



Impression Engineers

Free Strategy Report

12 Steps to Teleseminar Rapport Success

*Design your teleseminars so you can work less,
earn more and focus on work that really inspires you.*

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What better way to get to know your customers than to talk to them? One popular and inexpensive way is the teleseminar. But building rapport over the phone lines isn't always easy.

Teleseminars are a great way to prospect, build your list, sell, and stay in touch with current customers, and so much more. People buy from people they know, like, and trust.

Teleseminars can help people understand your niche or field of expertise. A CPA might hold a teleseminar on the latest tax changes and offer a free checklist with a call to action that client's try his services. A speaker may introduce their latest workshop and offer a short video session at their website, with their call to action to register for a training. You can do the same thing with a product. A storeowner may talk about the latest trends and offer a discount or downloadable coupon for coming to the store.

The key to successful teleseminars is to go beyond the features of your service or product. Tell them what problems you solve. Make the teleseminar a good value for their time. Have your end in mind (what you want them to do and how you want them to feel) before you start. Throughout the teleseminar build to that desired "end state." Desired end state refers to the feeling a person gets when using your service or product. This is a feeling beyond features and benefits. Look at it in terms of the benefit of the benefit. It could be a feeling of relaxation knowing that an expert now handles your taxes or knowing you will be the envy of all your friends when you are on the leading edge of fashion this year. It is simply more persuasive to develop the feeling a person will get when using your product or service as opposed to discussing the technical features. People buy on emotion and justify on facts and information. Give lots of information in a teleseminar—yet tell them why it is a good idea to have expert help as well.

It doesn't take much to get started, the minimum equipment needed to run a teleseminar is:

- A host and interviewee (you can be both)
- Instant message or an open email line to your interviewee (expert)
- A bridge line to host your teleseminar.
- Telephone
 - Do not use a speakerphone.

- Use a “landline,” no cell phones. Skype can work, but we have had problems on occasion with it dropping in and out on a call. If you have access to a landline, consider it first.
 - If you use a headset, test it first. Call a friend. Find the best place to put the mic. Make sure you are not breathing directly into the mic. (No need to sound like a stalker on the call...)
- An autoresponder account
 - A website or blog with landing page (An online shopping cart is helpful)
 - A day, date and time for your teleseminar
 - And most important, participants. This white paper only covers establishing rapport on a teleseminar, it does not cover finding your participants; visit our blog at www.impressionengineers.com/blog/ for more teleseminar tips.

Participants are the key to a successful teleseminar. Whether you are using your own marketing list or using a purchased list it is important to follow a few key steps to create and maintain rapport and participant comfort. Upsetting one client is unfortunate, but when you may have hundreds on the line, it could be a disaster...

Remember, you are the message. Participants may like your product or service, but may not buy, if they cannot relate to you. People enjoy (and buy from) people like themselves. Rapport is finding and relating to similar experiences. Experiences are important to people, it allows them to create a connection on a deeper level. But rapport is not facilitated by an insincere interest, or by always agreeing with someone. People can spot pandering a mile away. Rapport is defined as harmony in a relationship. It does not mean you must agree on everything.

It is important to know how to develop rapport over the phone. Research has found that 55 per cent of communication is body language, 38 per cent quality of the voice and 7 per cent for the spoken word. It is more difficult to establish rapport over the phone but with just a few simple ideas and preparation rapport will be developed smoothly and easily. Part of rapport is being comfortable with your self on the phone. Sounding competent, confident and successful on the phone is a skill you can develop. The more you do, it the easier it gets. For starters, try some immediate ways to practice

building rapport on the phone:

- Take a genuine interest in what's important to the other person. Make sounds of acknowledgement, e.g. “ I see, “That’s interesting.”
- Pick up on the key words and phrases. Notice what words they use and build these subtly into your own conversation.
- How do they handle information. Do they like details or a global view? Try to speak in the same portions.
- Match their breathing if possible. Breathe in unison with them.
- Try to determine the other person's intention, their underlying aim, rather than what they do or say. They may not be the same. Assume their heart is in the right place. Do they have a secondary gain?
- Adopt a similar voice tone and speed. Use gestures when you speak, especially over the phone. It gives your voice more tempo and distinction.

