

Blueprint to a Successful Seminar

Public seminars service your customers and educate your staff. One of the most effective means to increase in-store sales within the sports nutrition category (or any category for that matter) is the public seminar. Public lectures create demand for product, and if all goes well, the supply for that demand will come from your store.

Over the past twenty years I've performed literally hundreds of such seminars, so I'm very confident about this concept and know they work. Seminars are easy to organize and extremely cost effective. The idea is to create a triple-win-scenario for the customer, retailer and supplier. This is how they work.

First, as a retailer, contact one of your sports nutrition suppliers. Choose one that distributes a popular product line that is well researched and known for good quality. Discuss the idea of organizing a public seminar and present the idea of their participation with your store on a cooperative basis. Get them to commit and share the cost.

Upon agreeing on the concept, find a venue close to your location. This could be a community center, a seminar room at a local hotel, a college or university theater or, if you have the right type and amount of space, right in your store. I've been in some stores that have a room dedicated specifically for this purpose.

The cost of the venue usually represents as much as 40% to 60% of your investment depending on the size of the crowd anticipated (20-200). If you have your own space that's money you don't have to spend!

Next, a date must be selected. Experience says Tuesday to Thursday at 7:30pm or Saturday mornings at 11am work best. The best times of the year to hold the seminar tend to be:



- Middle January up to June
- September through November
- January, March and October are the optimum months.

Make sure no other big sporting events or concerts are scheduled for the night you choose. If you live in a small town this is easier to gage than in a large city.

Once the venue and date have been set, the next step involves marketing and advertising. Connect with your printer and arrange for the production of 50 to 100 large (11" x 17") color posters. The poster can be reduced to 8.5" x 11" black and white handouts, which are used as bag stuffers three to four weeks before the event. You want plenty of lead time to ensure a good turnout. Phone your customers or send them an e-newsletter promoting the event. Many retailers now have a newsletter they send each month by email to their regular costumers. If you don't you should.

Have one of your employees and/or your supplier rep distribute the posters in your community to recreation centers, gyms, shopping malls, ice rinks, schools, etc. Be sensitive to your competitors and even consider the possibility of a joint effort. You can also hire a student to distribute the posters.

Finally, choose the most popular local paper specific to your demographics, and have them create an ad from the poster. Include the name and logo of your store, the supplier's logo, a photograph of the speaker and all the necessary details. If you distribute a printed newsletter or e-newsletter, promote the event with a sense of excitement directly to your customer base.

If you want to go all the way, book some air time on a local, contemporary, high-energy radio station. If you have a good relationship already established with a radio personality, try and fit the promotion into a local talk show. Get your speaker involved by remote. Have the supplier send the radio or TV station a media kit. The kit should include a copy of a book the speaker has written, his or her bio and a forwarding letter of intent with a proposal of your idea. If possible be personal and get the speaker to sign the book to the attention of the radio personality.

Topics that pertain to body composition, steroids and drugs in sport, the effects of creatine and natural alternatives, and the politics associated with the regulation of sport nutrition in your respective country always creates controversy and interest for the listening audience.

During the seminar event, all the attendees should receive product samples, literature, health magazines and a discount coupon for specific brand products mentioned at the seminar, redeemable at your store for up to ten days. Call the publisher of the health magazines you distribute in your store to get them involved. In-store sales can also be amplified the next day with an in-store appearance by the speaker at a specific time mentioned on the poster. The speaker will draw customers to your store and this will pay handsome dividends.

Discuss with your supplier sales rep which products you want to promote and emphasize at the seminar. Think of the products you choose according to the time of year and in-season sporting events. Don't get caught being out of stock. There's nothing more frustrating to everyone involved when you've got consumers ready to buy but no product in the store, and believe me, this happens more often than you can possibly think. I was sent to a health store in Halifax from Vancouver once by a supplier to do an in-store demo and when I got there to do the demo not one of the products I formulated was in the store to sell. I can't tell you how frustrating that experience was! Talk about incompetence, poor planning and miscommunication!

