



sponsorship
academy

transcript

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LESSON 1:

OVERVIEW

build your corporate
sponsorship the smarter way

OVERVIEW

Tim: Welcome to the first lesson of our core training entitled Build your Corporate Sponsorship the Smarter Way. I'm your instructor, Tim Wood, and along with Bruce McKaskill who you'll hear from later in the course, we're co-founders of Fit Sponsorship Academy.

I'm really excited you're here.

What I want to do in this first lesson is give you an overview of the course. It's important that before we start digging into the detail that you can see the big picture so you can do the work required knowing why you're doing it and what results you can expect.

I also want to touch on the reasons that we created this course and the Academy so you can get a sense of the broader community you'll now have the opportunity to tap into.

This course and Fit Sponsorship Academy, was created to empower people in all Arts, Cultural and Community Organisations, regardless of size, with the knowledge and processes to successfully sell sponsorship. Our aim is to use our tried and tested processes, methods and tools to provide best practice training and ongoing support within a structure where the investment is affordable and repaid many, many times over in the additional sponsorship revenue you earn.

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When we talk to Arts, Cultural and Community sponsorship practitioners and really start to dig beneath the surface, the key word that comes up time and again is frustration.

- Frustration that what they do is actually really hard and carries enormous internal pressure.
- Frustration that there's a heap of competition but a limited pool of largely indifferent prospects.
- And Frustration that they can feel like a solo explorer trying to navigate a complex, ever changing world.

But we also see incredible passion and hard work. People busting their gut to succeed because they know what their organisation does, matters.

But unfortunately, in the sponsorship game, passion and hard work are not enough. You need smarts. You need to know where and how to channel your energies to maximise returns.

Believe me we've seen the problems. We've been advising and selling in this space for nearly 20 years on behalf of many clients, small, medium and large. We've seen it all:

- the merry go round of 1 year deals;
- of selling sponsorships at bottom dollar a week before deadline just to try to get closer to budget;
- of knowing that your assets are probably worth double what you're selling them for but not knowing how to break through that glass ceiling,
- and of pleading with board members to make meaningful connections to corporations so you can get in front of the right people.

THE PROVEN PROCESS

We found a way out of this malaise and over many, many years have developed and refined a sponsorship sales system that works again and again. It has delivered for Arts Companies, Museums, Entertainment Companies, Festivals and Community Organisations. And if you follow it, it will work for you too.

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But there are no shortcuts. And we dare say many of your problems are a result of just that, of rushing to market without having done all the preparation.

This course will give you the structure, the methods and the tools you need to succeed. It will get you out of those all too common ruts and avoid the classic sponsorship pitfalls we see people fall for ever day. Our commitment to you is we'll help you build a sustainable, profitable sponsorship portfolio. In return we need you to commit to following the proven process.

So welcome to the Sponsorship Academy. I've got no doubt that you're going to get a lot out of this course.

THE ROADMAP

Now let's dive into an overview of the course and work you through the roadmap so you can see what we're going to do, how we'll approach it, and why the course is structured the way it is. The Roadmap for this course is available as download link below. You may like to download it now and refer to it as we work through the lesson – up to you. Ready? Alrighto, let's go.

This Roadmap actually breaks into four distinct phases. This is our proven process. When you follow it, it delivers results.

One of the biggest traps sponsorship seekers make is taking their offer to market before it's ready. And it nearly always ends in failure. Corporations are ruthless commercial machines. If you don't present the right story, supported by the right information, at the right time, they'll very quickly overlook you. Worse still you'll feel exposed as you burn potential sponsors in your urgency to find a deal.

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But there's a trick, and that is to do the required work upfront so when you go to market you not only have the tools at your finger tips to significantly increase your chances of securing sponsorship, but the added bonus is that you'll usually increase the value of the deal as well.

THE 4 PHASES TO SUCCESS

So there are 4 distinct phases to this course. The first 3 phases are about getting you ready. The last phase is where you'll see the money come in. Believe me – a little work upfront pays dividends.

Just like that old story of the 2 wood cutters. One rushes in to the forest with a blunt axe and starts chopping. The other takes most of his time to sharpen his axe then chops down a number of trees while the first axeman is still struggling on his first with a blunt axe.

So the first 3 phases are where you'll sharpen your axe if you like and they are Benchmark, Identify and Optimise. The Final Phase is where the dollars start coming in and we call it the Earn phase – more on that one later.

PHASE 1: BENCHMARK

So the very first thing we will do in this course is Benchmark your organisation. What does that mean? Well essentially you'll learn what the sponsorship potential of your organisation is, right now, and get the first glimpse of how to unlock that potential.

Sponsorship Practitioners tell us that once they Benchmark it's often like a light switch has been turned on. For the first time they can see what they need to do to attract more sponsorship and what's been limiting them in the past. They become an expert internally really quickly, simply because they have taken the time to understand the organisation's full potential. This helps plan effectively, gaining the internal support they need and importantly manage expectations.

