Tools for Tradeshow Success

SALES STRATEGIES FOR THE TRADESHOW ENVIRONMENT

One of the most startling revelations I've discovered in my tradeshow travels is the fact that companies will spend thousands of dollars buying booth space in a show and purchasing elaborate exhibits and graphics to promote their message, then permit sales people to work in the booth with no training. I don't mean sales training, I mean tradeshow sales training. How about your company? Do you recruit the most experienced sales people and include technical experts on your team? Or are you like most companies? You ask for volunteers, select the team at random or simply draft people, at the last minute, against their will?

Let's say you do give careful thought to who will represent you at the show. Chances are they are not provided with a written sales strategy or a set of goals. Most likely, they will be allowed to wing it and sell at the booth spontaneously. You are not alone.

Statistics show that 80% of tradeshow attendees base their opinion of your company on the actions of your employees at the booth. This is why it is essential to have a well trained staff with a prepared game-plan before you even think about letting them step inside your booth.

Maybe you don't think the staff needs training because they know how to sell. Seven out of ten companies put staff in the booth with no exhibitor training because they assume sales skills from the field translate onto the show floor. Unfortunately, poor results from a show are often due to this misconception. Consider the differences. The rules of engagement are unique. Instead of having 45 minutes to make a presentation to a captive audience, you actually have about two minutes to make your point to customers who will be past your space in a matter of seconds. A random sales approach is not effective here.

- Ask a qualifying question to draw them over.
- Develop four or five statements to excite and educate them about your benefits and features.
- Make sure each customer is receiving the same information from each representative.
- Prepare to obtain contact information for future follow-up.

If you want to increase the number of qualified leads your booth staff collects, then script a sales outline for each team member and require them to use it consistently. Without a consistent presentation from each person or accountability from the entire team, management will never be able to calculate a return on investment. There will not be a way to discover why one salesperson gets 50 leads and another gets 10.

At any given tradeshow only 16% of the attendees will be interested in your product. Of those, an even smaller percentage will be qualified to buy. Insure that your time is spent wisely and your investment is protected. Train your staff.

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