

# Anatomy of an Event

By Al Lee, Max Associate

Below is my summarization of Rick Teague's excellent discussion about how to conduct presentation events. Such events may be small in-home affairs or large spectacular events. Regardless, the rules are the same.

Events are key to the success of your business. You should attend as many as you are able, even if you must attend alone. Better, of course, is to bring a few prospects. Best, is to bring a large number of prospects. An important concept is that these events are not for your entertainment and you are *not* a spectator. You are a part of the cast. You have a role to play and how well you play that role could be a major factor in the degree of success you achieve in this business.

From the larger viewpoint, an event has three parts: the Front End, the Event itself, and the Back End. The Event is, itself, divided into three parts: the Pre-Meeting, the Meeting, and the Post Meeting. Rick discussed the role you play in each of these "acts". I will offer first the outline I produced while listening to Rick speak, then a narrative discussion based upon my outline.

## 1. Front End

- a. commit, promote – promotion is the key
- b. commitment precedes promotion
- c. set date in advance, then promote
- d. events are necessary to build large group
- e. don't prejudice content, prospects are new, they do not see it same as you
- f. not for entertainment, for recruiting and building
- g. you are part of the cast, even if not speaking
- h. lawyers go to court, doctors go to hospitals, NM'ers go to events
- i. going alone is better than not going – recharge battery – motivates you through disgust factor
- j. spectacular events vs. routine events – Showcase vs in-home event
- k. be an "owner" at spectacular events – big payoff
- l. get there using routine events
- m. edify the speaker – regardless who he/she is (Greg Fullerton or just any associate)
- n. promote only one event at a time – not "every Tuesday..."
- o. promote routine events as spectacular

## 2. Event itself - participation

### a. Pre Meeting

1. create buzz!
2. music – gets louder toward beginning of speaking - lively
3. silence is your enemy – get people talking!
4. no gap of silence between music and start of talking
5. temperature – cool

6. chair control – no empty chairs – SRO is better
7. put out too few chairs, bring more as needed
8. associates are part of cast – be in the room!
9. don't hover around sign-in table making guests run gauntlet to sign in
10. leave your problems outside
11. NO negative talk!
12. smile! Introduce yourself to guests. Subtly volunteer your story.

b. Meeting

1. one-hour maximum
2. associates in audience create enthusiasm, laugh at jokes, be excited
3. you are part of cast
4. phones off, no texting
5. act interested even if you have heard it 100 times
6. guests only get half as excited as you do.
7. use restroom BEFORE

c. Post Meeting

1. music resumes immediately
2. call to action
3. when music starts—don't get up
4. circle chairs for your group – or go meet at restaurant with your group
5. have paper application ready
6. immediately start talking with person closest to getting started
7. “do you see any reason not to get started right away?”
8. assume the sale. Start filling in the ap
9. if they offer a reason NOT to start, ask “if I can get that handled, can we get started right away?”
10. If they do not enroll, BaMFaM – book a meeting from a meeting.

3. Back End – capitalization

- a. bring closure to events, take pix, write recap, testimonials of event
- b. conference call recap of event

### **Narrative Summary**

Presentation events are a cornerstone of our business. It is virtually impossible for you to build a large business without them. Doing them effectively is one of the most important things you can do to spur your business upward. Unfortunately, most of us start off with the wrong perception of what these events should look like and the part we play in them. We are tempted to think that the presentation is for us to just send prospects to and to allow the presenter to do the selling job for us. While that might happen sometimes, that is not the way to view presentations. They are actually a complex interaction of players, including the presenter, the prospects, and us. We, the associates who invite guests to attend a presentation, are actually an integral part of the play, like in a dinner theater.

We might think that the primary point of doing presentations is to inform or educate. Certainly, people do receive information and education at these events; but some much more important things happen—if the event is properly executed.

