

Becoming a SecTor Speaker: Guide to Crafting a Compelling Topic

By: Afeerah Waqar, SecTor Review Board Member

SecTor serves as a platform for professionals to share insights, innovations, and best practices in the ever-evolving landscape of cybersecurity and technology. However, securing a speaking slot at the event can be a competitive endeavor. This guide aims to provide aspiring speakers with practical advice on crafting compelling topics, writing winning proposals, and catching the eyes of both attendees and review board members.

Understanding the Audience and Tracks:

Research the target audience for SecTor to tailor your topic to their interests and needs. This might include also looking into what track you want your topic to be a part of and reviewed as. Now this part is actually a key factor that many may disregard as a minor afterthought.

Familiarize yourself with the track theme and ensure your proposal aligns with it.

Consider the current trends, challenges, and emerging technologies in the security and technology field to develop relevant content.

Choosing a Compelling Topic:

Select a topic that addresses a pressing issue, challenges conventional norms, or offers innovative solutions, something that is unique or rarely discussed. The more unique and interesting your topic is the higher the chance of it catching the reviewer's attention.

Aim for a balance between depth and breadth, ensuring that your topic is sufficiently detailed yet accessible to a diverse audience. Demonstrate your expertise and unique perspective on the chosen subject matter to stand out among other proposals.

Crafting a Winning Proposal:

Start with a captivating title that summarizes your topic and sparks curiosity. Provide a clear and concise abstract outlining the key objectives, methodologies, and expected outcomes of your presentation. You could highlight your credentials, relevant experience, and past speaking engagements to establish credibility to the chosen topic. Include any supporting evidence, case studies, or research findings to substantiate your claims and enhance the credibility of your proposal and maybe even think of creating a demo or something that can act as a visual to increase audience interest.

Tips for Writing Attention-Grabbing Proposals:

Use compelling storytelling techniques to engage readers and evoke emotion, be relatable.

Incorporate vivid imagery, anecdotes, or real-world examples to illustrate key points and make your proposal memorable. Ensure your proposal is well-structured, logically organized, and free of grammatical errors or typos. Tailor your language and tone to resonate with the conference's audience while maintaining professionalism and credibility.

Engaging with Review Board Members:

Follow the submission guidelines and deadlines provided to avoid disqualification. Seek feedback from peers, mentors, or industry experts to refine your proposal before submission.

Be responsive to any inquiries or requests for additional information from the review board members. If your proposal is rejected, don't be discouraged. Use the feedback provided to improve your submission for future opportunities.

Best of luck with your submission!