

# Giving your own very profitable seminars (#6 of 15)

Let's see how offering seminars on your own differs from offering seminars with academic sponsorship, where you give up about 40-50% of the gross income paid by attendees in exchange for the school listing your title and description in a catalog, providing a room, and giving very little additional promotion.

Nobody else must approve where you offer your own seminars, when you do it is up to you, and you will never suffer because the institution can't tell the difference between a news and a jail release.

That's because you do all the work yourself or hire somebody of your own selection. There's nobody else to blame. You also get to keep 100% of the money, after paying only the expenses necessary to make the program work.

The ORGANIZATIONAL CALENDAR (the next blog in this series) will tell you, roughly, what is done when. The toughest and most important thing you must do in advance is pick your topic, write a tight and alluring description, create a title that the interested "must" attend to hear more about, and then find the market that you can reach with your limited resources.

Choosing a site, a date, and setting up the structure are the easy parts. Getting others to pay and attend to hear what you have to say, plus, you hope, buy some of your back-of-the-room products you sell later, are harder. They might be even harder for beginners because they start, probably wisely, in their home town where others know them.

Promotion is how you fill the hall. It can cost you more than you'll make, it may not work, and you must pay for it up front. That is made harder for newcomers because too often they cringe at having to laud their virtues in public print, particularly if they haven't given their program yet and they aren't quite sure what those virtues are. There's no cure for this dilemma short of plunging in, planning with prudence and common sense, being frugal and showing boundless enthusiasm when selling the worth of your offering to others. Make it clear that you want to help them define and solve their need. Exude confidence, and others will help pass it on.

We will discuss using the media in coming blogs; use it wisely. One of the best things about putting on your own seminars is that you can aim specifically at those most benefited by your program, almost personally directing quality promotion at them. Study telephone selling. Talk to local groups, speak with directors and supervisors, tell your friends, get on a radio talk show, speak with the feature editor at the newspaper and show why what you have to say will interest his/her followers—in short, you have a chance to do far better on your own because you carry the promotion, mostly in person, to those who will most profit from hearing what you have to say.

Not much else differs from the college seminars: content, handouts, actual presentation, BOR sales. Whatever the sponsorship, you must show your professionalism as you grow into it. Wear the suit until it fits. The nicest thing of all? It's your suit, every thread of it. You created and caused the success. And there can be plenty of reward—for plenty of work.

But it's a real risk to start your speaking career by first giving seminars on your own. You can earn a bundle or you can lose your shirt. It probably makes more sense to begin seminarizing through institutions, like colleges or hospitals. Or offering workshops to and through businesses. (I tell more about each later in this series.)

Best wishes,

Gordon Burgett

From Gordon Burgett's **How to Set Up and Market Your Own Seminar**, the audio CD version, with digital workbook and audio text summary. Produced by Communication Unlimited, P.O. Box 845, Novato, CA 94947, (800) 563-1454. There's more information [here](#).