

Villanova University Alumni Association

Speaker Series – Best Practices

November 3, 2015

1. The Villanova Club of New England tries to schedule a minimum of one, and preferably two, annual speaker event(s) per year. Usually held in the spring, but exact timing depends on the schedule of the speaker and the club.
2. Try to schedule the event a minimum of 3-4 months in advance to allow time to accommodate the speaker's schedule, marketing and publicity, logistics (e.g., location, food), etc.
3. Develop a roster of potential speakers for future events, if possible. Roster might include 5-10 possible speakers. Consider inviting speakers based on availability and relevance of their topics. Look to speakers with some connection to Villanova. However, that is not needed. For example, put together a panel of speakers on a specific topic. The topic may be relevant to Villanova or your local club, but the speakers do not have to be. Potential speakers include:
 - a. VU administration and professors.
 - b. VU alums of undergraduate and graduate schools (eg. recent speakers have included NH Senator Kelly Ayotte (law), Adelene Perkins, CEO of Infinity Pharmaceuticals (engineering)).
 - c. Parents of current VU students.
4. Consider individual speakers or a panel with a moderator on a relevant subject of interest.
5. Combine with a networking event for attendees before and after the presentation.
6. Have a host to introduce the speaker.
7. The event can be at a local hotel or restaurant (especially if an evening event). Also, the event can be held at the office of the speaker to accommodate their schedule (e.g., early morning event).
8. Most events have been in the evening, but breakfast events may make sense when speaker is a local business person. Morning events usually run 1.5 hours (8-9:30 a.m.), evening events run 2+ hours (6pm-?).
9. Keep remarks from the speaker to about 20-30 minutes. Speakers can talk about their experience at Villanova, but not necessary. Many of the speakers have talked about their own area of expertise.
10. Encourage question and answer session to develop interaction with speaker. Consider developing a few questions in advance.