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Be Famous. Host A Seminar!

Imagine hosting your own seminar. Whether you dream of hosting clients for the weekend, prospects for a few hours, or colleagues for a lunch-hour workshop, let's make this year the year you realise that dream! Planning and hosting a seminar, workshop, or other event's not nearly as hard as you might expect. And today I'd like to share with you the five secrets to a flawless event.

Decide on a format

Remember, your event doesn't have to be in-person. You could conduct it virtually--over the telephone or Internet. You could offer webcasts and live chats, an email list for lengthier discussions, or you could use an online meeting space.

Besides deciding whether your event will be in-person or virtual, you'll also need to determine how long the event will last, what you'll cover, and how you'll cover it. Will you host guest speakers? Will you offer discussion panels? Or will the event be primarily lecture-based?

Go with your gut on these decisions. What makes the most sense for your audience? What format do you prefer? How can you best deliver your information?

Decide whom to invite

Will you advertise the event? Open it only to your select clients? Offer it to a targeted list of prospects?

It may seem strange to decide on your audience before narrowing down your topic, but by picking out your ideal audience first, you'll be able to zero in precisely on their interests.

At this stage, also decide how many people you're comfortable hosting. Are you picturing a small, intimate group of 20 people? Or do you see yourself speaking before hundreds?

Decide what topics to cover

Next, you'll need to really get at the core of your topic. Sure, you're going to focus on your expertise. But what, precisely, about your expertise will you devote the time to?

This decision has a lot to do with your goals. Do you want to convert prospects to clients? Dazzle your current clients? Build relationships with colleagues?

Obviously, you'll want to choose your topic a bit differently for your prospects than you would for a group of clients. Each audience will have different concerns and slightly different interests.

Get the right support

There's a ton of planning involved with creating a workshop or seminar. You'll need to find the perfect venue (or technological support, if it'll be virtual). You'll need to find hotels for guests to stay at, arrange special rates, and plan special activities during down time.

You'll want to accommodate special guests in a way that makes them feel truly appreciated. You'll want someone creating a log of each activity, and perhaps recording and transcribing the event so you can offer copies to participants.

In short, you need a partner who shares your vision for your event. Someone to handle all the details while you're raring off, full steam ahead, on the big picture elements.

You can easily hand off these details to a virtual assistant who'll work in the background to ensure your entire event goes off without a hitch.

Close the feedback loop and do it again

You're going to love holding your event. You'll shine in the spotlight, your participants will have a delightful time, and you'll all have an extraordinary experience.

Once the event's over, make sure to ask participants for feedback. Ask them for what they loved, and what they didn't. Find out how you can improve next year's event.

And get ready for an even better event next year!

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