

Guideline 1: No commercial agendas

If it's essential to a talk that the speaker mentions what they do and describe the businesses that they're in, they should. But speakers may never use the TED or TEDx stage to pitch their products or services, plug their books, or ask for funding. While entrepreneurs and business leaders can speak at TEDx events, their talk should be driven by an idea and not sell from the stage. A TEDx event is not a platform for professional or circuit speakers, such as motivational speakers and professional life coaches--it's a fine line between shameless self-promotion and wholesome self-reporting so, as a rule of thumb, if it feels like an advertisement, it probably is.

Guideline 2: No political agendas or inflammatory rhetoric

Politics, social issues, and policy are key parts of the global conversation. However, TEDx stages are not the place for partisan politics, nor for extremist or inflammatory positions. Speakers must not attack or advocate for parties, party platforms, and political leaders in their talk. They must not advocate for violence or oppression. Advise speakers to focus on discussing concrete problems and solutions.

Special care should also be taken with politically divisive subjects (eg. abortion, gun control) so as to avoid polarizing "us vs. them" language. Instead, speakers should focus on consensus-building and nuanced discussion. Consideration should also be given to any content that may carry negative connotations for other parts of our global audience.

Guideline 3: No religious agendas

Don't book speakers who attempt to prove or persuade the correctness of a single religion, deity or other belief system (such as atheism or agnosticism), whether through rhetoric or "scientific proof." Be wary of speakers promoting new age beliefs, including concepts such as quantum consciousness, Gaia theory, archaeoastronomy, and drug-induced spiritual epiphanies. Speakers can be honest about their beliefs, but should not use the stage to promote them or to denigrate those who don't share them.

Guideline 4: No bad science

TED offers scientists and other experts a platform to provide scientific information directly to millions of people around the world. Learn more about [TED's Science Standards](#).

Science is a big part of the TED universe, and it's important that TEDx organizers sustain our reputation as a credible forum for sharing ideas that matter. It's not always easy to distinguish between science and pseudoscience. And the more willing a speaker is to abandon scientific underpinning, the easier it is for them to make attention-grabbing claims. This is especially true for talks that call on science for support but do not come directly from the scientists themselves.

Claims made using scientific language should:

- Be testable experimentally.
- Have been published in a peer-reviewed, respected journal.
- Be based on theories that are also considered credible by experts in the field.
- Be backed up by experiments that have generated enough data to convince other experts of its legitimacy.
- Have proponents who are secure enough to acknowledge areas of doubt and need for further investigation.
- Not fly in the face of the broad existing body of scientific knowledge.
- Be presented by a speaker who has the right scientific qualifications.
- Show clear respect for the scientific method and scientific thinking generally.

Claims made using scientific language should not:

- Be so obscure or mysterious as to be untestable.
- Be considered ridiculous by credible scientists in the field.
- Be based on experiments that can not be reproduced by others.
- Be based on data that do not convincingly corroborate the experimenter's theoretical claims.
- Come from overconfident advocates.
- Use over-simplified interpretations of legitimate studies.
- Include imprecise vocabulary. (Phrases like "quantum consciousness," personal "energy fields," "crystal healing", and the like, should be considered major red flags.)
- Abandon evidence-based thinking or be dismissive of the scientific method.