

# Super Seminar Tips & Tricks<sup>®</sup> by Frank Maselli

## Episode 8:

# Get the Audience Writing

One of the most powerful ways to engage your workshop audience is to get them to take hand-written notes.

In an age of computerized information, writing anything by hand seems anachronistic. But many studies have shown that handwriting (*especially in cursive vs. printing\**) uses a tremendous amount of the human brain. It helps people understand and remember things much better. These are two very good things you want to accomplish at your workshops.

### Writing turns data into emotions

Handwriting is a process that crosses brain hemispheres and connects “cognitive” and “affective” parts of the mind. That means it turns data and simple information into EMOTIONS and helps people FEEL something while you’re talking.

This is precisely what you want to happen, and it greatly improves the business results from your programs. You don’t need people writing constantly. This isn’t L-3 or P-Chem. But even a few notes will enhance the bond between you and the audience.

### Custom note paper

Include several sheets of notepaper in the handout packet you give people when they arrive. I like to customize them with the title of the program at the top and my name and contact information somewhere on the page as a reminder of who brought them this amazing wisdom. If you need help designing notepapers, let me know.

For a special workshop with top clients or COIs, you could use branded notebooks or binders. But that’s probably overkill for a simple public seminar.

Some nice pens with your logo are another great touch point.

### Blank notes & guided worksheets

In addition to lined notepaper, you might include partially filled-in worksheets. These can be valuable for more complex subjects since they lead people through a topic with more structure and are easier to follow.

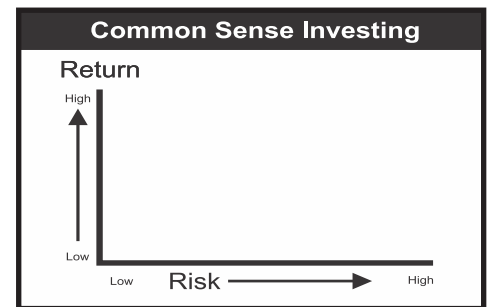
They also work wonders with charts and graphs and can be a tremendous source of humor and audience interaction. I like to walk around and see what people are drawing. Particularly good or bad drawings are fun to highlight. Audiences love this kind of interplay and it spices up a presentation very nicely.

### Charts & graphs

One example I’ve found particularly successful is for Modern Portfolio Theory. I love teaching MPT and have found audiences go wild when they learn this concept.

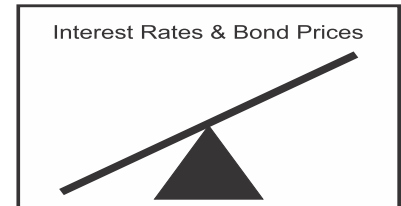
I start with a simple sheet like this. As we get deeper into the topic it gets more elaborate. By

creating the chart themselves, however, they get an extra level of understanding that cements the concept.



### The “See-Saw”

Another one I like is the basic chart that illustrates the relationship between interest rates and bond prices. That may seem very elementary, but it’s something most people don’t understand. Drawing it themselves brings the point home more vividly.



There are many topics that benefit from using blank or guided worksheets. They help with **Sequence of Returns Risk**, **Roth conversions**, and **The Bucket Theory** which are all huge issues in retirement seminars.

### Worth the extra effort!

Using notepaper is easy, but creating customized worksheets for your seminar is something extra that will take a little effort. Go through your slideshow and find the places where note-taking or a guided worksheet might augment the ideas you’re trying to teach. You don’t need many, just a few for the entire program will do the job nicely.

The benefit you will derive from getting your audience writing during your workshop — even a little bit — is extremely impressive. Give it a shot.

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*\*Cursive writing isn’t even being taught anymore but it may be something to re-consider given the brain benefits.*