

# The MU Guide on How to treat a Speaker



## *Why ask an outside Speaker?*

- ◆ To tap their expertise in a particular topic of interest eg a doctor, dietician, author, MU Overseas and Northern Outreach Department Head.
- ◆ Because they have special training eg your minister, or a member of your church staff. This can be a helpful way to inform them about MU and its aims, if they are not usually involved
- ◆ To bring into your group some outside ideas
- ◆ To give variety to your program
- ◆ To allow you to invite other people to the meeting who don't normally come.

## *Checklist for how to treat a Speaker*

### **BOOKING**

#### **Try to phone**

It's easier for you if you can phone the person you wish to invite and discuss the details with them, as you will know immediately if they can come. If you book them by writing, and have to wait for a written reply, you will have lost quite a bit of time if they can't come and you have to invite someone else.



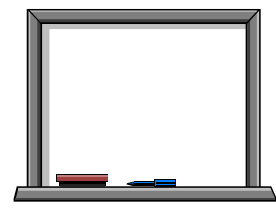
#### **Have the details to hand when you ring them**

They may wish to know more before they commit to coming so:

- Give the date, time and location of the meeting
- Tell them how long you would like them to speak.
- Have details about the group: age range, expected number, interests, special needs. Are they mainly or entirely Christians. Will there be visitors present.
- What is the type of meeting and what are its aims? Is it outreach to people outside the group, or is it encouragement or information for existing members?
- If you are specifying a topic tell them why you chose it. It is usually better for a speaker to be given an idea of a theme, than to be asked to speak on 'anything you like'. However, if you have a particular topic in mind, remember the speaker may not feel competent to speak on it, so you may need to be flexible.
- Let them know if they are to be part of a series or one of a panel.
- If they agree to speak, check that they think the amount of time allotted is reasonable. They are more likely to stick to time if they've had a say in how long they need.
- Make sure you **follow up the booking with a confirmation**. This is particularly important if you have asked your speaker when you were both at another event, but should be done anyway. A confirmatory email or letter is best and don't forget to send any material they may need, eg copies of the Bible Study if you've asked them to lead one.



## One week before meeting



- ◇ Contact speaker to confirm details of meeting and the title of their talk.
- ◇ Find out if they have any requirements eg whiteboard, screen for powerpoint presentation, microphone.
- ◇ Check their transport arrangements. Do they need information about public transport or about where they can park?
- ◇ Make sure they can find the meeting in the complex where it is being held. It can be confusing for a stranger, particularly if a number of activities are happening at the same time.
- ◇ Find out what time they will need to leave and consider if they will be facing heavy traffic at that time.
- ◇ Work out with them if they will come for the entire time of the meeting, including the business part, or if they will just come for the part they are involved in. This might mean they come after the business section or leave before it. If your speaker is an MU member they may wish to be at the entire meeting, including the business, but they should be given the option.



## On the day

- \* Arrange to be at the meeting before the speaker, or deputise someone to meet them and to introduce them to others.
- \* Ask if they would like a refreshment
- \* If you have invited other 'official' people to your meeting, eg Literature Stall, Deanery President, make sure you ask someone to look after each guest, not just the Speaker.
- \* Have any 'props' they have requested on hand and show them where they are and how they work. Don't wait until they get up to speak to do this.
- \* If you are using technical items, eg microphone, computer, data projector or overhead projector, check that they are working before the meeting starts.
- \* Start and finish the meeting on time.
- \* Try not to make the speaker wait too long to speak. Some people have nerves of steel, but most get nervous while waiting.
- \* Don't ask them to lengthen or shorten their prepared talk on the day. Adjust your meeting program if that is necessary.
- \* Arrange in advance for someone to thank them.
- \* Give them traveling expenses, even if you are also giving them a gift. If you put the cheque or money in a thank you card, mention that money is enclosed, so they don't forget to look.
- \* When they leave make sure they know how to get back out to the direction they want to go. You know your local area's layout, but they may need some instructions if main roads or one way streets have to be navigated.

