



Tips for Effective Boothmanship

Never underestimate the importance of your trade show booth staff. They are your front line ambassadors and the critical links to your overall trade show success. The fast pace at a trade show requires a systematic approach in order to effectively attract, engage and create a bond within a very short period with your competition only a short distance away. You have only a few seconds to make an impression or ignite interest. Here are a few tips:

Choose staffers who are:

- Matched to the audience and type of interaction required (no extreme introverts)
- People oriented
- Professional, enthusiastic, and motivated!
- Well-versed in product knowledge
- Keen listeners
- Empathetic to the visitor's situation

Set guidelines for engaging prospects:

- Capture contact and interest immediately and systematically for follow up
- Prepare 3-6 questions for engaging prospects
- Be friendly and approachable (build a rapport)
- Ask open-ended questions
- Ask questions that will reveal their level of interest
- Gather information in the form of conversation not interrogation

TOP 10 RULES OF BOOTH ETIQUETTE

1. SMILE! Get a positive attitude. (Where else, other than in a small retail setting, does the buyer come to the seller? Make the most of it!)
2. Proper dress is important, and the policy of "when in doubt, go conservative" should apply. Don't be afraid to turn booth staff away if they are improperly attired. And wear your name badge on your right side so the badge faces the prospect when you shake hands.
3. Carry and use breath freshener spray or small mints (Tic Tacs vs. large, bulky mints). Shy away from spicy or garlicky food and alcoholic beverages.
4. Booth staff should avoid smoking, chewing gum, eating, drinking, heavy colognes and perfumes and anything else that might bother visitors.
5. While working the exhibit, don't sit in your booth or lean on the exhibit counters. Keep the booth neat and tidy!
6. Don't spend time engaged in paperwork or on laptop, reading the newspaper, talking on your cell phone, with booth neighbors, or to your other booth staff. Engage prospects. Be approachable.
7. Make eye contact; never ignore a prospect, even if you're with another prospect. (Give them a nod and "just a minute" sign.) Include them into your conversation. Any one moment can deliver the single customer who can make the difference between success and failure.
8. Greet attendees by name; if you can't pronounce it, ask!
9. Shake hands; match the strength of the other person's handshake and only "pump" twice.
10. Don't leave your booth unattended and do not dismantle your booth early. Place your watch face on the inside of your wrist to "sneak peeks."