



# THE SAGE SPEAKER

## GUIDELINES FOR SUCCESSFUL SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW  
before you enter the classroom

*OR*

Speak at an event

SAGE IS A NONPROFIT COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION LOCATED IN SACRAMENTO, CA AND IS COMPRISED OF A SPEAKERS BUREAU, TRAINING & EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AND OUTREACH PROGRAM. THIS ALL-VOLUNTEER TEAM IS THE FIRST OF ITS KIND LOCALLY. IT IS ENTIRELY DEVOTED TO THE ENCOURAGEMENT AND EMPOWERMENT OF MIDDLE-SCHOOL AND HIGH-SCHOOL GIRLS IN PURSUIT OF CAREERS IN COMPUTER-RELATED TECHNOLOGY, LIFE SCIENCES, ENGINEERING, SCIENCE, MATH AND LAW.



VISIT US ONLINE  
[WWW.SACSAGE.ORG](http://WWW.SACSAGE.ORG)

# THE SAGE SPEAKER GUIDE

## The History of SAGE

SAGE is a non-profit organization that inspires and educates girls (grades 6-12) to pursue careers in under represented fields. We accomplish our mission by providing speakers, trainers, and outreach volunteers to the community and by consulting and partnering with like-minded organizations.

Our organization was established in 2001 and has had many successes to date. In the past few years, we provided speakers to over 100 Sacramento area events at schools such as Hiram Johnson, Luther Burbank, Center High and Buljan Middle School. We taught computer skills to over 50 women at the Women's Empowerment Program, helping to increase self-confidence and provide a marketable skill to women re-entering the work force. Through our involvement at the Intel Clubhouse, our training volunteers provided young girls with technical skills and exposure to positive female role models.

In keeping with our vision, we created an Executive Speakers Bureau, consisting of over 150 local women in the fields of computer-related technology, life sciences, engineering, science, math and law. Our speakers talk about their backgrounds and experiences to help young girls feel comfortable with choosing challenging careers. SAGE Speakers represent positive, female role-models for our audiences of young girls and boys. In addition, our multiple training programs focus on developing and enhancing computer-related skills for girls and displaced women who are sharpening their job skills. Lastly, we were fortunate to recently partner with Grant Unified School District to provide community outreach volunteers for its Academy programs.

## Welcome to The SAGE Speakers Bureau

As professional women and role models we can help girls take inventory of who they are and where they want to go in their professional lives. We can encourage them to think about their long-term goals and how they plan to achieve them. Together we can create a community of healthy, caring adults that can provide support to girls.

And your support is recognized by young girls. The following selection of quotes is from young girls whose lives have been impacted by SAGE Speaker interaction.

“Hearing her story helped me realize that I can do anything I set my mind to and I don't need to be afraid of failure.”

“I've learned that women really can do anything they want to as long as they put their mind to it.”

“After listening to them speak, I became even more excited to begin my college career and to continue challenging myself in my education.”

*Being part of the SAGE Speakers Bureau is a rewarding way to give back to your community.*

## Speaker Commitment

*Thank you for signing up to become a SAGE speaker.*

Time Commitment: Our speakers are asked to participate in 1 to 2 speaking engagements a year (about 1-2 hours each). Other volunteer opportunities within the Speaker Bureau Committee exist for those who would like to increase their level of involvement. For more information, please speak with our Director of Volunteer Management.

Because our speaking assignments are hosted within school districts, community events and career fairs, you may find yourself interacting with a variety of different audiences. We ask that you commit to providing your audience

with an opportunity to engage with you in a free exchange of questions, answers and ideas. You may find resources and other materials of interest helpful in engaging your audience. Sharing your story with a various youth-based audiences has many rewards. This may include professional and personal examples of your struggle, achievement, and perseverance that will enable the girls to connect or identify with you and your topic. By joining us you are committing to represent yourself and SAGE in a professional and respectable manner at all times. And, to help us better serve you, we hope you can remember to do the following on a regular basis.

- Tell a friend about SAGE
- Update your contact information with the program director as needed
- Respond to SAGE Surveys
- Read our Quarterly Speaker Bureau Newsletter
- Attend SAGE mixers and events

## Where do SAGE Speakers Speak?

Every speaking opportunity is unique in its audience composition, location and focus. The following list comprises the typical types of requests we receive.

- Local Schools
- Career Day
- Teacher Requests
- Local Events and Conferences
- Engagements with youth groups (i.e., Girls Scouts, Big Brothers, Big Sisters and after school programs)

## The SAGE Speaking Process

To become part of the SAGE Speakers Bureau you must first complete an online volunteer application which is housed on our Web site: [www.sacsage.org](http://www.sacsage.org). Once you have created a speaker profile you will receive email announcements from us that include our special event announcements, speaking opportunities, and our Quarterly SAGE Speaker Bureau Newsletter.

The SAGE Speakers Bureau Director and Speaker Recruiter match our speakers with the school, organization or club based on their criteria and needs. For example, if a local middle school teacher requests a speaker to represent the field of the high-tech industry to supplement a current lesson, it is the responsibility of the SAGE Speakers Bureau Director to identify and invite women in the bureau who work in high tech careers. The same process applies to other career fields, like Law/Legal, Mathematics, Medicine, etc.

Remember, speaking engagements are formed quickly. So, the best way to increase your chances of being selected for an opportunity is to respond quickly to the speaker request emails.

Once a speaker has been identified and confirmed the Speaker Bureau Director will contact them to explain the steps moving forward.

