

Super Seminar Tips & Tricks[®] by Frank Maselli

Episode 1:

Beware the “Crappy Restaurant Syndrome”

Imagine you're strolling downtown at dinnertime and you get a little hungry. You see a restaurant where the line is out the door...what do you think?

“Look at that line. That place must be fantastic! We'll never get in but we should make a reservation next time.”

Now flip it around. Now you see a restaurant that's totally empty, so you think,

“Why is no one eating there? Is the place even open? It must not be any good. Let's skip it.”

A Packed Room is Good

Like a packed restaurant, a full seminar room sends a subliminal message of success to your attendees. They think, *“This must be special. I'm glad we came. Obviously many other people have the same concern we do.”* That positive anticipation and sense of shared concern enhances the impact of your message and improves your business results.

If you're expecting 30 people, set the room for 20 with open space in the back of the room. It's rare to have 100% attendance anyway, so the 20 who do show will think that's what you planned for. But if more do come, you can set up more tables and chairs. Have the tables and chairs on “stand-by” and prepare for this in advance so it's a smooth transition.

“WE NEED MORE TABLES!”

Setting up extra tables once people arrive is an age-old speaker trick that creates an air of excitement and energy in your audience. It's infinitely better than having a half-empty room.

Also, be sure to spread people out comfortably. For example, you can only put 2 people behind a six-foot table, not 3! That's the difference between flying first class or coach.

And of course, always use tables! That's called “classroom style” seating. Never do a workshop with “theater style” seating (chairs only.) It's a disaster of discomfort! If your facility can't handle the seating arrangement you want, find another location. Proper seating is critical to your success.

Half Rounds?

It's possible you might have a room with round tables. These are more common in hotels or country clubs, less so in libraries or community centers. In that case tell the facility to set “half-rounds.” That's the side where people can face you and still be either fully or partly behind the table. Making people turn their chairs 180 degrees around to face you is very bad.

Comfort is the key!

Remember, the more physically comfortable your audience is, the more likely they are to appreciate you and enjoy your program. Also, every person in that audience is a fantastic prospective client, not simply a random stranger. Do whatever it takes to make your workshop an enjoyable, professional, and memorable event. Make the mental shift out of “lecture mode” and into “experience mode” and you will see greatly improved business results.