

A BITESIZE BIO SPEAKER PLAYBOOK

What makes a great webinar

Seven things our most successful speakers do and a real case study to prove it works.

THE HEADLINE FINDING

Placement gets eyeballs. What you do as a speaker is what converts them into attendees.

This is a short, practical guide for Bitesize Bio webinar speakers. It's built from what we've seen work — both across our own webinar program and in the wider research-marketing world. We've kept it tight on purpose as the things that move the needle aren't complicated!

We'll walk through seven principles, then show you exactly how they played out in a recent high-performing webinar so you can see the numbers behind the advice.

The seven things that make webinars fly

1. Start from a problem your audience actually has

The most common mistake we see is starting from a topic the speaker (or the sponsor) wants to talk about, rather than a problem the audience is genuinely trying to solve.

Researchers won't give up an hour of their day for a sales pitch or a generic overview. They'll give up an hour for something that helps them get unstuck on a problem they're already working on. Before you finalize your title and abstract, ask yourself: what is the single thing a researcher in my audience is struggling with right now, and how does this session help them?

If the answer to “why would someone attend?” is “because the topic is important,” keep going until you can finish the sentence: “Attend this if you're trying to ____.”

2. Lead with “How to” — and make the outcome obvious

The clearest pattern we see in high-performing titles is action-oriented framing. “How to write a scientific review.” “How to design a flow panel.” “How to choose between qPCR and ddPCR.” It sounds almost too simple, but it works because it tells the reader exactly what they'll be able to do after attending.

Resist the urge to make your title clever, comprehensive, or impressive-sounding. A title that signals a clear takeaway will outperform one that signals expertise every time. Save the nuance for the session itself.

Try this:

- Start your title with “How to,” “A practical guide to,” or “Choosing between X and Y.”
- Keep it under 12 words
- Use the language your audience uses with colleagues, not the language you'd use in a paper

3. Promise three concrete takeaways

Once your title is clear, the description does the next layer of work. The most effective format is three specific, scannable takeaways rather than vague themes.

Three is the magic number because it's enough to feel substantial but not so many that you forget. It also gives you a structure to deliver against: if you can name the three things attendees will leave with, you've already half-planned the session.

VAGUE VS. CONCRETE

Vague: “Attendees will learn about scientific writing.” Concrete: “Attendees will learn a practical system for taking notes and choosing subtopics, how to design figures that guide the reader, and how to handle reviewer requests for out-of-scope content.”

4. Share it with your own network (even just once!)

This is the single biggest lever you control as a speaker. Our highest-performing webinars almost always have one thing in common: the speaker promoted the session to their own audience. Usually, that's a single LinkedIn post. Sometimes, an email to colleagues or collaborators. That's it!

It works because your network is full of researchers who already know your work, already trust your judgment, and are far more likely to attend and engage than a stranger. The lift in conversion rate from speaker-led promotion is consistently the largest single factor we can isolate. We've put together some [Canva assets](#) to make this as quick as possible. It really doesn't need to be much.

What “sharing” looks like in practice:

- One LinkedIn post using the [Canva templates](#) we provide
- One email to your lab, department, or a few collaborators
- A mention in a Slack channel or community you're already part of

5. Write copy that's about them, not you

When you write your social post or email, watch the first sentence. If it starts with “I’m,” “We’re,” or “I’d like to invite you,” rewrite it. Lead with the benefit to the reader, e.g., the problem the session solves, the decision it helps them make, the time it saves them.

“I’m running a webinar on figure design next Tuesday” is forgettable. On the other hand, “If you’ve ever stared at a complex dataset and wondered how to turn it into a figure people will actually understand, my webinar might help” gets more conversions.

6. Don't be afraid to mention it more than once

Speakers often worry about being annoying. The reality is the opposite problem: most people who would happily attend your session never see the message. Email open rates sit around 20–30%, social posts disappear within hours, and people are busy.

Our data shows something counterintuitive: the people most likely to actually attend a webinar are the ones who sign up the same day it runs. Same-day signups attend at a much higher rate than people who signed up two weeks in advance. That means continuing to mention your session right up to the day of broadcast is genuinely effective and not pushy.

COUNTERINTUITIVE BUT TRUE

Same-day signups attend at the highest rate. Keep mentioning your session right up to the broadcast — it's not annoying, it's how people see it.

7. Set the energy in the first minute

The first sixty seconds of your webinar shape how the rest of it feels. You don't have to be a performer; most of the best speakers aren't. But you do need to treat the opening as part of the session, not the warm-up. Walk in knowing the first three sentences you'll say. Acknowledge the audience. Name the problem you're about to help them solve.

CASE STUDY

How Gorana's webinar outperformed

April 2026 — “How to Write a Scientific Review: Storytelling & Design,” with Gorana Jendrisek, Postdoctoral researcher at the European Institute of Oncology.

Gorana's session is a useful case study because we can isolate what she did differently. Her webinar ran in the same promotional slot as a comparison webinar from the same period. Both received Position 1 (P1) and Mid-The-Email (MTE) placements in our newsletter, so the Bitesize Bio-driven marketing reach was effectively identical.

Everything else — the title, the description, the speaker's own promotion, and the framing of the session — was within her control. Here's how the numbers compared:

Metric	Gorana's webinar	Comparison webinar	Uplift
Page views	391	238	1.6×
Conversion rate	16.4%	6.3%	2.6×
Registrants	64	15	4.3×
Attendance rate	34.4%	20.0%	1.7×
Attendees	22	3	7.3×

What Gorana did differently

Four things stand out, and they map directly onto the principles in this playbook.

She promoted it herself. Gorana posted on LinkedIn to her own network, tagging Bitesize Bio. The post got over 35 reactions and 7 reposts before the event. This is almost certainly the largest single driver of her 2.6× higher conversion rate. Her audience was warm, qualified, and primed to attend.

Her title started with “How to...” Action-oriented framing told researchers exactly what they'd be able to do afterward. No metaphors, no cleverness — just a clear promise.

She promised three concrete takeaways. A structured storytelling outline, visual design strategies for figures, and a method for handling out-of-scope reviewer requests. Specific enough that researchers knew exactly what they'd leave with.

She kept it educational, not commercial. The session centered on the researcher's problem (i.e., writing a review article) not on a product or service. That kept trust high, which shows up in both attendance rates and signups.

THE TAKEAWAY

Same placement, same audience, same marketing spend. The variables Gorana controlled — title, takeaways, her own promotion, and the educational angle — drove a 4.3× lift in registrants and a 7.3× lift in attendees.

Your pre-webinar checklist

If you do nothing else, do these. Each one is worth doing on its own — together they compound.

Two weeks before

- Title starts with “How to,” “A practical guide to,” or similar action framing
- Description names three concrete takeaways
- Description leads with the problem you're solving, not your credentials

One week before

- One LinkedIn post drafted using the Canva templates on your landing page
- One email drafted for your lab, department, or collaborators
- First three sentences of your opening rehearsed

The week of

- Post on LinkedIn (or wherever your audience is)
- Send the email
- Mention it again the day before. Same-day signups attend the most

The day of

- One last mention on social or in any community you're active in
- Open the session with energy and a clear statement of what's coming

WHO DOES WHAT

We handle the landing page, newsletter promotion, registrations, and on-demand follow-up. You handle the four things only you can: a clear title, three concrete takeaways, one share with your network, and a strong opening. Thank you for being part of the mentor community — sessions like Gorana's are why this program works.