

Organizing Your Speaking Ministry

- I. This Call Was Not Recorded, Sorry!
- II. Learn more from Elizabeth Hagen
- III. Immediate Opportunities for Speakers
- IV. Organizing Your Speaking Ministry for 2006
- V. Note from Marnie

I. We tried – but it did not work for some reason. I apologize for the disappointment of not getting to hear the call.

II. Elizabeth Hagen was our special guest today.

Elizabeth is an organizational expert. During the call we were gifted with two of her favorite strategies for staying on top of a busy life.

A. The Right Now Technique.

Has anyone ever said to you, “You really just needed to be there?” Well, that’s how I feel trying to even partially recap this particular strategy. Elizabeth painted such a wonderful picture of our need to “live in the moment”. At the end of the call, a couple gals mentioned this as their favorite tip... I just can’t redo it here. Sorry!!

B. 3x5 Card Prioritization System

In the evening, before retiring, spend some time with a pen and a stack of colored 3x5 index cards. Onto each card, write one task that needs to be done the next day. When you have them all on cards, select which one is your first priority. Lay it face down in front of you. Select the next most important card and lay in on top of the 1st one. Proceed until you have organized your priorities for the next day.

Elizabeth is truly a genius at this stuff. To learn more about what she does, or to find out about Paper Tiger (mentioned later in the call), check out her website at: <http://www.organizeyourlifetoday.com>.

III. Immediate opportunities for speakers.

A. Be quoted in a book. Our Retreats Made Easy Ebook is due for release within the next few weeks – we’re really just polishing it right now. If you have a first person, goose-bump raising, exciting, God-honoring story from a retreat at which you spoke or attended, PLEASE email it in this week! We need them now. [Sorry, offer expired January 25th]

B. Be quoted in the Event Planners Friend Monthly Newsletter: The paid positions for 2006 are all taken, thank you to those of you who supported us that way, but there are some FREE publicity opportunities still available. Details about that were in your speaker's newsletter and will be included again in your teleconference debrief. Don't miss out—over 1000 event planners read these newsletters – get your name out there! [Click HERE now.](#)

C. If you have been thinking about upgrading, this is the VERY BEST time to do it – as expected, experiencing double the daily traffic of December. January and February are when event planners get really serious about inviting their speakers for the year, so now would be a great time. [Click HERE now.](#)

IV. Organizing Your Speaking Ministry for 2006

A. Organizing Your Speaking Topics

- 1) Donna uses a Desktop Filing system which holds about 40 files. She uses colored files to organize different types of files and enjoys having everything at her fingertips. These are available from business supply stores.
- 2) Selencia and Marnie use 3-ring binders (described in detail later in this email).
- 3) Elizabeth W. and Sonya use Outlook with an added reminder system like Franklin.
- 4) Elizabeth Hagen and Marnie use Paper Tiger.
- 5) Jacque, Gail and others use a filing system. Connie separates her filing system into three sections: a) tried and true topics, b) topics under construction and c) ideas for possible future use.

It was also recommended that we keep a notebook in our purse to jot down ideas and quotes as we go through life.

B. Tax Deductions for Speakers.

A bit of background from [Marnie](#). My husband and I own a C Corporation, an S Corporation and a Partnership; plus, we use a Schedule C and I do all the bookkeeping for these small business. (I'm not recommending that do what we do; it's just my reality.)

Even so, I am by no means a tax expert! I really tried to find someone who was a tax expert who would join our call today, and I had no success at that, so I am treading carefully onto thin ice as I present to you some of the basic tips for bookkeeping and tax deduction maximization that we routinely use.

My prayer is that you will take this advice as it is given: from one novice to another!

This I know for sure: You have got to figure out which government agencies you owe money to and when you owe it then so you can pay it on time! You Do NOT to make a mistake on this or you can expect audits, penalties and interest payments with no mercy.

DEDUCTIONS

Rule #1. Don't mess with the IRS. If they say it's legal; take it. Don't stretch things.

Rule #2. Keep great records. If they audit you 7 years from now, the burden of proof is in your lap. If they look at your VISA bill and see that you've taken a meal at Olive Garden 7 years ago, you have to tell why – who you were with and what business you discussed. Keep good records or don't take the deduction.

Rule #3. Take your legal deductions.

Depending on what type of business you have, you can take different types of deductions. But the following are the deductions most business types allow.