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So at the end of the Benchmark phase you're going to have a very clear direction on exactly what you need to leverage to maximise your sponsorship revenue. And this is the beginning of your sponsorship strategy. The next step in the process is to road-test and refine that broad strategic direction internally and externally to better understand what's required to present and deliver it to sponsors. And we do this in the **Identify** phase.

PHASE 2: IDENTIFY

The Identify phase is really powerful in helping you shape your final strategy and your ultimate offer that you're going to take to market. The lessons and the exercises within this phase often produce those 'penny dropping moments' internally, for the wider organisation, when they discover their market potential and what needs to change to achieve it.

By the end of this Identify phase, sponsorship success is going to start to feel very real for you. Your chosen strategy will be starting to take shape. You'll know the potential sponsorship rewards that your strategy can generate via your **benchmark** work and you would have identified the elements that may need to change to help you get there in the **Identify** phase. You've now done all the hard yards required to construct your new strategy in high detail.

PHASE 3: OPTIMISE

So now it's time to write your Sponsorship Pathway Plan and change what needs changing – and we do this in phase 3, **Optimise**.

Your Sponsorship Pathway Plan will be the pivot point in your organisation where you use the facts and insights from the previous 2 modules to align the organisation from the top down and provide you, your team and the board with clear a pathway for sponsorship success. The detail and process in this plan is what helps you avoid those last minute 'shifting goal post kind-a-moments' from within the organisation.

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It enables you, with the organisations support, to anchor the sponsorship process in facts, removing those niggling doubts and clear the path so you can get on with earning sponsorship dollars.

The time it takes to make any required changes in the Optimise phase will depend on your findings in Benchmark and Identify phases. It will be critical to take the organisation on the journey with you and well show you how to do that using the collaborative methods and tools in the Optimise phase.

So a reminder as to where we're at in the course. You've Benchmarked your organisation with insights and facts and revealed the initial strategic directions that may lead to maximising your sponsorship dollars. You've then tested the various options and shaped the right story in the Identify phase and discovered the best levers to pull to maximise sponsorship potential. You've then created your Sponsorship Pathway Plan in the Optimise phase and set about making the required changes.

Now you're ready for phase 4 – **Earn**. This is where all your hard work pays off.

PHASE 4: EARN

The Earn phase is where most people actually start their sponsorship journey – and that's a mistake. They don't do the required preparation and instead leap straight to selling. So at this point in your journey you're going to feel super confident that you've done the right preparation to deliver results.

The Earn phase is divided into 2 parts. In the first part you'll decide who to approach, how to approach them and when. The second part of Earn is where you make the approach, do the first meetings, shape the final response and then progress to signing new sponsors.

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If you're one of the thousands of organisations that currently sends out sponsorship proposals that receive, at best, a mixed response then I've got some good news. We are going to teach you a smarter way to approach prospects that does not include sending out proposals.

In the Earn phase I'll walk you through exactly how we go to market. You'll learn how to present your offer in a way that will be heard. Getting that first meeting is a key milestone for every sponsorship manager. The approach you will learn will significantly increase your first meeting response rate and enable you to tell your story and craft the sponsorship deal.

The results we see and the feedback we get is that the proven structure and methods we apply in the Earn phase helps people open doors and makes what can be a challenging process, far simpler. Make no mistake there's no replacing the hard work of sales but when you go into battle with the right preparation, using the right tools and knowing what to do, and when, you know you stand the very best chance of signing the right sponsors to your organisation.

This entire course is structured around a proven process. The Fit Sponsorship Group has applied this process with clients for nearly 2 decades with spectacular success. What you have here is that experience and wisdom bundled into an eminently learnable package.

SUMMARY & HOUSE KEEPING

So that's an overview of the 4 phases of the course. Remember, and this is important, it's good preparation that will give you the best opportunity for success. Do the work in the Benchmark, Identify and Optimise phases then enjoy the rewards in the Earn phase. There are corporations, right now, looking where to place their sponsorship dollars. You need to be the shiny beacon they want to talk to. The story they want to hear.

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Now a bit of house keeping to ensure you get the most out of this course....

As you progress through this course it's important that you remember exactly where you are in the process. At times we will dive down very deeply to help you access and analyse data.

Try not to become over-whelmed in these early sessions but rather push through knowing that the work you do first lays the foundations for your success.

In addition to the Roadmap we have created a side-bar navigation right here on this page so you know where you are at any stage. And if you've signed up for Group Coaching we'll address any questions you have as you move through the process and ensure you stay on track in our weekly calls.

NEXT LESSON

Next up is the 5 Key Principles for Sponsorship Success. Don't zone out on this one, it's critical. It's important to know the core principles in creating a successful sponsorship response that seizes on the opportunities you have right now and also the mindset of a sponsorship professional. It's critical to understand the fundamental principles of creating sponsorship opportunities that corporates are looking for and importantly how to stand out.

We'll do that all in the next lesson. Talk soon.