1. A week before you begin:

- Practice. Record yourself, then play back and critique yourself in the third person. Is that person on the recorder speaking clearly? Is it too fast? Are they remembering to pause. Are there too long or pauses and "ums?" Are they communicating interest and enthusiasm?
- Have your expert send you a short bio and a list of possible interview questions.
- Develop a well thought out agenda that stays focused and on topic. Send this agenda to your expert in advance. Decide if email or instant message will be the preferred method of private contact during the interview.

2. An hour or two before you begin:

- Take care of any distractions such as household pets or other phone lines ringing including call waiting.
- Use the restroom. (I actually was on a call where we heard the “expert” use the facilities during the conversation. It may be funny to remember, but it is very unprofessional.)
- Place a mirror on your desk to remind yourself to smile. A smile can be heard in your tone of voice. Monitoring your facial expressions helps you see if you are communicating your enthusiasm and expertise.
- Place any reminders such as how to use the bridge line, “a LISTEN sign,” the interview set of questions, the bios etcetera within sight and reach.
- Have plenty of drinking water and cough drops nearby.

3. As you begin:

- Do not multi-task, other than to communicate if necessary via email or instant messenger with your expert.
- Speak clearly. Remember to pause.
- Sit on the outer one-third of your chair, with your back straight and no elbows on the desk.
- Vary your voice. It is critical to vary the tone and cadence of your voice to communicate interest and develop rapport. The secret to building rapport in a group is to be approachable, if the majority is approachable. Stop trying to be

approachable, if the group is the type that likes “just-the-facts.” It is easy to notice, just ask yourself, are they reciprocating?

— Change your voice pattern as needed, be approachable for the introductions and credible for the instructions.

- To create an approachable voice, curl your voice up at the end of each statement and bob your head during each sentence. This structure creates a rhythmic voice.

- To create a credible voice, drop your chin slightly at the end of each statement while keeping your head still. This structure creates what some may say sounds like a flat voice.

— Most important, remember to breathe low, deep and often.

4. Arrive on the line a few minutes early for the call. Make each caller feel important. Say hello as you hear the beep that another caller has arrived. Introduce yourself, tell them it is a pleasure to have them and ask that they introduce themselves. As the appointed time arrives, it may become too busy to say hello to everyone, however maintain a pleasant “Welcome Everyone” as the phone lines fill.

— If time permits, ask the callers to share one thing they hope to get from “today’s call.” Write it down. This is also a good time to judge if you have “storytellers” on the line. A teleseminar storyteller is someone who feels compelled to give a long back-story to ask a question. Make a mental note of the number of storytellers.

5. Start on time. No more “hellos” after the appointed time. If you cannot start on time, offer a very good reason why you cannot. It is even acceptable at the top of the hour to say that you intend to start a minute or two after the hour, due to the large volume of callers. Be proactive, make the

announcement on time, you do not want participants to believe you are wasting their time. End on time or ask permission to run over. Thank those that cannot stay.

6. Announce the “rules” at the beginning of the call. This technique creates a safe environment and develops a comfortable feeling for the participants from which to develop rapport. Let them know what to expect, including:

- The name of the presentation, the length and the benefits of listening.
- Your name and a very short bio and reason for the teleseminar. Although rapport is often associated with the opening, in fact you want to maintain rapport throughout the call. With some participants, rapport comes only after you have proven yourself— be respectful, be prepared, add value, and be honest.
- Knowing when and where to draw the line on sharing too much personal information is a part of rapport.
- Restate some of the benefits you promised in your marketing and promotion of the event. (The expert is introduced later.)
- Announce if there will be a Q and A session. If so, How long it will be and when. Q and As are best handled in the ten minutes during the 40-50 time in an hour-long session.
- Important, do not make the Q and A at the very end of the presentation.
Callers will remember the last thing they heard more than anything else.
Make sure it is your Call to Action.
- Announce that as the Q and A begins, you will first take a list of names to judge how much time to give to each answer.

