

The Canadian Association for Professional Speakers (CAPS)  
Calgary Chapter

# Fast Track Program Guide 2012



Professional Training & Development  
for Keynote Speakers, Workshop Leaders  
Trainers and Facilitators Ready to *fast track*  
their Speaking Business

**CAPS**   
Experts who speak professionally

# Table of Contents

Introduction.....	2
What is the Fast Track Program?.....	3
How is the Fast Track Program structured? .....	4
1. Orientations.....	4
2. “Whirlwind Saturdays” .....	4
3. Work Group Meetings .....	5
4. Individual Self-Study .....	5
5. Speaker Showcase and Celebration.....	6
What does the Program Committee do? .....	7
Who is the Fast Track Program For?.....	8
How do I apply? .....	9
How are participants selected for the Fast Track Program? .....	9
If I Am Accepted Into This Program Am I Automatically a Member of CAPS? .....	10
What is the time commitment? .....	11
How much does it cost? .....	12
Non-refundable Application Fee .....	12
Program Fee Options.....	12
Early Bird Fee.....	12
Regular Fee.....	12
What’s Included with My Program Fees?.....	13
What is the Refund Policy?.....	13
What Kind of Receipt do I Get? .....	13
How do I get more information? .....	13

# Introduction

The Fast Track Program began in 2008 when Canadian Association of Professional Speakers (CAPS), Calgary chapter president, Natasha Halikowski encouraged Patricia Morgan to develop and coordinate a professional speaker school.

2012 marks the 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the program. It has grown and evolved a great deal since it first began. It has grown in reputation and demand. Today, other Canadian chapters of CAPS use elements of the Calgary program manual in their own professional development programs for speakers.

In the first few years of its existence, the program accepted all applicants. Today there are more applicants than there are spaces available in the program. Participants are carefully screened by the selection committee to ensure that Fast Track is a good fit for them.

This guide is intended to help you understand what the program is all about and determine if the Fast Track Program is right for you.

## What is the Fast Track Program?

The CAPS Calgary Fast Track Program assists individuals who are committed to building a business as a professional speaker, workshop leader, trainer or facilitator.

The program's primary focus is on the *business* of speaking rather than improving speaking skills. Elements of the program work together to provide a broad range of support, information and accountability to help *begin* to develop the key pieces required for a speaking business.

Only 24 participants are selected to take part in the Fast Track Program every year. It is an intensive, six-month, non-credit, adult education professional development program for aspiring or developing speaking professionals who want to learn what they need to do *fast track* their speaking business.

# How is the Fast Track Program structured?

The program is comprised of 5 components:

## I. Orientations

Two evening orientations in January – A program orientation and a work group orientation

Program Orientation: Wednesday January 11, 2012: 6:00-9:30 pm

Work Group Orientation: Wednesday January 18, 2012: 6:00-9:30 pm

## 2. “Whirlwind Saturdays”

There are six full-day sessions, one Saturday per month from January to June

08:30 - 09:00            Networking

09:00 – 12:30            CAPS Calgary Chapter meeting (included in your Fast Track Program Fee)

12:30 – 13:50            Lunch with your Work Group and a Professional Speaking Advisor (included in your Fast Track Program Fee)

14:00 – 17:00            Afternoon Learning Session

This is a rough idea of the topics that may be covered (subject to change)

**January 21:** Grounding: Mission, Topic, Niche, Credibility and Expertise

**February 18:** Business/Marketing Plan and Analysis

**March 17:** Marketing and Office Organizing

**April 21:** Advanced Presentation Skills (Speak 3-4 minutes in front of small group of peers and **CAPS** members) combined with Topic Development, Research and Structure

**May 12:** Speaker One Sheet/Website Basics

**June 16:** Sales

### 3. Work Group Meetings

Participants are placed into Work Groups at the beginning of the program. There are generally 4-5 people per group. These working groups meet on a regular basis to discuss their assignments, share information and challenge one another to be accountable.

The work groups also meet for lunch once a month with a Professional Speaking Advisor. Each group chooses a different advisor each month. At the end of your program, you will have had lunch with six different Professional Advisors who are experts in the speaking business.

At the beginning of your program, you are given a list of Professional Speaking Advisors whom you can invite. It is up to you to select which advisor you'd like to learn from and then make arrangements to invite that person. This program feature allows you to tailor your learning to your particular goals.

