



How to Book a Floral Design Program

for the Master Floral Designer



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Master Floral Designers (MFD) complete significant training and practice in the art and science of floral design with the Mississippi State University Extension Service. MFDs are sought-after speakers for garden clubs, civic associations, religious groups, and many other organizations. While they have broad floral knowledge and skills, planning, executing, and wrapping up a public speaking event may seem mystifying. This publication provides tips to help MFDs and others prepare successful floral design presentations.



Share What You Have Learned

If you are interested in sharing your MFD knowledge, be proactive in securing speaking engagements. You have a lot to communicate! If you or your friends participate in garden clubs, meet one-on-one with decision makers to share your topic ideas and schedule an event. Most garden club committees plan and schedule their programs about a year in advance, so what you are planning now may not occur for several months. Do not be discouraged by gaps in time; use this time wisely to build a solid program.

Many civic organizations are interested in floral design with specific topics such as the Extension MFD program, holiday decorating ideas, locally grown flowers, and how to use cut plant materials from the yard and garden. You're encouraged to tell your family, friends, and community contacts what you have learned in MFD training. Share your excitement about the science of flowers as well as a floral design that you created and displayed. Flowers and floral design are always safe topics to discuss when you meet new people or need to make polite conversation. You never know what impact you will make on someone. Before you know it, someone will ask you, "Will you speak to our group?"

When you receive an invitation to speak to a public group, it is important to take the time to organize your way to a successful program. In the following sections, we provide information that will help get you started.

The Five Ws and One H

If you are contacted by a representative from a group requesting a program, you can begin planning by using the "Five Ws and One H" (who, what, where, when, why, and how). This technique is used by journalists, investigators, and project managers to gather information. Before you accept a request, find the answers to the Five Ws and One H. Questions using the technique are listed below to help you gather what you need to deliver a top-notch program.

WHO?

Who is the audience and how many attendees are expected?
Who is your chief contact for the event and what is their cell phone number and email address?

WHAT?

What is the topic? What program content is needed? What is the program's duration? What do your attendees want to learn? Based on the event parameters, what can they learn? What are your calendar conflicts? It takes a few days to prepare a one-hour demonstration, and you should add a day after the event to reorganize your home workspace. In other words, provide a cushion of one week with no other major speaking engagement or event. A major question is "What is the budget?" Flowers, containers, mechanics, and transportation have costs.





Did You Know?

Professional Floral Communicators-International (PFCI) is a floral industry network of educational speakers. They are certified by the Society of American Florists (SAF).

all the stakeholders' needs and desires. How does delivering an educational program benefit you, the program attendees, and other stakeholders?

HOW?

How should an MFD keep track of the program planning and implementation process? We find that email threads are best—and phone calls can be the worst—in tracking what has been communicated! Text messaging or using a messenger app is not recommended because stakeholders cannot gain enough detail. It is often best to direct any requests to email so that an informational log can be built. This lessens stakeholders' need to repeat details that have already been discussed.

Sponsors Should Cover All Expenses

Funding is important. We recommend that MFDs do not pay for demonstration or workshop expenses out of pocket. This is not sustainable and after one or two events, you will lose interest in such an expensive hobby. It is only fair that sponsoring organizations cover the cost of materials used in the presentation. After all, their attendees will be gaining helpful, quality information. When booking the program, use the phrase, "I request that your organization cover the cost of materials used in the presentation." They are almost always willing and able to provide you with payment for the expenses at the end of the program day. Your floral design program expenses can include:

- cut flowers
- cut ornamental foliage
- potted plants
- containers
- mechanics
- supplies such as tools, soil, gravel, candles, and drop cloth
- travel including fuel/mileage, hotel costs, and meals

WHERE?

Where will the program be held; what is the specific address? What time will the program start? What amount of time is needed to set up the event? What is the distance between your starting point and the event location? What time of year will the event be held? This may affect the types of plant materials that will be available from both the garden and commercial floral suppliers.

WHEN?

When can I set up the program before the participants' arrival? Once attendees arrive, distractions will take away from your planning and concentration. Pre-set all the materials, tidy your demonstration site, and be mentally ready to demonstrate floral design.

WHY?

Why are you doing this? It should be a question you answer immediately after getting a program request! First, understand



If the organization is paying for the materials used in the program, it is only right that the finished projects become their property at the end of the event. Communicate with the program organizers so that they can make plans for disposing of the designs. Often, the finished designs are used as door prizes. Some organizations opt

to sell raffle tickets for door prizes or sell the completed designs at the end of the demonstration to cover program expenses.

If you are accruing MFD volunteer hours, your expenses can be recovered from the sponsoring group. MFD volunteering is a non-profit activity.

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**MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™
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Publication 4070 (POD-03-25)

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Produced by Agricultural Communications.

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Extension Service of Mississippi State University, cooperating with U.S. Department of Agriculture. Published in furtherance of Acts of Congress, May 8 and June 30, 1914. ANGUS L. CATCHOT JR., Director

