

**ALICIA MCKAY** ⚡

# How to make the most of your MC

**CLIENT RESOURCE PACK**

# Let's make your event amazing!

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Thank you for choosing me as your MC. Being part of your event is a privilege and an honour, and I take my responsibility to you and your audience seriously.

A good MC is not an “add-on” to an event but an important way to provide the audience experience you’re hoping for.

In this guide, I’ll outline what it will be like to work together and what I need from you to do the best possible job for you and your event.

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# What makes a great MC

## Facilitation

Celebrities and professional speakers can make average MCs, because they're used to being centre of attention.

Hire people used to elevating and coordinating others, such as journalists and facilitators. They will be more attuned to the audience's needs, ask better questions, and be more conscious of energy management.

## Translation

As your experience coordinator, your MC is an extension of your brand. They should bring the event theme together and integrate your voice into their presenting style.

A great MC will use inside language and references, and use closing remarks to tie speakers, panels and other features into the themes and goals of your event.

## Connection

The days of a passive audience listening to a lecture are gone. Your MC should be skilled at interacting with a crowd and building a natural and authentic connection with your audience throughout the event.

They will also go out of their way to build relationships with your event staff, AV team and key stakeholders to ensure everyone is happy with how things are progressing and has what they need.

## Promotion

The right MC will have a keen sense of "relationship radar" when knowing and highlighting your audience's key leaders, partners, vendors, sponsors, VIPs, and customers. They'll make them look good and feel special to elevate your brand and relationships.

# How I work

I take my responsibility as your MC seriously and invest time and effort into understanding your event, sector, and audience needs beforehand.

Then, as the event takes place, I am conscious of the following:

- **Communicating openly.** I will continuously work closely with you before and during the event to meet your expectations.
- **Managing energy.** I arrive with genuine enthusiasm and excitement for you and your goals! Then, I'm attuned and attentive to the energy levels of your audience during the event, adjusting accordingly.
- **Enhancing your brand.** I make sure to use the language and terminology of your industry and organisation, tie everything back to your event theme and promote key sponsors and exhibitors in scheduled and integrated ways throughout the event.
- **Responding as things change.** Things won't always go according to plan. I keep a cool head and a cheeky grin and seamlessly adjust on the fly.
- **Promoting engagement.** Throughout the event, I will encourage people to capture their experience by posting on social media with the event hashtag and posing at the media wall (if applicable).
- **Capturing the fun.** I'm available for selfies and photos with delegates and try to get a photo or video from the stage for my social media. I organise delegates for the group photo if needed.
- **Mingling with attendees.** In breaks and during sessions, I'll mingle with your delegates to gain real-time feedback.
- **Promoting the next step.** I'll get people excited about next year's event or other upcoming events and encourage them to get involved and/or register.

# The MC run sheet

## MC run sheet

At least a week before the workshop, we need a copy of the MC run sheet. It's OK if it changes before the event – this is normal! – but the draft is useful.

It helps me to build familiarity with the event order and highlight any queries.

The run sheet should be formatted in an easy-to-read table, in at least 12pt font, and with 1.5 character spacing.

Please print it single-sided and make at least two copies available on the day of the event.

You don't need to write the entire script word for word – that's why you've hired someone! However, making sure the wording is right for speaker introductions and sponsor references is particularly important. Trust that I will be an extension of your brand voice and energy.

## Things to include in the run sheet

- Timings for all programme elements, with notes or asterisks for uncertainties (i.e. Ministers).
- Suggested script for openings, transitions, and closings. Include instructions on competitions, breakouts, etc.
- Introductions with bios for all speakers, including the correct pronunciation of names (write phonetically). E.g. my name is pronounced "Ah-lee-sha Mick-eye"
- Contact details for venue coordinator, AV team and video/photographer.
- Evacuation procedure and assembly location.
- Special people & VIPs to meet.
- Dress code for all elements of the event.
- Event hashtags and preferred social media platform.

# On the day

## Tell me what time to arrive

Unless otherwise instructed, I will arrive at the venue at least an hour before kick-off. Please be clear about when you would like me there.

I will use this time to get familiar with the venue, meet the rest of the team, do a final programme run-through, and test the stage and technology setup.

## Show me around the venue

Please have someone available to show me around the venue, including breakout rooms and the exhibition area.

## Introduce me to key people

Please introduce me to key people, including:

- The Chair and/or CEO of your organisation
- Speakers and panelists
- Support crew and suppliers.

## Stay in constant communication

Your run sheet will often change and flex throughout the day in response to speakers and events. People will run late, speakers will cancel, and breakout spaces will shift. That's OK! We need an early warning system with frequent updates.

Please make sure to keep me up to date with changes as soon as you are. We are flexible with how to do this.

Options include:

- Setting up an event group chat on Whatsapp or similar for all crew and staff
- Providing new print-outs of run sheets as they shift and change
- Texting me and/or my assistant to inform us of timing shifts.v

# Look after your crew

## Create space for the event staff

When catering for hundreds of people, it's easy to forget to create space for the team.

This is important so that your busy crew – coordinators, AV team, photographer, MC, et al – have somewhere to put their things, take a breather, and eat away from the enthusiastic crowd. Consider creating a dedicated space or green room for your team and the event support staff.

Also, please ensure I have a designated seat at a table (banquet seating) or in the front row (theatre seating) for when I am not on stage.

## Make sure the team are fed

As your MC, I'll be regularly checking in with the AV team, photographer and others to make sure they have everything they need. One way you can support this process is to make sure the crew are eating lunch!

## Never skimp on breaks

When you have an ambitious programme, it's tempting to shorten the break times to fit everything in. This is almost always a mistake. You are better to drop an item from your programme and keep energy levels up than cram. This also allows people to mix and mingle, which is one of your event's drawcards.

Also remember: the times when the audience are taking a break and refuelling are often the busiest time for your event staff, so they need the space too.

Your MC will be talking to the next speakers; your AV team will be fitting microphones and troubleshooting lighting; your videographer and photographer will be capturing candid shots and B roll.

Make sure the team have water, coffee, and enough time to rest before the action kicks off again.

# Panels and interviews

## Briefing panel guests

My job is to elevate your guests so they are their smartest, brightest, most impressive selves for the audience. I will facilitate a conversation that brings their most useful insights together for the people listening – all they need to do is relax and lean in.

The more relaxed your guests are, the more engaging and conversational our session will be, which is best for your audience.

But even the most experienced speakers and guests get nervous before they speak at an event!

Here's how we can ensure your panelists feel and perform at their best:

- **Make an early introduction** – Where possible, I like to know the group of panelists before the event. We get to know each other and bounce ideas around.

- **Prepare some questions** – People want to know what they will be asked, so try to circulate a brief list of questions before the event.
- **Rally in the break** – Gather panelists together in the break before their session. Then we can talk about where they will sit, how they will be introduced, and how the session will run. This helps soothe pre-panel nerves.

## Writing questions

Here's how to write great questions for your guests:

- **Keep it high level.** Long and complicated questions aren't necessary. We only need a few prompts to get the conversation moving.
- **Prepare fewer questions.** Fewer questions means your guests can prepare more easily and allows conversation to emerge. A 30-45 minute segment with two or more panelists should have no more than 5 questions.