Professional Speaking Advisors volunteer their time and are professional speakers who are nationally if not internationally recognized experts in their field ranging from branding to sales to marketing.

When, where and how often you meet is determined in conjunction with your group members. Group members meet in person, via phone or via Skype. We encourage participants to meet in person as often as their schedules permit.

### 4. Individual Self-Study

Prior to every Whirlwind Saturday, you'll have one or more assignments to complete. It is up to you to complete the self-study assignments.

There are two types of assignments:

**Pre-session assignments** The purpose of these assignments is to help you prepare for the Whirlwind Saturday Learning Days. We have found that participants who complete the pre-session assignments make better progress through the program.

**Post-session assignments** These assignments are designed to help solidify your learning.

It is typical for the work groups to meet to go over and discuss their assignments to help each other stay on track and ensure the assignments are completed.

Accountability is an important program feature. Participants are expected to keep agreements with their work group, the Professional Speaking Advisors, the program coordinators and CAPS Calgary.

## 5. Speaker Showcase and Celebration

To close the program in June, participants are invited to a public Speaker Showcase evening.

Participants prepare a short presentation and receive valuable feedback and support from members of the professional speaking community. Family, friends and other supporters are welcome to attend this free event. We encourage you to invite others to join you at this closing celebration of the Fast Track Program. The 2012 Speaker Showcase and Celebration will be held Wednesday June 20, 2012 from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.

## What does the Program Committee do?

The Fast Track Program would not be possible without the Program Committee. This group of professional speakers volunteer their time to plan, administer, monitor and deliver the program. They provide structure, support and accountability for the participants. Many members of the Program Committee are former Fast Trackers themselves.

The Program Committee is led by the chair, but it is really a collaborative effort of many individuals, each of whom demonstrate a service focus and a desire to help aspiring and developing speakers succeed in the business. All members of the Program Committee volunteer their time and expertise.

In order to be a member of the Program Committee, individuals must be members of the Canadian Association of Professional Speakers (CAPS), Calgary in good standing.

CAPS Calgary is committed to helping its members and program participants to grow and develop as a result of participation.

## Who is the Fast Track Program For?

The Fast Track Program is for aspiring and developing professional speakers. It differs from other speaking programs in that it focuses on the *business* of speaking, rather than on helping you to improve your public speaking skills.

We recognize that our participants vary in their speaking ability, but we expect that all of our participants are already comfortable speaking in front of an audience. Here's a questionnaire to help you decide if the Fast Track program is right for you. (Be honest!)

	Yes	No / Unsure
1. I am comfortable speaking in front of an audience.		
2. I have taken previous training to learn the art of public speaking (e.g. Toastmasters or a course in public speaking.)		
3. I have a basic understanding of how to prepare and deliver a presentation.		
4. I speak on a regular basis as part of my job or volunteer work.		
5. I have (or am planning to have) a job where speaking, training, facilitating or teaching will help me earn a major portion of my income.		
6. I would eventually like to be part of the professional speaking community (e.g. become a CAPS member).		
7. I am ready, willing and able to work with others in a small group situation to advance my learning		
8. I am ready, willing and able to commit to one full Saturday per month from January to June 2012.		
9. I am ready, willing and able to commit to approximately 15 hours per month of self-study from January to June 2012.		
10. I am deeply interested in learning the business of professional speaking and how to make a living from speaking, training or facilitating.		

Did you answer “yes” to at least 8 questions? If so, then the Fast Track Program may be right for you.

## How do I apply?

Apply on line through the CAPS Calgary website: <http://www.capscalgary.ca/>

Applications usually open in July of each year, so watch the website for more details.

## How are participants selected for the Fast Track Program?

The Fast Track Program is a non-credit, non-formal professional development program for adults (18 years or older). On rare occasions, we accept individuals under 18, but this is at the discretion of the Program Committee.

Online applications are received and reviewed by the Selection Committee. Applications are carefully considered. Applicants may be contacted by a member of the Selection Committee for a telephone interview.

*There are only 24 places available in the 2012 program.*

Admission requirements include:

- **A basic comfort level with public speaking.** Those with previous training (e.g. Toastmasters) may have an advantage over those who have never taken part in speaker training.
- **A commitment to becoming a professional speaker, workshop leader or trainer.** Many people who complete the Fast Track Program go on to become members of CAPS and join a national and international community of professional speakers.
- **Focus.** This is a fast-paced program and in order to complete it, you will need time and energy to focus on it.
- **Commitment.** Participants are required to fully engage in all program aspects.
- **Payment of program fees.** Payment of your fees is required upon acceptance to the program.

