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Trade Show Manual

SELECT MARKETING SERVICES, LLC

Trade Show Manual 2001

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Qualifying Prospects

QUALIFYING – You should be able to qualify anyone in four minutes or less. After learning the type of business the visitor is engaged in, how he or she accesses information, what he or she is looking for, and determining that the visitor is a prospect, you begin the qualifying process. Six components make up the qualifying process. The acronym ACTION will help you remember the attributes.

a) Authority

- Does prospect have buying/decision making authority?
- Or, is prospect a buying/decision making influence?
- Be sure to ask. (How is your decision making structured? Do you see anyone else in your company involved in making this decision?)

b) Cash/Budget

- Can the prospect afford this service? When are budget decisions made? Is the prospect a ready buyer or a long-term prospect?
- Also inquire about current supplier, current use of requested products and services, number of employees in organization, current procurement process.

c) Time

- Put your time and energy into those who are ready to buy/decide now.
- Determine with questions (When do you see a need for this service? Tell me about your timing for making this change.)

d) Identity

- Have a predetermined, organized way of recording prospects
- Computerized Identification
 - Embossed plastic badges – person's name, company, address, etc. is imprinted from badge onto a multi-part form supplied by show manager.
 - Coded badges – a computer generated badge with basic information plus coding. Exhibitors rent/use a badge reader to capture information from badge. A printout of leads is then provided to the exhibitor.
- Manual Identification
 - Lead forms are filled out by hand & business cards are attached.
 - Make sure lead forms are simple & easy to fill out. A checklist format of ACTION items, services/products, literature requests, and appointment requests should be included.

e) Operational Constraints

- Departmental regulations/procedures (bid list), office size/location, applicability of product/service to the organization.
- Uncover any constraints early on.

f) Need

- Need is the basis for any sale. No need...no sale.
- Establish need from the start.

FATIGUE – Be aware of the energy needed to survive several days at a show. Pace yourself.

- a)** Breaks should be scheduled every four hours.
- b)** When on break, get out of the booth and away from the show floor.
- c)** At end of show day, have a good meal and rest.
- d)** Wear good shoes, eat healthy, get plenty of rest.
- e)** Visitors also suffer from fatigue. Don't waste their time.

ATTITUDE – The right show attitude is one of energy, enthusiasm, professionalism, and caring. In addition to saying the right things, do the right things with your voice and body. People form opinions about others based on three variables.

a) Verbal – the words you use (7% importance level)

- Remember that you are not at the show to sell things. You are there to help people buy.

b) Para-verbal – how you say things (38% importance level)

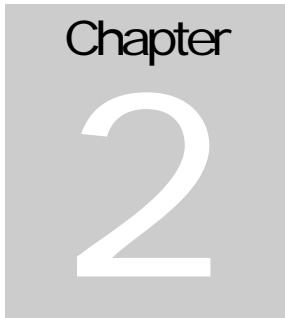
- The tone, pace, tempo, speed, and volume of your speech.
- Match and mirror your visitor/prospect.
- Volume – Lower the volume of your voice to match the visitor's voice.
- Speed – If someone naturally speaks slowly, then you should slow down.
- Tonality – Watch your inflections. Too much bounce can bounce a tired prospect right out of the booth.
- Show passion. Show you believe that your products & services are good and can help improve quality of life.

c) Non-verbal – your body language (55% importance level)

- Our gestures, postures, head movements, smiling, eye contact, etc.
- Match and mirror your visitor/prospect.
- Posture – a formal person may not feel comfortable with someone who is casual. He/she is not like them. It will be more difficult to build rapport with him/her.
- Gestures – Some people are more demonstrative than others. Match your hand movements to your visitor's.
- Physical proximity – Respect other people's space. Take your cues on how close to get from your visitor. As rapport builds, you may notice that the space gets smaller.

SUMMARY

- a)** Your job at the show is to take full advantage of the first four minutes of any interaction.
- b)** Find out how you can help the visitors by qualifying them.
- c)** Take care of their fatigue, as well as your own.
- d)** Take the first steps to building rapport and building business friends.
- e)** People are most comfortable with those most like themselves.



Qualification Form

FOSE March 20-22 Washington Convention Center

Representative: _____

Date: _____

Prospect Priority Code:

- High (Immediate Need)
- Medium (This Fiscal Year)
- Low (After October 1, 2001)

Contact Information (attach business card, if available):

Name: _____

Title: _____

Department: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: (____) _____

Fax: (____) _____

Email: _____

Product Interest:

(List Services)

Decision Maker: Yes ____ No ____

Decision Maker Contact Name: _____

Decision Maker Title: _____

Phone: _____

Time Period:

- 0 - 3 months
- 3 - 6 month
- Over 6 months

Budget: _____

Operational Constraints: _____

Appointment Made: _____

Other Comments: _____

Trade Show Supply List

Company Materials

1. Exhibitor manual
2. Informational handout
3. Qualification forms
4. Business cards
5. Giveaways

Office Supplies

1. Tape
2. Stapler
3. Order forms
4. Pencils/pens/highlighters
5. Four clip boards
6. Small tool kit
7. Electric extension cord
8. Paper towels & spray cleaner (Windex)
9. Scissors
10. Paper clips
11. Candy and candy bowl
12. Bowl/box for business cards
13. Table & chairs
14. Contact phone numbers

