

Meeting Planner's Kit

The Meeting Planner's Kit is designed to provide much of the information you may need in one place. It is not designed to *replace* phone calls, emails and other conversations, but to make those conversations more informed and useful to both of us. Here is what you'll find here:

Pre-event questionnaire

Frequently Asked Questions

Sample Client List

Sample Quotes (What people say about...)

Press and Travel Arrangements

A/V Requirements and Set-up

Biographies (full and brief)

Introduction (to introduce Chris at your event)

Printer friendly pdfs are also available for...

- ❖ **Keynote descriptions** – www.strengthsinfocus.com/invite/keynotes
- ❖ **Seminar descriptions** – www.strengthsinfocus.com/invite/seminars
- ❖ **Hosting Program** – www.strengthsinfocus.com/invite/hosting_program

Pre-event Questionnaire – page 2 of 2

6. **Does your organization have a web site where Chris can learn more about you?** (If not, please forward some limited materials for this purpose.)

7. **Describe what will be going on immediately before and after Chris' presentation.**

8. **Tell us about the participants/audience members.**

9. **How many participants/audience members do you expect to attend?**

10. **What are your specific objectives for the event and/or for Chris' presentation?**

11. **What else would be helpful for Chris to know? (e.g. major events in the last year, current big issues, previous speakers, sensitive issues, etc.)**

Thank you!

Frequently Asked Questions

Below are the most commonly asked questions about contracting with Chris - all those "money" kinds of questions that are so important but we'd often like to know without asking. It's OK to call; we just know that sometimes you want the basics now (and honestly, this page will stimulate a whole new set of questions for our conversation). Talk to you soon!

1. **What if I don't know what I want yet and just want to talk about the possibilities?**

By all means, email or call me (207 767 2024). There are no rules for the right way to do it.

2. **What will it cost to bring you to our event or sponsor a training?**

There are many factors that can impact this answer, so the only reliable number is the one we agree to after we have discussed the specifics. That said, my fee is based on the number of days away from home and level of preparation required.

- **Rule #1:** Make no assumptions. There are many factors - both personal and professional - that can influence your actual cost.
- **Rule #2:** Ask. Be fearless. Invite serendipity. Chris may have ideas about how the impossible can be made possible. And sometimes, just asking opens doors you didn't even know were there to be opened.

3. **Who pays for expenses and what expenses should we expect?**

There are two ways to contract for expenses: 1) You may pay directly for flight, lodging, car rental, meals, etc. or 2) We can contract for a fee that includes all these expenses and I will take care of these details. I prefer not to engage in expense reimbursement (I dislike extra paperwork as much as you do!), but will make exceptions when your financial systems require it. Standard expenses include flight or other travel reservations, lodging, car rental, cab or shuttle, and meals.

4. **Can all this just be included in your fee?**

Yes, I am happy to provide a fee that includes all anticipated expenses at my cost.

5. **Will you provide us with an invoice?**

Yes, I will send you an invoice as soon as we have agreed to everything.

FAQs – page 2 of 2

6. What if we need a W9?

Just let me know and I will include a signed W9 with the invoice.

7. Do you have a DUNS number and cage code for government contracts?

Yes

8. Do you require a contract?

Generally, the invoice and/or a simple letter of agreement will suffice. In the case of more complex arrangements, a contract may be needed.

9. Can we use our contract?

Yes, you are welcome to send me a contract that reflects the fees and services to which we have agreed.

10. Do you require a deposit?

I request a 20% non-refundable deposit to hold your date. Once that deposit is paid, I will not accept other engagements for those dates. The deposit is designed to cover my time investment prior to the event, so is generally non-refundable. If you wish to pay the deposit via credit card, I will send you a link to complete payment through our secure online system.

11. What is your cancellation policy?

Booking a date is a bit like booking an hour with a therapist: that time is reserved for you regardless of whether you use it. Often, by the time an engagement arrives I have turned down other requests for that same date, so if the original event is cancelled, that income is lost, along with the opportunity to replace it. Consistent with these realities, the cancellation policy is as follows: 1) If I have actual out-of-pocket expenses prior to your event (non-refundable tickets, etc.), those must be reimbursed. 2) Under some circumstances, I am able and willing – at my discretion - to waive all but the deposit, up to a few weeks prior to the scheduled event.

