# How to Prepare:

## Before the Event
- Ask yourself these questions:
  - Who is the audience? Why are they coming?
  - Can organizer provide demographics?
  - Can you look at last year’s programs? Were there reviews of the event on blogs?
  - What are other speakers speaking about?
  - Will this be a keynote lecture (more scripted) or small (more interactive)?
- Create a list of questions audience will want answered in the talk
- Prioritize the list and sketch out stories / ideas / points
- Budget at least 10x time to prepare (1 hour talk will take roughly 10 hours of preparation)
- Develop ten minutes of rough draft material
- Practice the ten minutes. Do not procrastinate.
- Revise material when it doesn’t work, then practice again from beginning. Repeat as necessary.
- Do a test run in front of people who will give honest feedback (Or videotape and watch)
- Practice with a clock with goal to end reliably with an extra 5 minutes
- Ask for emergency contact cell phone number, give organizer yours
- Get directions to the venue, including office-park insanity, and within building insanity
- If appropriate, post slides to web, include URL at end of talk

## Leaving for the Event
- Get an hour of exercise that morning or night before
- Check laptop: do you have all cables? Is it working fine? Are slides on it? Battery charged?
- Bring backup slides on flash drive / Extra-backup online somewhere / Print back-up of slides
- Bring remote control: Check battery
- Shower, shave, prune, scrub, brush, deodorize
- Ensure you avoid all avoidable stress (get there early no matter what)

## At the Event
- Register and let organizer know you’ve arrived
- Find your room and watch another speaker speak it. Notice anything?
- If time allows, mingle and meet people who might be in your audience
- Return to room to catch (at least) tail end of last speaker before you – maximize time to set up.
- Get laptop hooked up to projector immediately. Most problems occur here.
- Find tech person, or call organizer. You’ll need their help to get microphone set up or for tech issues.
- Test remote and fancy videos.
- Walk the stage and get comfortable. Ask someone to look at you and your slides to flag any issues.
- Make sure you have a glass of water or preferred beverage at the lectern.
- Sit in the back row and imagine yourself on stage. Check that the text on your slides is readable.
- Relax. You’re prepared and all set. Nothing you do now will change anything. Enjoy the ride.
- If needed, distract yourself by going for a walk or other physical activity

## After the Event
- If there is another scheduled speaker, get out of their way so they can get set up
- Make yourself visible so people can find you to ask questions about your talk
- Write questions from attendees on their business cards so you can answer in email later
- Post slides online or to Slideshare if appropriate
- Email people who gave you their cards, answering their questions
- Thank the organizer and ask for any feedback (positive/negative)
- If your talk was videotaped, ask for a copy so you can watch and improve.
- Have a beer

If this was useful, go buy the book:

**Confessions of a Public Speaker**

at www.scottberkun.com