Taxes and the Public Speaker.

While my husband and I own a C Corporation, an S Corporation and a Partnership; plus, we use a Schedule C. (I'm not recommending this; it's just my reality.) Even so, I am by no means a tax expert! However, having zero success at finding someone who specializes in tax accounting for public speakers, I am treading carefully onto thin ice as I present to you some of the basic tips for bookkeeping and tax deduction maximization that we routinely use. My prayer is that you will take this advice as it is given: from one novice to another!

This I know for sure: You have got to figure out which government agencies you owe money and when you owe it so you can pay it on time! If you have a tax accountant, ask her. If not, get one. Or, at least visit: http://www.webtax.com/miscellaneous/self_employment_tax.htm to self-determine your situation. Do NOT make a mistake on this or you can expect audits, penalties and interest payments with no mercy.

Re: Social Security. If you are self-employed, you have to pay double the Social Security contributions you would as an employee. That's because federal law requires the employer to pay half and the employee to pay half. Self-employed workers are both. Check with a tax expert for details, but you should be able to deduct half of this on your 1040.

DEDUCTIONS

Rule #1. Don't mess with the IRS.

Rule #2. Keep great records.

Rule #3. Take your legal deductions.

Depending on what type of business you have (C or S Corp, Partnership, Schedule C), you can take different types of deductions. The following are the deductions most business types allow. For specifics, contact a tax expert.

1) Home Office. The law says it must be a space devoted to your business and absolutely nothing else. Although I work in my home office nearly 40 hours a week, I also spend time at my computer typing out upcoming worship services, shopping on Ebay, making the children's home school schedules and reports, etc. Therefore, I do not take the home office deduction. If you opt to take this deduction, it will interest you to know that you don't have to take a full room -- measure your actual work area and divide by the square footage of your entire home (all levels). That percentage is the fraction of your home-related business expenses -- rent, mortgage, insurance, electricity, etc.-- that you can claim.

2. Office supplies. While I don't take the home-office deduction, I do keep track of everything I use in our home office for business purposes including printer paper and ink, post its, notebooks, etc. Keep your receipts.

3. Furniture and Office Equipment. Honestly, you need a tax accountant (or someone really great with tax forms) to help you here. There are different rules which apply to different entities and most include depreciation.

4. Software and Subscriptions. Yippee! Recent changes to the tax code allow us to take 100% of the cost of off-the-shelf software purchases (related to your business) without depreciation. You may also deduct any subscriptions required to keep you abreast in the areas of your expertise.

5. Mileage or Auto Deductions. The auto deduction is much like the home office: the portion of the vehicle you claim must be used 100% for business. If you buy a business vehicle, 100% of the expenses related to it are deductible. If you don't, then keep a travel log: The current IRS mileage allowance for a non-business owned vehicle, when engaged in anything that is business related such as going to the bank, post office, driving to and from speaking engagements, etc. is tax deductible at .445 per mile (the new 2006 mileage rate). If you opt for this method, do not also turn in insurance, gas or other auto related bills. [Added note from Jennifer Swanson (thank you!). The updated business mileage info is located online [HERE](#). In brief, it is 40.5 cents per mile for first 8 months of 2005; 48.5 cents per mile for last 4 months of 2005; and 44.5 cents per mile for 2006.]

6. Travel, Meals, Entertainment and Gifts. The good news is that the entire cost your business related air, rail or auto travel and hotel are deductible at 100%. Also completely deductible are costs associated with life on the road (dry cleaning, rental cars and tipping the bellboy). The bad news is that when you eat out, you can deduct only 50 percent of your meals while traveling. At home, your on-the-job meals are not deductible unless you bring along a client to talk business. Most client entertainment expenses fall under the 50% rule. However, a direct gift to a client or employee is 100 percent deductible--up to \$25 per person per year.

7. Insurance premiums. At this time, if you pay your own health insurance premiums, you can deduct them 100% on a Schedule C (so long as your business' net profit exceeds that expense and you are not eligible for coverage under a spouse's plan). If you have a corporation, it's better to use a C Corp than an S Corp for this deduction. Consult your tax accountant for details.