However, if I have turned down another engagement for the same date and the cancellation comes so late that I cannot rectify that situation, then full payment is due on the date agreed. 3) In such a case, I will maintain for you a credit equal to the full value of the invoice (including deposit) until such time as you are able to utilize my services. As well, I will be as flexible as possible with regard to how you utilize this credit. For example, I will provide the same or comparable services at a future date and in a similar location. 4) The full value of the credit may also be used for any combination of materials (books, CDs, etc.) and/or individual registrations



for courses or trainings sponsored by SIF and/or consultation services. The bottom line is that I will work with you to create the best possible outcome for your organization and assure that you receive full value for the fee you will pay me on the date of the original event.

12. When do you expect payment?

Generally, a check should be ready at the end of the speaking engagement. Exception is made when financial systems do not allow checks to be cut until services are rendered. In this case, payment is expected within 14 days. Please discuss exceptions with me at the time the event is booked.

13. What forms of payment do you accept?

Check, purchase order or credit card. If you wish to pay via credit card, you may provide the information by phone or I will send you a link to complete payment through our secure online system.

14. What is the business status of SIF?

SIF is a sole proprietorship.

15. Who should checks be made payable to?

Strengths in Focus, 462 Preble Street, South Portland, ME 04106.

16. What is this "Hosting Program" I have heard about?

This is a special program whereby you may be able to host a training with minimal cost to you, allowing each attendee to pay their own way and earning free registrations for your own staff. You can learn more about this program online.



Sample client list

Casey Family Programs

Fourth and Fifth Annual It's My Life Conference
Seattle, WA Atlanta, GA

Maine School Counselors Association

2006 Annual Conference - Keynote
Rockland, Maine

Treu-Mart Youth Development Fellowship Program

Leadership Team Training
Cleveland, Ohio

Los Angeles Consolidated School District - South LA Area New HS #1

Resiliency Training for staff of innovative new magnet school
Los Angeles, California

Cornell University *ACT! for Youth* program

Full-day seminars
Rochester, NY Albany, NY

University of California - Davis

Full day seminar
Yreka, CA

Maine Foster Family Based Treatment Association

2006 Annual Conference – “A Day with Chris Trout”
Bangor, Maine

Camp Resilience

5-day camp for youth in foster care and foster parents – Team Leader
Far Horizons, Sequoia National Forest, California

7th Annual Youth Justice Committee Conference

Calgary, Alberta Canada

SUNY Albany Professional Development Program

Full-day Seminars
Syracuse, NY Albany, NY

Sample quotes: What people say...

Regarding Chris' Book, Reflecting Strengths

“What a gift! From the first words ("bring it on!") to the last ("and we thrive"), Chris speaks with an authenticity and insight that can only come from having walked the talk. I wish every adult who parents, cares for and supports young people - and everyone who has known adversity - could experience the inspiration, the insights, and the sense of hope that fills this book. Inspired!”

--Misty Stenslie, Foster Care Alumni of America

Regarding Chris' audio CD, Reflecting Strengths

“I'm listening to Reflecting Strengths in my office right now. It's clear to me that EVERY juvenile probation officer in the world needs to hear this CD. I plan to incorporate it into my new employee orientation.”

--Steve Nesky, Treatment Coordinator,
Coconino County Juvenile Court, Flagstaff, Arizona

Regarding Chris as speaker

“Your message was so positive and uplifting that I think many more parents and professionals need to hear how they can change their way of thinking and ENJOY the challenges that Young People present.”

--Angie Arndt, parent, educator and community activist

“Chris is an engaging presenter whose enthusiasm, vast experience and wealth of meaningful stories combine beautifully together to create an enhanced learning experience. Thank you! “

--Tracey Stark, Youth Worker, Ontario, CA



Sample comments about Chris Trout – page 2 of 2

“Chris presented a perfect mix of focus inward and focus outward. I wish all of us in human services had the motivation and the tools to practice what we've learned here - we'd have much more efficient and effective systems and you and families with more hope love and success.”

--Misty Stenslie, Foster Care Alumni of America

“Let me just say that my staff has never been so amazed and involved in a training before. They still are asking when you can com back.

-- Linda McKinney, Director, Girl's Transitional Program -
Youth Alternatives, Portland, ME

“We need to get you on Oprah!

