Super Seminar Tips & Tricks®

by Frank Maselli

Episode 12:

Do a Great Q&A Session!

The Q&A Session is one of the three most valuable parts of a workshop...right up there with the Power Opening and Emotional Close. But most advisors seem to be skipping this vital chance to build credibility. Fortunately it's an easy fix.

4 Main Reasons to do a Q&A

1. Enhanced credibility as an "expert"

Your ability to handle questions proves to the audience that you are totally immersed in the subject. You're not just reading from the slides or a prepared script, but are capable of adding value based on your own experience and judgment.

Handling questions with ease is one of the trademarks of an expert in any field. For example, as an expert in public speaking and financial presentations, I actually look forward to questions and actively encourage them. Tough questions are particularly valuable because they don't just get a simple answer. They illuminate a thought process the audience can use when faced with their own challenges.

2. They get to see you thinking on your feet

Questions often take a presenter off-script and audiences love this. They admire your ability to expand on key subjects, be creative and respond more extemporaneously.

3. Maximize audience value

Questions tell you what the audience is receiving from your message. You can use them as a way to make your talk more valuable and meaningful for the audience.

4. Boost audience interaction

The Q&A session opens the program up to spontaneous moments of humor, empathy, and joy. Someone might say something funny and give you a chance to improvise along with them. Someone might ask a serious question that allows you to display genuine concern, sensitivity, and caring. These are powerful relationship qualities audiences are looking for.

The Dangers of a Q&A!

There are risks with a Q&A. Among them:

1. Not knowing the answer to a valid question

2. Very long, boring, or personal questions

3. Disruptive people who could derail your program

4. Giving out too much information

5. Running overtime

You can reduce all these risks by...

Setting the "Foul Poles"

The key to running a great Q&A is to have a tight set of rules. These boundaries allow you to control the flow and prevent any problems that might arise.

Personal question? ***"I'd love to help...see me after class!"***

Not on the topic? ***"Sorry...talk to me later."***

Rude question or nasty tone? ***"You're outta' here!"***

Long question? ***"That will take time, let's meet to discuss it."***

Specific advice? ***"What part of NO didn't you understand?"***

With crystal clear rules, the Q&A dangers are reduced to the point where the benefits of taking questions FAR outweigh the dangers. Do not be afraid of questions. Embrace them. Prepare for them. Have fun with them. And hit them out of the park.

Your audience will appreciate your effort and admire your skills. The result will be that you set many more appointments and lift a lot more wonderful people into your Lifeboat.

Oh...I almost forgot!

NEVER END ON THE Q&A!

The Q&A come close to the end, but never AT the end. Let the audience know that you will take questions for 3 minutes and then you have something very important say at the end of the program. After 3 minutes, cut things off and go into your Emotional Close...like "The Harbor Pilot."

If you would like to learn more about handling the Q&A, click on the QR code below to download the full white paper. With a little skill, you will fall in love with questions and your audience will fall in love with you!

Frank Maselli is the author of ***"Seminars: The Emotional Dynamic"*** and is a leading expert on presentation skills for financial professionals.
If you have questions or comments please email frank@maselligroup.com.