair for a date a few days before the meeting, to help everything go smoothly.

### *Two weeks to go:*

- You should receive a copy of the full agenda, a list of attendees and the location map/directions.

*Some Speakers also choose to set members thinking beforehand with questions that will link to the presentation. Occasionally others solicit questions from members in advance of the meeting!*

### *A few days to go:*

- Participate in the telephone conference with the Chair as arranged earlier.
- Ensure that you have all the information you need to be successful. (Ask for information about the profile of the members in the group, and their preferences, pet passions and hates from Speakers!)
- Confirm timings and any specific requirements such as room layout and any non standard equipment.

*“I prefer stories to dry theory – real life examples are a powerful tool.”*

*“It is of little value to hear only the issues faced by large corporations – what about businesses the same size as mine?”*

The Host Member should provide basic presentation equipment including a flipchart in the meeting room which will be laid out with a U or board room style.

If you require any additional equipment (e.g. Data Projector) you would need to arrange that yourself. Similarly if you need a different layout, please liaise with the Chair to ensure that it is practical and in place.

*“I hate it when speakers just read out screeds of prepared text!”*

## On the meeting day

In the unfortunate event that your arrival is delayed, please call the venue or the Chair's mobile number.

### *A typical meeting*

1. A light breakfast during which you have a valuable opportunity to meet the members. This time is also available for you to check the room layout and equipment and to discuss any last minute details with the Chair.
2. Each member briefly outlines the significant events of the past month. This can be a rich source of relevant and personalised case study material to link to your presentation. Members always derive great value from this kind of personal engagement.
3. Chair's brief introduction of yourself
4. Your presentation – part 1
5. Coffee break
6. Your presentation – part 2
7. Interactive feedback session.
8. (Following your presentation there is usually a short interactive feedback session in which members share their learning and publicly commit to their resulting action points. This is a central component of the Academy process, actively identifying the learning in each experience.)
9. Light lunch. (An opportunity for members to raise further questions with you individually.)

*“I really like it when the speaker uses my pre-work and relates the topic specifically to me and my business”*

### *Tips for meeting success*

Members do sometimes go off at tangents, which can hamper your focus or may derail your intended outcome. You may then wish to renegotiate your agreed outcome with the group. This provides the potential to speed up, return to your intended structure, or even to concentrate on a particular aspect in greater detail.

*"I like to raise questions as I think of them; a skilful presenter makes a note and then covers it later. That way I don't feel I've hijacked the meeting."*

Good practice is to agree with the group at the beginning of the day what they want to get out of the session and then solicit commitment to action throughout and certainly at the end of the session.

## ***Takeaways***

We know you will understand that members are not expecting to be overtly 'sold to' during your session, however, if a member should approach you on an individual basis, we are happy for you to respond to this request and we do not expect any fee or commission.

*"I turn off when they start selling to me."*

A win : win technique for Speakers is to provide handouts, handbooks or books to members. These are valued by members for future reinforcement and action and at the same time give them the ability to contact you should they wish to follow up.

Books are particularly effective. If you have published a book that complements your presentation, we recommend that you provide this to members as a gift at the end of the session. Taking away this tangible link with the expert author is always highly valued by our members and can be useful to you too, as they tend to sit on shelves for years and may result in a follow up call much later. It is not appropriate though to proactively sell books to members who are paying to listen to your session. If they choose to ask then that is their choice.

If you do bring handouts, handbooks or books, please bring along sufficient for all the group members and the Chair. We will forward them on to anyone who is unable to attend.

We also record the presentation session and send members a copy within two weeks. Please be assured that members know these recordings are not for wider distribution.

## After the meeting

### *Feedback*

Members will rate your presentation from 1 (poor) to 10 (awesome) based on the value they have received. We hope you will value this feedback and use it when planning future presentations to other groups. The Chair will contact you within two weeks to let you have any additional feedback on your presentation. This will be supported by the results of the members' evaluation forms completed at the end of the day. Your score and feedback will be posted on the Academy website.

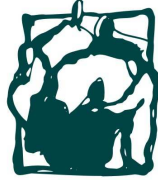
### *Follow on opportunities*

All our Speakers are experts in their field and we now have a comprehensive database on which members can draw. When appropriate, members are signposted to the support they need for their personal or business development. This is part of our partnership process.

No commission or incentive is payable to the Academy for such an introduction to a member, but we hope that you would reflect this in the level of fee you are able to offer to the member. By the same token, we hope you will be sufficiently inspired by the work of the Academy that you will want to recommend us to potential members. If you meet any business leaders who are interested in knowing more about the Academy, please call or e-mail us with their details and we will be delighted to contact them. If the individual that you have referred to us joins the Academy and stays a member beyond their guarantee period, we will be pleased to recognise that the referral originated from you and send you a "Thank You" gift.

***"All of the top achievers I know are life-long learners... looking for new skills, insights, and ideas. If they're not learning, they're not growing... not moving toward excellence."***

*Denis Waitley, Author, Speaker, Peak Performance Expert*



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*“The worst of all deceptions is  
the self-deception that we no  
longer need to learn.”*

*Plato 428BC*



*You really* **don't** *feel*  
*have to* **alone** *at the top*

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