Along with the products you want to promote, ask the speaker to discuss the benefits of other products you carry which compliment their use. This is how you create a connection in the consumers mind between health and the products they want for performance. You'll see sales expand into other areas not perceived exclusive to sport nutrition.

Remember, sports nutrition is about the "sport of living" of which we are all natural athletes engaged in. What products do you think people need to stay well life long? Whatever products you can think of or come up with all fall into the category of sports nutrition.

The seminar should run from 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm and should start on time. Be fair to those who show up on time and don't wait for the stragglers who show up late. Designate an MC (preferably the store owner, one of your staff or a sales rep), discuss the philosophy of your store and before you introduce the speaker, announce when the next seminar will be and it's topic. Mention your website or newsletter. Encourage attendees to fill out a form or survey that provides whatever data you need in return for an opportunity to win a door prize.

At 9pm, the MC should formally end the seminar, but invite those who wish to stay longer to remain for an extra 10-20 minutes for questions and answers. Encourage people to come to the store the next day to meet with the speaker. You can also book consultations by appointment.

Summary

- Contact your sales rep or call head office directly toll free.
- Confirm venue, seminar date and the availability of a speaker.
- Arrange for the production of posters, handouts and newspaper ads.
- Contact local radio station: discuss the possibility of an interview or talk show.
- Coordinate product samples and literature in advance.
- Designate an MC for the event.
- Promote door prizes on the poster (make them stand out).
- Publicly mention your store's mission statement, inform customers of future seminars and remind people about the discount coupons.
- Prepare your staff in advance with a morning or evening meeting designed to review products the lecture will promote. Ask your sales rep to detail the products, provide product samples for your staff and have your staff prepare a list of questions.
- Get the best volume price for seminar products, and pass the savings on to your customer. They'll love you for it.

Retailer Cost

Venue:	\$0	to	\$500
Newspaper ad:	\$100	to	\$500
Poster/Handout:	\$100	to	\$200
Total:	\$200	to	\$1200

Supplier Cost

Speaker:	\$0	to	\$2000
Newspaper ad:	\$100	to	\$500
Samples:	\$100	to	\$200
Door Prizes:	\$100	to	\$200
Total:	\$300	to	\$2900



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7:30pm Wednesday, January 17th, 2007 • Doors open at 7:00pm
Executive Plaza Hotel Ballroom A • 405 North Road, Coquitlam, BC

TICKETS AT THE DOOR \$10.00 • KIDS 12 AND UNDER FREE • DOOR PRIZES



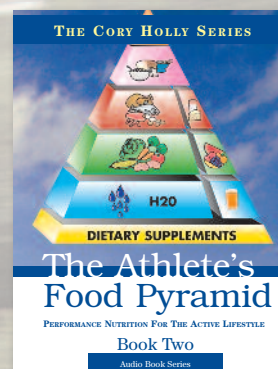
Cory Holly DN

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Cory Holly

The Athlete's Food Pyramid

The Athlete's Food Pyramid challenges conventional thinking with facts, clinical observation and real life athletic experience. This presentation will liberate the athlete inside and define the true meaning of sports nutrition. Cory will emphasize the consumption of organic, whole food and bridge the gap between fitness and nutrition. Learn how to personalize your own nutrition program and use dietary supplements to improve your health and performance. For more info visit www.coryholly.com



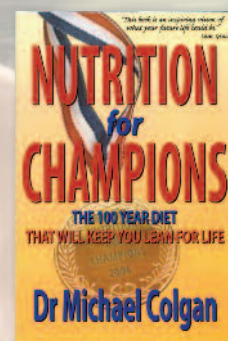
Dr. Michael Colgan

SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER

Dr. Michael Colgan

Nutrition for Champions

With exacting precision, Dr. Colgan will teach how our nutrition requirements relate to the development of the human genome and its expression of our DNA code. He will highlight eight detrimental changes in our food supply that many medical scientists now believe are the chief causes of most Western degenerative diseases, including obesity, cardiovascular disease and many cancers. With incisive analysis Dr. Colgan will show how optimum health and athletic performance depend on eating foods for which the human body is designed. For more info visit www.colganinstitute.com



Mari-Ann Drevvatne

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