On behalf of the California District Attorneys Association, thank you for agreeing to serve as an instructor. Your contribution of expertise, effort, and time are deeply appreciated by prosecutors, allied law enforcement professionals, and the Association.

Seminars are valuable because they provide opportunities for experienced, carefully chosen presenters to communicate their skills and experience to others. We strive to make each of our programs educationally sound by focusing on the participants’ needs and designing each training to produce maximum understanding and retention.

You will find that careful and complete preparation is well worth your effort. Your audience will be attentive, appreciative, and anxious to hear you again, and the intellectual labor of conscientious preparation will always enhance your own knowledge of the subject. Therefore, both for you and for your audience, we offer the following suggestions, culled from many sources.
I. **General Guidelines**

A. If you plan to fly to a seminar location, make your travel arrangements **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. Please** do not wait until a few days before you are scheduled to teach to make arrangements. This costs CDAA money, which could be better spent training more people. The general rule with most airlines is that the less expensive flights require a 14-day advance booking.

B. Please make every effort to have your FINAL handout materials to the CDAA Training Consultant handling the seminar on or before the manual deadline.

C. Please let the Training Consultant know what audio/visual equipment you will need for your presentation WELL before the seminar by submitting the audio/visual request form.

D. If you feel as though you cannot cover your topic within the allotted amount of time, tell the Training Consultant **AS SOON AS YOU ARE ASKED TO TEACH.**

E. Please apprise the Training Consultant **AS SOON AS YOU KNOW** if you need to cancel your speaking engagement.

F. If you need to cancel, please **DO NOT** confirm a substitute speaker before discussing it with the Training Consultant.

G. Please inform the Training Consultant **AS SOON AS YOU KNOW** if you will/will not need a room at the hotel at which the seminar is taking place. CDAA will be charged a “no-show fee” if the room is not cancelled.

H. If you are using presentation software such as PowerPoint or Prezi, please be familiar with the software.

I. Expect to wear a cordless, clip-on microphone during your presentation.

J. **DO NOT** under any circumstances make disparaging comments about other instructors at the seminar.
K. DO NOT comment on your time allotment or perceived lack of time for your presentation. If a judge gave you only an hour to do your closing argument, you wouldn’t waste it talking about how little time you have.

II. Understand Your Assignment

Be certain that you fully understand your lecture assignment. Do not hesitate to question the Training Consultant about the program’s scope and purpose, who the other speakers are, and how your lecture fits into the overall program. Also, you are encouraged to discuss your topic with the seminar Technical Advisor and other faculty members. This will eliminate repetition with other lectures or serious omissions in seminar coverage. This is especially crucial if you are assigned to participate in a panel discussion. Always contact your fellow panelists and coordinate your presentation.

III. Prepare Course Materials

As a CDAA Instructor, you are required to provide course materials.

A. According to the California State Bar Rules, substantive written materials must accompany a lecture in order for participants to receive California MCLE credit for the presentation.

B. These materials can be in the form of your course outline, a printed version of your PowerPoint Presentation, or other relevant material.

C. You are solely responsible for obtaining copyright and duplication authority for materials of any type not authored by you. CDAA will assume that you have permission to use any materials you submit, and that CDAA has permission to reproduce them. This includes any photos, clipart, video and/or audio clips you use in your presentation.

D. DO NOT use copyrighted images (i.e. pictures pulled off the internet that don’t belong to you) in your presentation/manual materials.

E. Again, PLEASE submit your handout materials on or before the deadline! (And tell Training Consultant the order in which to add them to the seminar manual.)
F. Your lecture should support your handout materials. Participants rely on seminar handout materials days, months, even years after they have seen your presentation. Make sure your handout materials and lecture complement each other.

IV. Think About Your Audience

A. You will be talking to an experienced and mature audience. Although the composition of audiences varies from seminar to seminar, there are some common characteristics which you should remember when preparing and presenting your lecture.

B. Seminar attendees want the instructors to be interesting and entertaining, but their primary desire is for practical suggestions. They become impatient and dissatisfied with speakers who rely on too many jokes, personal anecdotes or lengthy descriptions of past triumphs.

C. Unlike school students who view their education as preparation for the future, seminar participants attend in response to the needs and demands of their current employment. Their time perspective is one of immediate application. Therefore, you should emphasize specific procedural steps or problem areas rather than spending a great deal of time on a broad overview.