--enthusiastic workshop participant

A/V requirements and set-up

Below are Chris' routine A/V needs and guidelines for room set-up. Please discuss your facility and circumstances with Chris. Please make any request for modifications as early as possible. We will accommodate your circumstances when possible. Thank you.

Microphone

Except in the case of audiences under 40 people, please provide a *wireless* lavalier (lapel) microphone. If only a wired lavalier microphone is available, please assure sufficient cable length to allow Chris to move freely around the presentation area and into the front section of the audience. Please make sure that a back up microphone and replacement batteries are available at all times.

On occasions when a Q&A session is desirable following the keynote in large venues, please provide at least two wireless handheld microphones and two staff to go to audience members who wish to speak.

Projection and Sound

Please provide an LCD Projector with cable to connect it to Chris' IMB/Lenovo ThinkPad T60 laptop. In most cases, Chris will use his own remote control, which requires a direct line of sight to the laptop. Please have a Projector-based remote control available for backup.

Sound: Sound from Chris' laptop must be tied into the house sound system or other primary amplification.

If you prefer that Chris to utilize your computer, please assure that its software is compatible with Microsoft Office PowerPoint 2003, SP3 and indicate whether you prefer Chris copy the presentation to CD or USB plug. Sound must be tied into the primary amplification system.

A/V requirements and Room Set-up – page 2 of 2

Important: The projector should be bright enough (sufficient lumens) to be viewed easily with the lights on in the room and, when possible, with the window shades open. Screen/image size should be large enough to be read from any part of the room.

Special Note: The 30-60 minutes prior to an event is often an important time for meeting hosts and guests, getting a "lay of the land" and dealing with any last minute emergencies. Whenever possible, someone with a solid knowledge of all equipment and systems should be available to set-up and assure that all technology is working as planned. Thank you.

Room set-up & other needs

Please discuss your venue and room set-up with Chris. When possible, Chris prefers to be close to the audience and able to move through the front section of audience members.

Please provide two bottled waters or a pitcher of water and glass with ice. For longer presentations, please assure that water is always available.

Generally, Chris does not use a podium. If a podium exists, it may be pushed to the side and Chris will use it to organize his water, props and materials. Otherwise, please provide a small table for Chris to organize his water, props and materials. If you prefer that Chris speak from the podium, please let him know at time of booking.



Press and Travel arrangements

Press Interviews

When time permits, Chris is pleased to participate in pre or post event interviews with local or national press of all types. Please discuss your ideas with Chris prior to travel arrangements being made.

SIF is happy to provide materials and to cooperate with you in the preparation of press releases for your event. Strengths in Focus reserves the right to contact press or distribute press releases regarding Chris' participation in your event. You will have the opportunity to review press releases prior to distribution and to participate in interview and background stories, when appropriate.

Lodging

If you are making lodging arrangements for Chris, please gain his approval of the facility prior to making final reservations. Chris requests a non-smoking room, away from elevators, kitchens, vending machines, or machine rooms. Hotels are more than happy to honor such requests. If SIF is making lodging arrangements, please provide a list of recommended hotels or bed & breakfasts.

Transportation

Coordination and payment of flight/travel reservations will be negotiated during our initial conversations. Chris will either make his own reservations or will provide you with very specific information to make these reservations directly. In this case, you are responsible for assuring that all arrangements are accurate and approved by Chris prior to making final reservations. Transportation to and from the airport/event venue may be provided by the host or via hotel shuttle or taxi/hired car.

Biographies

Biography – Full

Chris Trout, author of Reflecting Strengths: Transformative Lessons from Resilient Youth, knows well the practical challenges of maintaining a strengths-focus in the face of day-to-day realities with youth, adults, organizations and systems. Over the course of 30 years, he has explored these ideas as an educator, a music therapist, a family mediator, a prevention specialist, an executive director and as a parent. Perhaps this is why readers and audiences so often comment that Chris “put into words what I knew to be true. He has clearly 'walked the talk'.”