- Announce (for the storytellers in the group) that “back-stories,” are not necessary. Ask that they state the question short and concise and if more information is needed the expert will ask for specifics. This is an important announcement to make beforehand. It will allow you to cut-off a storyteller during the Q and A session without appearing “mean” to the group. If you do not take this step beforehand, the group will see you as disrespectful, and side with the storyteller.
- Let them know if the teleseminar will be recorded and if you intend to make a product from it. They need to know beforehand that if they ask a question or comment, it will be recorded and produced as a product.
- Let them know how to mute and unmute their own phone. Each bridge line system is different; so provide the details of using the bridge line system.
- If you have a “handout pdf” which we strongly suggest you do, announce the URLs where they can download or follow along. It is an easy way to get participants to your website. It also is a visual reminder of the event. The URL where the material is located is a great place to offer another promotion, discount, coupon, and etcetera.
- Always introduce the expert. Do not presume everyone knows who they are...since they are such an expert. State their name and a short bio of the expert. Have the expert send you a short, two or three line bio before the day of the event. Also, have your expert send you a list of possible questions. This will smooth the flow of the conversation. (If you are not interviewing an expert, state your name and qualifications at the beginning after the name of the presentation, the length and the benefits of listening.)
- Frame the finish of your introduction with the niceties of rapport such as, “what a pleasure it is to have the expert, and all the participants, for this exciting next hour...” Restate some things you are looking forward to in the teleseminar.

Focus on the WIIFM (what's in it for me) and work to build your desired end state from the very beginning. The result is a more persuasive presentation.

7. Avoid talking too much if you are interviewing an expert. No more than 30% of the time. They came to hear the expert, not you. Just by knowing the expert, the expert's status rubs off on you. No need to upstage your expert. By listening respectfully, you provide an inspirational and educational experience for your participants.
 - If needed, make a visual reminder by your phone, it could be a sign that says, "LISTEN," or "SHUT-UP," or even a drawing of lips with the red circle and slash around it...you would know best what will remind you.
 - The participants will presume you will treat them the way you treat your expert, so be respectful. Do not waste time gushing to your expert. The audience came for information, give it to them. The more valuable the information they get for "free" or "low-cost" the more they trust that your service or product will also be valuable to them.
8. If you are the expert, story telling is a great way to build rapport. Stories and metaphors can create different realities that form the basis for mutual understanding. Participants become comfortable interacting with you if you understand their reality. This builds trust and allows them to open their mind to you quickly.
 - A metaphor is simply a word picture. Going visual, even over the phone, helps create a long-term memory of the event. Three types of sales metaphors are:
 - Action Metaphors. Use active phrases to paint word pictures depicting a physical action. E.g., "Are you spinning your wheels...."
 - Familiarity Metaphors. Relate your product to something they are familiar with. E.g., "Remember when you had time to enjoy a bike ride...."

- Competition Metaphors. A metaphor that demonstrates the differences from your competitors. E.g., “We exceed industry standards...” or “Unlike ‘X’, our product is made of...”

9. Stay on track. Stay Consistent. Have a well thought out agenda that stays focused and on topic. Send this agenda to your expert in advance. The participants came for the benefits promised. Deliver on your promise. Rein in a digression with "How interesting, (we will schedule another teleseminar) now back to our topic for today..." or "We may not have time to cover “X” today, I’m making a note of it, tell us more about “Y?”"