D. Make your presentation as “nuts-and-bolts” as possible. Try to think of information or tips you would have found helpful the first time you encountered a particular problem or situation.

E. As an example of lecture content:

1) Go directly to your subject. You are engaged in a serious educational effort, not an after-dinner speech. Do not start with a long history of the topic unless it is absolutely necessary. Audiences frequently find it helpful, however, to have a two-minute introductory statement explaining the organization of your talk.

2) Discuss typical problems. Avoid unique or academic situations.
3) Describe techniques to be used, methods of handling problems, and pitfalls to avoid.

4) Cover the important topics. A common temptation is to try to be encyclopedic. It is more effective to present significant ideas thoroughly than it is to skim. Say more about few subjects rather than saying a little about many subjects.

V. Utilize effective delivery techniques

A. Your delivery should be carefully planned and practiced.

B. Do not read your lecture.

C. Speak loudly enough for all to hear. Public address systems vary. Please treat each microphone as a new challenge and ask your audience if you can be heard clearly.

D. Budget your time. You have been allotted a specific amount of time. Plan to use all of it, but do not exceed your limit. Edit your notes or outline to what you can present in your allotted time frame.

E. Refer the audience to other helpful sources of related information for future reference.

F. End with a bang – not a yawn. Your final words should be as effective as your opening statement. A meaningless closing such as, “Well, I guess that’s all I have to say,” can ruin a good presentation. Have a strong conclusion. It leaves a lasting impression.

VI. Use visual aids whenever possible

A. Studies have shown that even attentive audiences retain very little of what they see in a presentation. They retain even less of what they merely hear. However, the retention rate for what they see and hear can be phenomenal. Use visual aids for emphasis and lasting effect of your presentation. (Most CDAA instructors use PowerPoint.)
B. Regardless of your subject, visual aids can help you make your main points unforgottably clear and the body of your presentation varied and interesting. Something as simple as a brief quote, a diagram, or a form can add immeasurably to the effectiveness of your presentation.

VII. Remember the following when using presentation equipment

A. Verify that the presentation files can be run on the equipment available at the seminar. In most cases, the Training Consultant will bring a PC laptop or tablet to run presentations. Be sure send your presentation to the Training Consultant ahead of time so that he/she can verify that it runs on the CDAA equipment.

B. If you wish to use your own laptop, ensure that the laptop you are using is compatible with the projector provided on-site, and that you bring any non-standard connections you may need. When in doubt, ask the Training Consultant which connections are available. Instructors are advised to test out the laptop with the projector before registration, during lunch, or at the end of the day (especially if you plan on playing any audio and/or video clips.)

C. Typically, there will NOT be internet access available in the meeting room. Let the Training Consultant know well in advance if you need internet access during your presentation.

D. BRING A BACKUP OF YOUR PRESENTATION FILES ON A FLASH DRIVE!

E. Limit the information on each slide to the key points. DO NOT try to cram too many points on a single slide.

F. Select colors that are easy on the eye and easy to read. Blue background with yellow or white lettering is best.

G. Allow the Training Consultant to make “Handouts” of your presentation for the audience. Not everyone in the room always has a clear view of the screen. Be sure to give the Training Consultant your presentation before the deadline!

H. Again, have a backup of your presentation files!
VIII. Avoid common “DON'Ts”

A. DO NOT USE PROFANITY, TELL OFF-COLOR STORIES OR TELL STORIES IN WHICH CERTAIN RACIAL, ETHNIC, SEXUAL, POLITICAL, OR RELIGIOUS GROUPS ARE DEROGATED. Never underestimate the unintended damage that can be done to your presentation by comments or remarks that are misunderstood or misinterpreted by your audience. It is better to omit a questionable remark than to risk destroying the credibility of your presentation.

B. DO NOT READ YOUR PRESENTATION. Nothing is more tedious and boring.

C. NEVER SAY, “I DON'T KNOW WHY I'M HERE.” Once you say this, the audience has tuned you out. Even if you are a last-minute substitute, try to make it an educational experience for all involved.

D. NEVER SAY, “I DON'T HAVE ENOUGH TIME TO COVER THIS SUBJECT.” This only frustrates your audience and takes up precious time that could be spent on the topic at hand. Do your best to cover the most important issues in the time allotted.