Chris' experiences have ranged from front-line therapeutic work in institutions and special needs schools to community-based prevention and outreach. One of Chris' great joys has been the conception, creation and execution of many new strengths-focused programs in diverse settings. These have been wonderful opportunities to “experiment,” to find out what these ideas look like in challenging settings and with challenging people. As a prevention educator, Chris trained hundreds of youth peer listeners, parents and professionals each year and co-founded a nationally recognized model for the use of story-telling in prevention. As the founding Director of the Mission Possible Teen Center in Westbrook, Maine, Mr. Trout brought the concept of "growing strengths in the midst of chaos" to life through the creation of a youth designed teen center in one of the most economically and socially challenged neighborhoods in Southern Maine. And his creation of the Youth Resiliency Project in Portland, Maine provided the opportunity to explore what "strengths-focused" program design looks like across highly diverse populations, ranging from neighborhood-based afterschool programs for immigrant and refugee youth, to peer mentoring in both urban and rural schools. In 2004, Chris left 27 years in education and social services to create Strengths in Focus, with a mission to share these transformative ideas internationally through speaking, writing, teaching and mentoring.

Chris has inspired thousands of youth and adults from coast to coast and through his keynotes and seminars, and authors both the Strengths Ezine and Strengths Blog, with a worldwide readership that includes transformative people like you in places like New Zealand, South Africa, Tajikistan, the UK, Mexico, Canada and, of course, the US.

In all he does, Chris speaks from a solid foundation of in-the-trenches experience informed by research and colored by humor and personal insight. The result is an authenticity and clarity that makes the message “where we focus, grows” come alive as both personal and practical.



Biographies – page 2 of 2

Biography – Brief

Chris Trout's insights are grounded in a rich, thirty-year hands-on exploration of the transformative power of strengths - in special education, family mediation, youth development and, most profoundly, parenting. Now a highly acclaimed speaker and author, Chris has inspired thousands of youth and adults from coast to coast and his weekly Strengths Ezine and Strengths Blog reach thousands of readers in more than a dozen countries around the world.

Introduction

Below are a couple of introductions you may use to introduce Chris at your event. While you are welcome to tailor this introduction to your audience, please gain Chris' approval any modifications.

Introduction – brief (and preferred)

This one is about 60 seconds and is less formal and "informational."

We are pleased to welcome Chris Trout, president of Strengths in Focus. While Chris is widely known as an inspiring speaker, many first come to know him through his writing. In addition to the Strengths Ezine, an online publication with thousands of readers in more than a dozen countries, he is author of Reflecting Strengths: Transformative Lessons from Resilient Youth. This powerful collection of essays on how we can tap the unrecognized strengths of challenged and challenging kids is available here today. I invite you to check it out.

What often catches people's attention is Chris' clarity and integrity. While his ideas are informed by research, they are colored by the humor and personal insight that can only come from thirty years of in-the-trenches experience - as an educator, therapist, family mediator, executive director, and parent. Chris will say these insights are the result of a simple idea: do more of what works and less of what doesn't. Whatever the case, we'll take it, for when Chris Trout challenges us to "see differently," we want to see what he sees.

Please help me welcome Chris Trout.

...See next page for a longer, more formal introduction.



Introduction - long

This one is more formal, informational... and takes longer to say! I don't encourage it except in the most formal settings.

We are pleased to welcome Chris Trout, president of *Strengths in Focus*, and author of Reflecting Strengths: Transformative Lessons from Resilient Youth. While the ideas Chris will share are informed by research, they are colored by the humor and personal insight that can only come from thirty years of in-the-trenches experience - as an educator, therapist, family mediator, executive director, and parent.

These varied roles have offered rich opportunities to explore strengths-focused thinking in action. In the early 90's, Chris' co-created a nationally recognized model for the use of story-telling in prevention work with teens. As the founding Director of the Mission Possible Teen Center in Westbrook, Maine, Chris brought the concept of "growing strengths in the midst of chaos" to life in one of the most economically and socially challenged neighborhoods in Maine. And his creation of the Youth Resiliency Project in Portland, Maine provided the opportunity to explore what "strengths-focused" program design looks like across highly diverse populations, ranging from neighborhood-based afterschool programs for immigrant and refugee youth, to peer mentoring in both urban and rural schools. In 2004, Chris left 27 years in education and social services to create *Strengths in Focus*, with a mission to share these transformative ideas internationally through speaking, writing and teaching.

Over the years, Chris has inspired thousands and his weekly online *Strengths Ezine* now reaches readers in more than a dozen countries, from New Zealand and South Africa to Canada and the US.

Chris will say the insights he shares are the result of a simple idea: do more of what works and less of what doesn't. Whatever the case, we'll take it, for when Chris Trout challenges us to "see differently," *we* want to see what *he* sees.

Please help me welcome Chris Trout.