



Presented by the North Carolina Home Builders Association

Ways to Enhance Your Proposal

The Basics

- ◆ **Meet the November 16 deadline.** After the North Carolina Builder Institute Trustees have met to review proposals, you are still welcome to submit ideas, but your chances of being added to the lineup are diminished.
- ◆ **Submit a detailed outline.** An incomplete outline suggests that you haven't put a lot of thought into the topic. Without this information, it will be difficult to assess the merit of your proposal.
- ◆ **Submit a neatly typed, original copy.** Handwritten and/or faxed proposals are difficult to read and are unprofessional.

The Speakers

- ◆ Don't feel compelled to load up your panel with speakers, particularly if you're proposing a 60-minute conference program. Emphasize quality, not quantity. In most cases, 1-3 qualified speakers can adequately address a topic.
- ◆ Provide detailed information about each proposed speaker. Tell us why the audience will *want* to listen to the speaker and how the speaker plans to engage the audience.
- ◆ If you are proposing multiple speakers, carefully consider each individual with regard to the following criteria: 1) professional experience pertaining to the subject matter; 2) level of comfort with public speaking and ability to hold an audience's interest; 3) willingness to prepare adequately in advance of the conference.
- ◆ Broaden your topic with a mix of presenters with diverse backgrounds.

Be Innovative

- ◆ Look for emerging issues that the industry hasn't quite got a handle on yet, or suggest a creative new approach to the way things have always been done.
- ◆ If your presentation includes multiple speakers, consider an interactive discussion format, which is far more engaging and stimulating for the audience than a series of lectures.
- ◆ Don't be afraid to feature opposing points of view - even debate - among your presenters. A panel full of speaker patting each other on the back makes for a very dull program.
- ◆ Whenever possible, utilize speakers and/or case studies from other industries and apply their experience to homebuilding.

Be Practical

- ◆ Think beyond the "bring and brag" method of showing wonderful results. Instead, take the audience through the process of how the issues were resolved - what worked, what didn't, and what you would do differently next time.
- ◆ Present the issues from an interdisciplinary perspective, and focus on the bottom-line results. Was the architect's dream design a builder's construction nightmare? Was the product efficient and cost-effective to build but difficult to market? How could the team have worked together to make the project more financially viable?
- ◆ Use case studies to illustrate the lessons learned from both success and failure.

Be Relevant

- ◆ Target the right audience. The majority of conference attendees are small to medium volume single-family spec builders.
- ◆ Target the right level. 21st Century Builder Expo & Conference attendees are largely professional builders looking for advanced-level information. Please indicate if you are interested in presenting beginner-level information and we will work with you to name the program appropriately (i.e. "An Introduction to Topic" or "Topic 101")