E. NEVER GO OVER YOUR ALLOTED TIME. This puts the entire seminar behind schedule and is discourteous to the attendees and your fellow presenters.

F. DO NOT SELL SHORT THE VALUE OF YOUR PRESENTATION OR THE COURSE MATERIAL. The audience relies upon the instructor for the integrity of the lecture and the course materials. Negativism detracts from the value of your lecture. Never begin by saying “Everything that I say will be in the notebook.” This will surely kill the audience’s interest in your lecture.

G. DO NOT HIGHLIGHT OMISSIONS FROM THE COURSE MATERIALS. Focus on adding to the materials rather than detracting from them by criticizing omissions.
H. **DO NOT USE YOUR LECTURE TIME AS A FORUM TO BOAST OF PAST ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN THE COURTROOM.** Brief war stories might be useful, but don’t overdo it.

I. **DO NOT TALK DOWN TO THE AUDIENCE.** They are your colleagues first, students second. If your lecture is to benefit others, professional respect must be reciprocated.

J. **DO NOT PUT DOWN OTHER AGENCIES OR PROSECUTORS’ OFFICES.** If you have found it difficult to work with another agency/office, tactfully offer the audience ways in which to deal with the agency more effectively.

K. **DO NOT PUT DOWN OTHER PROFESSIONS.** You may not think the world of a particular profession, but belittling any profession serves no constructive or educational purpose. (This includes judges and defense attorneys.)

L. **DO NOT SUGGEST OR EVEN HINT ABOUT USING UNETHICAL PRACTICES/METHODS.** Period!

**IX. Conclusion**

You can never over-prepare! Every hour you invest in organizing what you want to present and perfecting your skill in presenting it will reap abundant returns from your audience. We have found that, while our audiences are knowledgeable and critical, they are also extremely appreciative of well-prepared and carefully planned lectures.

*We hope that you will find your speaking experience interesting and enjoyable!*
UNFAVORABLE COMMENTS BY ATTENDEES

Speaker Technique

Speaker X talked too fast – Presentation scattered.

Speaker X needs to learn not to talk to the screen; talk to the audience.

Speaker X simply repeated everything that was in the handout. Lecture should supplement the handouts.

Speaker X simply read the outline. I can read. Learning does not have to be boring!

Speaker X tends to talk down to his students. He treated the class like children at times.

Next time get a larger room to accommodate Speaker X’s ego!

Content

The morning speakers were unprepared and unfocused. I called my boss and asked if I could go back to work, but he wouldn’t let me.

Speaker X did not seem adequately prepared and appeared to be shooting from the hip.

Speaker X was citing incorrect names for cases.

Presentation was disjointed and difficult to follow.

Speaker X needed to be more specific and concrete. Need to spend more time on things we can use in trial.

Written Materials

Speaker X needed a more thorough outline with more information. Hard to follow with so much information not in the outline.
Please have speakers put cases they refer to in prepared materials or in separate printed handouts (with full case names and citations). Everyone is always asking the person next to them if they got the cite and missing what is being said.

I wish speaker X had filled the PowerPoint with the substance of what he discussed.

POSITIVE COMMENTS BY ATTENDEES

Speaker Technique

The instructors were excellent. They took what could have been a boring topic and kept our attention. It was obvious this is a subject they truly wanted us to learn about and wanted to give us the knowledge to carry out the job.

You can tell that they really enjoyed teaching. They were sincere, enthusiastic, experienced; their enthusiasm was contagious.

Speaker X had excellent voice projection and a wonderful rapport with the audience. I could listen to him speak for hours regardless of the topic!

I found the energy of the instructors refreshing and conducive to learning.

Content

Speakers X and Y were giving us concrete ideas on how their minds work and what questions to ask. They painted an image in the audience’s mind so we could see what they were talking about.

Enjoyed the speakers who used examples to clarify their points.

The instructors who were most effective came right to the point with illustrations of instances.

A lot of time and effort went into Speaker X’s presentation. It was greatly appreciated.
Written Materials

The written materials were well-developed and helpful.

The interplay and sharing of ideas prompted by material was very beneficial.

Written material provided was practical and user friendly.

I love that Speaker X provided us with more than just her PowerPoint. The flow charts are invaluable!