- Ask meaningful questions. Use the list of interview questions your expert sent you prior to the start of the call.
- Ask open-ended questions.
- Occasionally summarize and check for understanding.
- If possible, answer those questions you collected doing the pre-call welcome. It may be necessary to send them via instant message or email to your expert as the call starts.
- Avoid multi-part questions. Ask each part as a follow-up to the last answer. Multi-part questions become confusing for both your expert and the listening audience. Take notes for easy follow-up.
- Questioning is not grilling. The magic is not just in the questions. It is in the listening as well. Being listened to creates the feeling of respect for the expert and the participants.
- If communication starts to breakdown, stay flexible. Breathe. Notice changes and be prepared to keep communication flowing on all levels.

- Get the group’s attention before making an inspiring point (otherwise the first part of the message gets lost). Consider dropping to a whisper to make your point or add a language softener such “Consider...” “Perhaps...” “I'd like to mention ...”

10. Restate the URL for the free information, call to action, etcetera a couple of times during the teleseminar for latecomers and those that copied it wrong. But do not mention it so many times, that it dominates the conversation... no need to turn participants off with the old “hard-sell.”

- Keep the URL short and easy to understand. Say it slowly and clearly. If the URL is too long use <http://tinyurl.com/> to make it shorter. This site provides, free of charge, simple, short URLs to your marketing material. Make the URL available in the registration/sign-up email as well.
- If the teleseminar is promoting an upcoming paid event, make sure the participants know that in advance. Don’t just try to sell them something. Give them something before you ask for something back.
- Information about the event can be on the free material page, however the focus should be on the free material.
- Any copy about the paid event should be short and simple with a link for more information. This is not the place for a long copy sales letter.
- A hard sell at this point leaves the participants with the feeling that the company promoting the teleseminar only cares about the event selling out and not about helping them with their “problem.” The participants deserve the benefits and solutions the call promised.

11. As you begin the Q and As, ask for a list of names. Determine the length of time remaining for questions and divide it equally between those on the list. Q and As are best handled in the ten minutes during the 40-50 time in an hour-long session. Important, do not make the Q and A at the very end of the presentation.

- Use people's names more than in face-to-face meetings. Address the questioners by name and thank them for their contribution by name.
- Announce that as the Q and A begins, you will first take a list of names to judge how much time to allot to each answer.
- Announce (for the storytellers in the group) to save the “back-stories” so all can get a turn. Ask that they state the question short and concise and if more information is needed the expert will ask for specifics. This is an important announce to make beforehand. It will allow you to cut-off a storyteller during the Q and A session without appearing “mean” to the group. If you do not take this step beforehand, the group will see you as disrespectful, not the storyteller.
- Callers will remember the last thing they heard more than anything else. Make sure it is your Call to Action.

12. Close with your call to action. State it in the positive. Ask for the business. Remember that your teleseminar is to close some business.

- Throughout the teleseminar you have been building to your desired “end state” for your participants. Desired end state refers to the feeling a person gets when using your service or product. This is a feeling beyond features and benefits. Look at it in terms of the benefit of the benefit. It is simply more persuasive to conjure the feeling a person will get when using your product or service as opposed to just discussing the technical steps involved.

- Make sure you ask for their business. Let people know you want their business and their referrals. Give them the URLs and other ways to follow-up. Offer teleseminar discounts and other promotions. Have a specific time and/or quantity limit on the teleseminar offer.
- Follow up after the teleseminar with several reminders of the deadline, offer and benefits. Give them the WIIFM (what's in it for me) again.

By providing your participants with an inspirational and educational experience your next teleseminar will be just that much easier to build rapport. Success builds upon success.

We hope you find these teleseminar rapport building guidelines useful. Please share your ideas and experiences with us. Contact us at support@impressionengineers.com

About the Authors

As co-owners of Impression Engineers, Sharon and Adam Sayler, work as counsel and coach to executives who want more. Sharon and Adam use their skills to inspire confidence in clients through personal example and proven communication and marketing techniques. [Visit our blog](#) called "Best Impressions." It is full of business solutions and practical skills on persuasive presenting, marketing and copy.