Applicants who demonstrate a high likelihood of finishing the program and becoming a professional speaker, workshop leader or facilitator are the most likely to be selected for the program.

# If I Am Accepted Into This Program Am I Automatically a Member of CAPS?

No. The Canadian Association of Professional Speakers is a national, professional organization. In order to become a member of the national organization, you must qualify for membership.

CAPS National has two different categories of members:

**Professional Members:** These individuals have completed a minimum of 20 fee-paid engagements in the last 12 months, **OR** have earned a minimum of \$25,000 in speaking income within the last 12 months, **OR** have given at least 20 presentations to audiences of 12 or more as part of a salaried position within the 12 months prior to application.

**Candidate Members:** These individuals have earned income from a minimum of 10 fee-paid engagements in their lifetime. Candidate members can remain in this category for a maximum of 24 months before having to qualify for professional membership.

The Fast Track Program is run by the local Calgary chapter of CAPS. Participating in the Fast Track Program does not guarantee that you qualify for membership in the national organization.

However, many people who successfully complete the Fast Track Program go on to qualify for membership into the national CAPS organization and become an active member of the Calgary chapter.

## What is the time commitment?

This non-credit program involves some intensive learning. You should be prepared to commit approximately 180 hours over six months. Put another way that is 30 hours per month or 7.5 hours per week, from January to June. Here's what it looks like:

Program Component	# of sessions	# of hours per session	Total hours
January Orientations	2	3	6
Monthly CAPS Morning Meetings	6	3.5	21
Lunch meetings with Professional Speaking Advisors	6	1.5	9
Afternoon Learning Sessions	6	2.5	15
June Speaker Showcase	1	3	3
Work group meetings	6	4	24
Individual self-study (3.25 hours per week for 6 months)			90
Preparation for Speaker Showcase			12
<b>Total hours</b>			<b>180</b>

# How much does it cost?

## Non-refundable Application Fee

All applicants (who are not members of CAPS) are required to pay the \$59.00 CAD application fee. This non-refundable fee must accompany your online program application. Paying this fee *does not* guarantee acceptance into the program. However, only applications that are accompanied by the application fee will be considered.

## Program Fee Options

If your application is approved by the Selection Committee, please pay by the deadlines described below.

### I. Early Bird Fee

Pay early and save! The Early Bird rate ends **October 10, 2011 at 11:59 p.m.**

Category	Program Fee – Early Bird
CAPS Members	\$699
Non-Members	\$869
Full-Time Students	\$469

### II. Regular Fee

If you do not pay the Program Fee by the Early Bird date, to secure your seat in the Program, you must pay a non-refundable \$50 deposit by **October 10, 2011 at 11:59 p.m.** plus the balance of the full Regular Fee by **December 1, 2011 at 11:59 p.m.**

Category	Non-refundable Fee Deposit (Due by October 10 <sup>th</sup> , 11:59 p.m.)	Fee Balance - Regular Rate (Due by Dec 1 <sup>st</sup> , 11:59 p.m.)	Total
CAPS Members	\$50	\$749	\$799
Non-Members	\$50	\$919	\$969
Full-Time Students	\$50	\$449	\$499

## What's Included in My Program Fees?

Program fees include:

- Two evening Orientation sessions
- Six CAPS Saturday morning meetings (The regular \$55 guest fee is waived for Fast Trackers.)
- Six afternoon learning sessions
- Six lunches with Professional Speaking Advisors
- An electronic copy of the Fast Track Program Manual
- Speaker Showcase and Celebration
- Informed feedback, support, guidance and encouragement

## What is the Refund Policy?

A 50% refund of your paid Program Fees (exempt \$59 application fee and/or \$50 program deposit fee) will be paid, providing you withdraw before December 15, 2011. There are no refunds after this date.

## What Kind of Receipt do I Get?

You will receive a Calgary CAPS receipt for each payment you make. Your program fees may count as a business expense.

As this is a non-credit, non-formal education program, we do not issue tax receipts. Talk to your accountant for more details as may apply to your situation.

## How do I get more information?

Got questions? We are here to help! Contact the 2011 Fast Track Program Coordinator:

I.J. (Ida-Jean) McIntyre

[capsfasttrack@gmail.com](mailto:capsfasttrack@gmail.com)

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