Lightning Talks

What is a Lightning Talk?

A lightning talk is a short, 5-minute presentation on any given subject in a conference or forum setting. Lightning talks are given back-to-back by different speakers consecutively in a rapid-fire fashion. Ex: Speaker 1 will talk about topic A, immediately followed by speaker 2 talking about topic B, etc. The idea is to fit many different topics in a short amount of time to keep participants engaged throughout.

What can I Talk About?

Anything D&I! What are some best practices, solutions, initiatives, and leadership journeys that could be beneficial to share? When thinking of a presentation, consider how what you are presenting relates to our D&I strategy:

INCLUSIVE CULTURE: Nurture an inclusive culture where people bring their best selves to work everyday

ACCOUNTABLE LEADERS: Hold leaders accountable for achieving diversity and inclusion goals

DIVERSE WORKFORCE: Achieve diverse workforce representation that is reflective of our communities

SOCIAL IMPACT: Build our social impact through community partnerships and contributions that create opportunity for all

MARKETPLACE LEADERSHIP: Lead and influence our suppliers, customers and channel partners to be diverse and inclusive

What do I Need to do?

During registration for the D&I summit indicate your interest in delivering a lightning talk. You will then receive a [link to a survey (also accessible here)](#) where you can submit your idea for a topic. All submissions will be reviewed, and if your topic is selected you will be presenting at the summit! From there you will be responsible for putting your presentation together, incorporating feedback, participating in a dry run that will be organized by our team, and then presenting your talk on the day of!

How do I Make my Talk as Great as Possible?

- One of the most important things you can do to have a successful Lightning talk is sticking to the point and cutting out superfluous information. You only have 5 minutes, so you must literally make every second count!

- Keep your slides simple! Given your limited time, you do not want to distract your audience from what you are saying with complex visuals. A few words or *simple* graphic is plenty.

- Practice! Timing is the most important element in a lightning talk. There is a **hard stop** at 5 minutes, so you must be precise! Know exactly how much time you plan to spend on each slide so you can coordinate with the person controlling the slides.

- Don't rush. Your time is limited, but that doesn't mean you should speed through your presentation. If you're talking so fast that people can't keep up your presentation won't be effective. Keep it slow, and if during your practice you find that you're going over time the solution is to cut content, not speak faster!

Sources:

[The Lightning Talk Phenomena: Some Tips & Tricks For Presenting - SlideTalk (slide-talk.com)](#)

https://www.semrush.com/blog/16-ways-to-prepare-for-a-lightning-talk

Key Dates

9/13 – Registration Opens for D&I Summit and Lightning Talks

9/7- Last day to express interest in presenting a lightning talk via registration

10/1- Everyone who submitted an idea will be contacted with next steps

10/18- Initial Presentation Due

10/20- Feedback given

10/25- Final Presentation Due

10/25 or 10/26- Dry Run

10/28- Presentation Day!