8. Retirement contributions. I'm not touching this one! Check with an expert.

9. Telephone/Internet Charges. You can deduct the cost of the business calls that you make for business from home. When your bill comes in, circle the business-related calls, total them up and keep a copy. At the end of the year, tally your 12 bills and deduct 100 percent. Unless you have two separate lines, one for personal and one for business, the IRS assumes you have a "home" phone.

10. Child Labor. Employ your kids! You can pay them up to \$4,850 per year (for real work at a fair wage) and they won't have to pay taxes. Plus, there is no Social Security tax when you hire your child who is 17 or younger and you can deduct the salary as a business expense. (This applies only to Schedule C or partnership situation in which you and your spouse are the only partners.) If you have a corporation, the corporation has to pay the tax liabilities.

C. Organizing Your Calendar

Apologies – we totally ran out of time for this one... but, I can highly recommend my own Time, Life & Relationship Management Seminar [\[CLICK HERE\]](#) which outlines how I trust God to order my schedule plus keep track of a pile of stuff all going on at once. Smile. You are my good friends to let me do this here!!

D) Correspondence: A Lecture by Marnie

Before you ever book an engagement:

- #1. Create a timeline. From your first point of contact,
- How long will you allow before you call them personally?
 - How long in advance do you need a topic?
 - What is the latest date at which you are comfortable creating your final draft – subject to change by the Holy Spirit—but your final drafts?
 - How long in advance do you need to know about travel arrangements?
 - How many times do you want to contact the coordinator before the event?

Each of these are unique to you. There is no right or wrong answer and there could many more questions.... But, you have a comfort zone in which you function at peak performance. Figure that out, write it down and use it as a template every time.

After making your 1st contact with a group... whether you have mailed them information without an invitation or, whether they have contacted you....

#2 Document your follow-up schedule.

Either agree with the event planner to a date when you will touch base again, OR in the case of you sending out a mass mailing or something, you will decide when you will follow-up with a phone call.

- First, enter that date/purpose of the call information into your calendar system.
- Next, you will make a note about it in your prayer journal and
- Third, basically, unless you are praying about it, you're going to want to FORGET ABOUT IT until the next date you have flagged. One of the biggest energy sappers is getting preoccupied with tomorrow's work today. Get organized and don't do that!

Finally #3 -- Remember that list of deadline dates you created above? Once you book an engagement, enter your sequence of dates into your calendar. This is SOO important. Don't just put the date of the event, put your deadline dates all the way along.

Again, the reason: if you put only your speaking date – your mind will be consumed with the truth that you are probably not going to be ready; that you may miss some important detail; that you may fail the group, God or yourself in some way.

Being organized frees your mind from worry – because you KNOW it's all covered. This freedom enables you to be exceedingly productive with your time as well as to enjoy a life peace amidst a very full schedule.

Earlier on this call I said that I use 3 ring binders for my speaking topics. Once I have an engagement, these are the steps I immediately take...

- 1) I enter my calendar deadline dates.
- 2) I create an email file for that DATE into which EVERY email correspondence is saved.
- 3) I create a Word.doc file for that DATE into which my notes are typed; and, finally
- 4) I create a 3 ring binder for that DATE –the date goes on the spine of the binder, and I place into it copies of all the emails, word.docs, travel details, etc. I place these 3-ring binders on a shelf in my office by DATE. Then, when I'm ready to work on it, or ready to leave, I simply grab the binder or binders for that trip. It's 100% safe because everything for that engagement is in one, predictable place that is easily transportable to the event location.
- 5) When I return, I remove the contents from the binder and file them into my file cabinet. I use PaperTiger, available from Elizabeth at <http://www.organizeyourlifetoday.com>, to organize my files.

IV. Note from Marnie.

It never ceases to amaze me at how much I love you guys and enjoy any moments I can spend with you in person, online, on the phone or ... well, heaven will just have to wait – we've got too much to do for Jesus here.

Please be praying for me and this ministry. We are facing an immediate cash shortage of \$2500, but that's just because God wants to prove Himself able while growing my faith! And, as if to prove that money is not object (we keep the accounts for our businesses completely separate), God is ordering my husband's steps in purchasing two more businesses right now. Oh, my goodness.

I would be overwhelmed, but God...

Don't you just love that phrase, "But God!" God is able to do exceeding abundantly above and beyond what we ask or think according to His riches in glory.

Let us rest there every moment and live in the "right now".

I love you all! Have a super day and a super month.

In His Loving Arms,
Marnie