Remember, people do not join a company or a product, they join *people*. Your prospect is not merely watching and listening to the presenter or presenters, he is watching other people in the audience and he is watching you. To a large degree, your prospect's reaction to the entire experience will be dependent on how he perceives that you and the other attendees reacted. If you were enthusiastic and upbeat, he will probably feel much the same. If you were preoccupied with other things and not paying much attention, he will feel that this is not very interesting or important—a waste of his precious time.

People want to align themselves with other people who are positive, enthusiastic, and going somewhere. If they see that in you and the other attendees, it does not even matter if the presenter was not very good. They will likely have a very positive feeling about what we are doing. That is far more important than whether they understand the science behind our products or understand the nuances of our comp plan.

At the most basic level, an event is utterly useless unless people attend. In the Front End, your most important task is to promote the event. Regardless whether the speaker is a world-renowned raconteur like Greg Fullerton, or just some other associate who nobody has heard of and who is just a mediocre speaker, you must promote the event as if the world's greatest orator and expert on our business were presenting it. Always talk up the people who will be speaking. Make it clear that the presenter or presenters are well worth listening to. They have fascinating things to say and they know what they are talking about. **Promote the event by promoting the speakers.** Promote hard! The more people who gather together, the greater the dynamic and the more excitement you will be able to build.

Unless it is impossible, you must attend. It is very difficult to get people to go to a presentation if you are not going yourself. Also, since you are a part of the cast, the effect of even the best presentation will be greatly diminished if you were not there. Even if you are not able to get any guests to come, you should attend as many presentations as you can. We all need the extra jolt we get from being around enthusiastic people often. Also, after attending a few meetings alone and seeing others bringing guests, you might just find the drive based on your “disgust factor” to spur you into action. This business is 95% attitude and the rest is in your head.

If you are scheduling an event, first set the date and time and commit to it—then promote like heck. If you are not committed to it, you will not be able to convince prospects that this is important enough for them to rearrange their schedules to be there. Work with people around you, above, below, or even in other branches not related to you, to fill the room. The more people, the more effective it will be. It is better to have five of your prospects in a room with 15 of someone else's than to have your five be the only attendees. The more people in the room, the more excitement will be generated.

To hit a grand slam in this business, you want to be able to bring a large group of people to a large spectacular event. The way to get there, though, is by first bringing smaller groups to smaller in-home events.

Promote only one event at a time. Never invite people to attend “one of our regular Tuesday meetings”. Invite them to a specific Tuesday meeting as if it were the only one. If you give people options, they will usually choose the latest one and then forget to come altogether—there is no urgency! Every event is special and unique. If you must promote two events that are close together, do each one separately without mentioning the other.

When the time comes and the event actually happens, *be there*. Your duties start even before the event begins. Help to get people talking. Get a “buzz” started. Silence is your worst enemy. You do not want people just standing around politely waiting to be told to sit down. Mix and mingle! Chat with people. Greet people. Introduce them to one another. Tell them what a great event this is going to be. Get them chatting with one another. Never mention negative things. Bring up positive things, exciting things for people to talk about. Create anticipation for the coming presentations.

Have music playing from the moment people start to arrive. The music should progressively get louder right up to the split second when the first speaker begins speaking. There should be NO silent lull before he/she starts to talk. The excitement of the music should carry over to the tone of the speaker’s first words.

The room temperature should be a bit cool. Never warm. You want people to be alert, not drowsy.

Avoid having empty chairs, if at all possible. In some venues you may not have control of the number of chairs (such as at a conference table or in a theater); but whenever possible, you want people to see more attendees than chairs, as if more people arrived than you expected. You can always bring out more chairs as you need them. You and other associates can graciously offer to stand so that the guests may have a seat. Never let it look like fewer people showed up than you expected. Standing Room Only (SRO) is a good thing!

Smile! Be cheerful; but don’t let a bunch of associates crowd around the sign-up table so that guests are intimidated about having to run the gauntlet in order to enter or sign up. Be upbeat. Leave your problems outside. Be enthusiastic about what we are about to hear. “This is going to be a really good one”, “John is such a great guy to listen to”, etc.—regardless who is speaking!!!

