

April 2020

VETERINARY WELLBEING SPEAKER/EXPERTISE GUIDELINES

The question sometimes arises, “Who should give this presentation? What expertise should we look for? What education and experience defines expertise to talk about this topic?” Of course, expertise and specialization may vary among those in the veterinary wellbeing field, but knowing the level of expertise needed for the desired speaking topic will help your institution identify the best speaker for your audience. An audience rightfully wants great value for the time and money they are investing to attend a conference or pay for a speaker to present. Audiences are more likely to watch and listen to speakers who are considered experts on a subject.

There are not hard criteria to identify an expert but there are soft criteria. Drawing on papers, such as Crispen & Hoffman (2016) and Shanteau (2015), six criteria are recommended below. These criteria are not iron-clad, but are a useful and relevant guide to consider when choosing a wellbeing speaker. An institution or committee should always feel empowered to ask any potential speaker to provide their resume or CV (rather than a short bio) to give more clarity about their education and experience.

1. Education & Credentials

A formal, advanced educational degree from an accredited institution that is related to wellbeing. Licensing or evidence of achieving professional standards needed for providing wellbeing services.

- (a) ***This is particularly important when the topic is about mental health.***
- (b) Certificates are complementary additions to education but are discouraged to be viewed as a replacement for formal, wellbeing-related education.

2. Career

Number of years performing in a wellbeing role that requires a high level of responsibility and knowledge. Are they affiliated with a respected institution in the field? Is doing formal, wellbeing work part of their job description at their institution?

3. Peer Respect

Do others in the veterinary wellbeing field know about them, recommend them, and feel that they give accurate information and data? Are they affiliated with professional organizations and networks related to veterinary wellbeing? Do their peers think they are qualified to give expertise on the speaking topic.

4. Quality of Tacit Knowledge

Perceptual skills, pattern recognition, and ability to think strategically about a topic. Can they see patterns beyond what the lay-person sees about the topic? Can they anticipate barriers and potential outcomes that lay-people cannot?

5. Reliability

Do they use information and data that are scientifically sound and grounded in an academic discipline and not based solely on personal experience? Is the information industry-specific and demonstrating the complexities within the field?

6. Successful Performance and Industry Contributions

Measurable track record of making good decisions and recommendations in the veterinary wellbeing field. They understand the background and specific nuances of the industry.

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