
EXECUTIVE SEMINAR NEGOTIATION

Confidential Information for Williams' Agent

You have an agency that promotes authors and their related ventures, such as speaking, training, and social media. One of your clients is Pat Williams, a business writer/consultant and former professor who was chair of the marketing department at one of the most prestigious business schools in the U.K. He met his spouse, an American, a few years ago and last year took early retirement and moved to the US, to be close to his spouse's elderly parents.

Ten to fifteen years ago, Williams was a bit of a celebrity as a writer of marketing books. His series, titled "Mastery of Marketing," included volumes applying Williams' strategy and methods to various sectors: the services industry, consumer products, retail, and telecommunications, and so on. The books were written before the e-business boom, however, and in trying to place him for "gigs" you've found that Williams' name is not well-known in the U.S., particularly among younger people. It generally rings a bell, however, with upper management in more traditional business organizations.

Williams has complained to you that life has turned out to be more expensive in the U.S. than he'd imagined. He also has found it difficult to find U.S. clients because of the lack of a social or business network here. As a result, Williams has not been in as much demand as some of your other author/presenters. His only recent business nibble was from his U.K. publisher of the "Mastery of Marketing" series. At Williams' request, you sent the publisher an email raising the possibility of issuing a new edition of the series with associated web products. The publisher responded, but slowly, and expressed politely veiled concern as to whether the target audience would view a new edition as a timeless classic or merely as "dated."

That said, you took on Williams as a client because you'd seen him at a seminar and were very impressed. He's a real performer when he gets the chance – he loves standing up in front of a group and can get people laughing and learning at the same time. At his British university Williams was highly sought-after to lead alumni and executive education programs; they were apparently real money-makers for the institution, and he always received top-notch ratings as a presenter and facilitator. Though Williams is excellent on his feet, he's not been interested in a regular teaching position, especially one involving grading papers – he's apparently been there, done that, for far too long.

After his marketing books were published Williams was able to command the equivalent of \$3,000 to \$5,000 per day for seminars and client work. For a "tailored" training program created for a large private client he got \$5,000 per day for time spent in prep and delivery of the product, so a two-day program could generate Williams a fee of \$15,000 to \$20,000. In your experience a typical US professor would top out at \$3,000 per day for that kind of program, and younger professors would be lucky to get \$1,000 to \$1,500 a day.

EXECUTIVE SEMINAR was originally written by Marjorie Corman Aaron (as Marketing Maybes) but has been adapted and taught with greater frequency by Dwight Golann, who is the author of this preparation outline.



Yesterday Williams called you to say that he had chatted at a recent party with Chris Adams, an associate dean of the business school at Maxwell University, a local institution. Adams was familiar with his writing, Williams said, probably because she is relatively senior, and reportedly said very nice things about one of Williams' books, "Mastery in Marketing: Retail"—that it'd been invaluable in her prior business. Williams lapped it up.

Williams said he'd just gotten a call from Adams asking if he might be interested in teaching for two days in a large alumni program at Maxwell. The program is in two and a half weeks; Adams apologized for the late notice but said their booked speaker had suddenly had to cancel. Adams told Williams his existing material on marketing would be more than suitable for the program. Williams is ready to take it, but because you have an exclusive on representing him, he referred Adams to you (he also thought having a professional agent would make him appear more in demand).

It's clear Williams very much wants the job, seeing it as an entrée for more marketing, consulting, and training engagement, and in general as a potential jump-start for work in the US. He asked for your take on whether the program would get his name out; you said that both Maxwell and its university press were quite well-regarded. A successful program there would help establish that senior businesspeople, at least, still recognize the value of Williams' work, e-commerce notwithstanding. And, by raising his profile, it might make him more attractive to other clients. Williams was so enthusiastic about the opportunity he'd probably speak for nothing (Not that you'd let him—you must keep your own business running, and a fee of 15 per cent of zero won't help with that). You agreed to do what it takes to reel in the engagement.

Prepare for your negotiation with the Associate Dean.