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## Points to Consider

### A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE JOB:

- General nature of the position
- Example of a typical work day
- Hours and working conditions (overtime, day/night shifts, vacations, sick leave, retirement, flex time, location, mobility, unions)
- Working Contract (clients, customers, supervisors, co-workers)
- Equipment, tools, materials used to perform the job
- Other occupations available in the field

### REQUIREMENTS:

- Discuss the training, education, or experience necessary to perform the job
- Length of time to train, receive a degree, cost, local recommended schools, and school entrance procedures (i.e. waiting lists, minimum GPA, qualifications)
- Licensing (tests or exams)
- Unions or professional affiliations needed or desired
- Personal qualifications (age, physical stature, abilities)

### STEPS TO TAKE TO PREPARE FOR THE JOB:

- High school courses which are relevant
- What are the most advantageous school or colleges at which to apply
- Majors or degrees recommended
- Related summer jobs to acquire experience
- Volunteer work
- Clubs, organizations, affiliations which are advantageous to get involved in that relate to the field
- Helpful skills or general background knowledge needed
- How to be best marketable in the field

## Tips on how to interact with young girls

Take a second to remember what it was like to be in middle school & high school. Your body is changing... you feel awkward. You are overly concerned with what people think about you, especially that guy/girl that you wish would ask you to the homecoming dance. As a guest speaker in an unfamiliar classroom, making this mental shift is valuable and can make a difference in type of impact you make on the students. Here are a few tips on how to interact with young girls.

**DO:** Be objective, honest and realistic in describing your vocation. Give facts or state your opinion as such.

**DO:** Relate your topic to the immediate experiences and concerns of the students. Show connection between your topic and what they are doing in school. Let them know how this information is or could be useful to them now as well as later in their lives.

**DO:** Encourage Participation: Students are often times shy to speak up and ask questions of a guest speaker. You may intergrate a game or warm-up activity to get them engaged in your topic.

**DO:** Break up your presentation into chunks pausing every few sentences to ask if there are any questions. Continue your presentation with this pattern.

**DO:** Be positive! Educators help young people develop attitudes about human development by setting the tone of the learning experience. Maintain a positive approach to these normal, healthy processes of growing up. Adolescents pick up on your feelings and attitudes based on your tone and demeanor. How something is presented is often more powerful than what is said for this audience.

**DO:** Encourage a climate of openness and trust. Accept your students' comments and questions. Let them know that their concerns and opinions are valid and worthwhile.

**DON'T:** Oversell or recruit

**DON'T:** Deliberately discourage students from considering your vocation

**DON'T:** Dwell upon your personal biography and successes.

**DON'T:** Overload your material with detailed facts and figures

**DON'T:** Try to advise individual students of their personal qualifications

## Student Insight

- Students love to help
- They need varied activities
- Like to be included
- Want to know all about you
- Like visuals, graphics, and handouts
- Like to ask questions
- Are bored with statistics
- Students love stories

# THE SAGE SPEAKER GUIDE

## FAQ (How to finesse the tough questions)

### **Q: Do you have time for your family?**

Be honest. Yes, you make time for your family. Talk about how you prioritize time. Also mention the flexibility that you have in your job, especially over an hourly worker who may not be able to take an afternoon off to go to a softball game, or a day for a field trip, or work from home.

### **Q: How much money do you make?**

If you feel comfortable, tell them how much money you make. You can then add to this as to how else you are compensated...stock option, healthcare, sign on bonuses, vacation time, paid time off, college tuition, flexibility in work schedule, childcare, gym memberships, community discounts, work travel, cell phones, laptops, cars. If you are not comfortable giving an exact salary number, just tell the students you make enough money to... own a house, own a car, go to X-place on vacation, etc.

### **Q: How old are you?**

If you feel comfortable tell them, otherwise just give them a reference, "I was X years old when Michael Jackson's song *-I'm Bad-* hit the charts.

### **Q: How expensive was your college? Did you have to pay for it? Are you in debt?**

Be truthful about how much college costs, but always follow it up with all the opportunities for scholarships and grants. Explain how much more money you can make with a college degree. How that money will help cover any debt. Some careers, doctors and lawyers, it is common to go into debt, but once in working in the field the investment pays off.

### **Q: What different jobs have you had?**

When answering this, make sure to include any jobs you had in high school/college like waitressing, data entry/office work, babysitting, yard work/landscaping, fast food, etc. This will help the students connect and also see how far you've gone.

## What and How should you prepare?

**Tip:** Break the ice early in your presentation. Bring something to show and tell... an object, a newspaper article, something to share & get them interested.

**Tip:** Be creative and let the passion you have for your profession flow freely.

**Tip:** Prepare to have some story or stories about how you got into your career, a "day in the life of your job" etc.

**Tip:** Bring this story to a level that the age group will understand.

**Tip:** Move around to keep their attention. When speaking to the group, try not to stand behind a podium and table.

**Tip:** When doing the Q&A session, try to sit down or lean on something so you are casual and closer to being at their level (assuming they are all sitting in desks)

## Helpful Resources

“How to Talk So Teens Will Listen & Listen so Teens Will Talk”  
Adele Faber & Elaine Mazlish

Yes Your Teenager Is Crazy  
Dr. Michael J Bradley  
[http://www.yesyourteeniscrazy.com/my\\_book\\_01.html](http://www.yesyourteeniscrazy.com/my_book_01.html)

Job & Career Resources for Teens  
[http://www.quintcareers.com/teen\\_jobs.html](http://www.quintcareers.com/teen_jobs.html) (tons of resources here)

Job mentor site  
[www.icouldbe.org](http://www.icouldbe.org)

How to choose the right career-  
<http://www.streamingfutures.com/>

The local library sometimes stocks videos from people on the job

SAGE

Board

of

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