Once the presentation begins, your job is not over. The best presentations should be limited to one hour, with only few exceptions. If you will need to use the restroom, do it before the presentation starts. Be attentive, animated, enthusiastic. Have a pad and paper and take notes, that is the most effective way to demonstrate that you value what is being said. Laugh at the presenter’s jokes even if you have heard them before. Your prospects will be watching your responses and will usually follow suit. Look interested even if you

know everything the presenter will say because you have heard it all 100 times before. If you look bored, your prospects will be bored. If you look excited, your prospects will be excited. TURN YOUR PHONE OFF! Demonstrate enough respect for the speakers to be sure they are not interrupted and demonstrate that you want to pay full attention, just as you want your prospects to do. Your guests will only be half as excited as they see you being; so you should exaggerate your enthusiasm a little bit for effect. Half of tepid is cold.

When the presentation is over, the music should resume INSTANTLY. No silent gap! You don't get up! Gather your group together and circle your chairs (if possible) so you can talk with your prospects immediately. Your objective is to close the sale. You may be able to do it right now, or you may not. If you do not try, though, you will most likely not close the sale. Now is the time to ask: "Well, what did you think of it?" and then lead right into: "Is there anything to prevent you from getting started right away?" *<then, say nothing more>*

*If, after a short wait, the prospect says nothing in response to your question regarding what would prevent them from starting, assume that to mean: "No, I am ready to start." Sometimes people are hesitant to actually say the words, so you simply act as if you heard them and proceed forward. Believe it or not, they might very well appreciate that you relieved them of that stress. If they stop you, handle it as described next.*

When you ask that question, you are actually delivering a "close". The thing to do after delivering a close, is to be quiet. Wait for them to answer, even if it takes a few moments (they might seem like hours). The prospect will likely either respond: "No. Let's do it!", or offer some reason why they are not ready to commit. If they offer a reason such as: "I need to read the entire comp plan first.", you should respond with: "OK, if I get you a complete printout of the comp plan and you read it, would you then be ready to start?"

That question is called a "conditional close". If the prospect says: "Yes", you have an agreement that: "if <you do such-and-such>, then I will enroll". You have clearly defined what you must do in order to close this sale. Then, of course, *do it!*

If the prospect responds with something that puts you off indefinitely, such as: "I need to talk it over with my wife/husband.", then you should try to get a commitment as to exactly *when* they will do that (talk it over) and *when* you should get back with them for your answer.

Don't leave it up to whenever they get around to it. Set a time for them to do the talking over and a time for you to get back to them. Tasks that do not have a deadline do not get done. Human nature! For example: "Will you be able to talk to her/him this evening?", then: "Good, how about if I call you in the morning for your answer?"

The acronym BaMFaM stands for “Book a Meeting From a Meeting”. It means: do not let the prospects walk away with no further step planned. Do not just turn them loose, set up whatever the next step will be. Put a time on it so it has a “deadline”. The next step could be for them to enroll. It could also be for another event, maybe a 3-way call with a particular person the prospect was impressed by. It could be a Fly In to corporate. Always have a “next step” set. This event was not the end, it was one step in the path to your goal—enrollment.

**Recommendations:**

- Listen to Rick Teague’s recorded discussion on the [www.myMaxTrack.com](http://www.myMaxTrack.com) website periodically until this is second nature to you.
- Read the book “How to Win Friends and Influence People” by Dale Carnegie every year or two at least
- Subscribe to the email notices from myMaxTrack and read and re-read the material on that site regularly

Of course, not only should you do these things; you should encourage the people you sponsor, and the people they sponsor, to do them also. Remember, your success is ultimately tied to their success.

**Summary:**

The ability to get people to events that are done well is one of the most important skills in our business. The success of an event has much more to do with *you* and how you promote it and how well you do *your part*, as defined above, than it has to do with the actual presenter and how well he/she spoke. If you were a doctor, you would go to hospitals. If you were a lawyer, you would go to courtrooms. You are a Network Marketer, you go to Events. Study and practice how to do your part well just like you would to develop the skills for any other line of work.