

# 12 Tips for Becoming a Global Speaker



**A**s a speaker who has worked on six continents, I'm often asked, "How can I expand my business beyond my native country borders?" Be prepared to invest time, money and effort and follow these tips.

**1** Research your topic to confirm its local appeal. Then, customize it to assure your message is relevant to the audience.

**2** Find an agent or rep for your target countries. Agents generally charge 25 to 30 percent of your fees, but they can get you in the door. Ask other global speakers who they have used. If they have hired interpreters, ask to contact the interpreter to learn about reputable agents.

**3** Call all of your existing or previous multinational corporate clients and ask them to refer you to their colleagues in other countries.

**4** Tap into associations you already belong to which have chapters in your countries of interest. Try to speak for their chapters to build your name recognition.

**5** Stay up-to-date by regularly reading the front page of your chosen countries' newspapers online. Set up a "Google Alert" for each targeted country or capital city to avoid missing important news.

**6** Plan on early mornings and late nights if your target countries are

halfway around the world. Use Skype video or Vonage to reduce communication costs. Cultivate your relationships with consistent email, newsletters, phone calls, etc.

**7** Get on a plane and meet potential clients face to face. Shake hands and build relationships. In many Asian, Middle Eastern and Latin American countries, relationships are vital for getting bookings and can take a long time to build.

**8** Fly business class, not just for the comfort and the linen napkins, but because you might meet potential international business clients. Speak to your seat mate. If allowed, chat at the galley or near the restroom.

**9** Don't lower your price or offer a reduced-fee program to get in the door. It can negatively influence your brand later when you try to increase your fees. Instead, work on getting relevant speaking experience in your target countries. People are more likely to hire you if you've previously spoken there with success.

**10** Once you get booked for an engagement abroad, contact all of your clients in that country to let them know when you'll be there. Make sure your newsletter sign-up asks subscribers to record their city and country so that you can notify overseas subscribers of future visits. Announce your travel schedule in your newsletter and share it via your email auto-responder and email signature. Log your

upcoming travels on TripIt.com and automatically link that to Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

**11** If you book multiple same-country engagements, offer to split travel costs among clients. This pleases even the largest, deep-pocketed multinational companies and shows you're looking out for their bottom line.

**12** When you're in a country, extend your trip a day or two and ask your client(s) there to introduce you to five people who might be interested in your services. Use that time to schedule meetings and cultivate new relationships.

It takes time and the occasional short night to build your speaking calendar outside of your native country, but the rewards of speaking beyond borders are worth the effort.



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