Trade Show Booth Daily Meeting

Beginning of the Day

- Announce the mission and goals for the show that were worked out before.
- Hand out a sheet on basic selling hints for the show. Give staff a quiet moment to read it.
- Remind everyone about the essential benefits of the services/products you are offering.
- Explain that the goal is to meet new people as well as see old customers.
- Advise staff of the psychological problems that must be overcome to do well at booth selling:
 1. Rejection can feel personal, but it is not.
 2. The team will need to create new zones of personal comfort.
 3. The audience will have a retail expectation. Use behavior people would expect at a quality retail store. (But don't say, "Can I help you?")
- Take a pre-qualification minute.
 1. Ask staffers what they'd like to know about a prospect before launching into a sales discussion.
 2. Ask which of these are the two or three most important. Get agreement.
 3. Then ask people to phrase these want-to-knows as open-ended questions and use them as conversation starters.
- Explain the selling dialogue.
 1. Explain how to be polite and disengage with those who do not pass muster on the first questions.
 2. For those who do seem likely candidates, advise team members to use more of the qualifying questions just worked out in the selling dialogue. Learn more about the prospect while selling. An information exchange is the goal.
- Go over the "closing" sequence.
 1. Tell team members that you are not necessarily looking for a signed order, but instead a true indication that the prospect wants to talk more after the show.
 2. Ask team members to create right now closed-end questions that can be used. ("Should we be talking about this back in your office?")
 3. Tell people to look for this buying interest within five minutes.
- Remind people of the goals announced. Wish everyone luck.

End of the Day

- Make sure that all marketing materials and supplies are put away
- Take inventory of any supplies needed for next day
- Check that there is adequate coverage for the following day
- Check need for additional marketing materials
- Discuss changes in peak traffic times in order to make adjustments for staffing
- Discuss visitation to competitive booths
- Collect the competitive information gathered
- Collect leads generated/qualification forms
- Determine any immediate follow-up opportunity
- Send any leads to Vendor Partners as appropriate.

Conducting an Effective Trade Show

Booth Set-up

1. Ensure that the booth is set-up to welcome prospects. You want to invite them to stop & talk with you.
2. Handouts should be accessible but not in the front of the booth so that people can walk by and take the materials without talking with you first.
3. Make sure to have a bowl of candy for people to stop because it gives an opportunity to establish rapport. High quality candy makes a difference and chocolate works best! Keep the bowl away from the edge of the booth or people will avoid eye contact and take the candy. (I know this sounds silly but it works! I've seen instances where people form huge lines for coffee or popcorn. Of course, while prospects are in line, sales representatives are speaking with them.)
4. Make sure to have a box of supplies: extra pens, stapler, tape, stick pads, lots of business cards, paper clips, scissors

Lead Generation

1. Have a system for prioritizing leads at the show. High, Medium, Low. Mark these codes on the business card or qualification form. All the information gathered will assist you in prioritizing after the show. After the show, everyone will have his or her regular duties, as well as follow-up to the show.
2. One person at the show should gather the business cards at the end of the day. Those leads must be entered into a database and distributed within 1 week of the show. High priority prospects should be contacted by phone within the first week of the show.
3. Make sure you have a script or outline of what the booth personnel should cover with prospects. When there is an outline, everyone knows what to emphasize.

Booth Etiquette

1. There should be **NO eating or drinking** in the booth area. Eating or drinking will cause a prospect not to approach the booth. Prospective customers will not want to interrupt.
2. Employees should not have private conversations during the show. Prospective customers will not interrupt, they will continue walking.
3. There should be **NO chairs** at the booth. If employees want to sit, they should go to the break area.
4. Business attire:
 - Don't wear just anything. Agree on your attire (suits).
 - Don't let visitors see your backside. (No digging into boxes, bags, etc. when show is in progress.)
5. Stand around the edge of the exhibit; smile warmly at the crowd, not talking with each other.
6. Make people feel welcomed and comfortable.

Present Yourself

1. Voice, body language, and appearance impacts credibility and first impression.
2. Fifty-five percent of a first impression is based on your appearance.
3. If your clothing, demeanor, stance, or body language is inconsistent with what is expected, your message never get through to visitors...they've already tuned you out.
4. Thirty-eight percent is based on the tone of voice you use.
5. Speak calmly and with authority, without being aggressive. Speak slowly and clearly in easily understandable words. Project warmth along with a little bit of humor.
6. Show passion. Show you believe that your products & services are good and can help improve quality of the workplace.
7. Match and mirror the pace of the people with whom you're speaking.
 - Lower the volume of your voice to match the visitor's voice.
 - If someone naturally speaks slowly, then you should slow down.
 - Watch your inflections. Too much bounce can bounce a tired prospect right out of the booth.
8. The actual words you speak account for only 7% of a first impression. Remember that you are not at the show to sell things. You are there to help people buy.
9. The correct placement of the badge is high up on the right (the right-hand notch of jacket lapel) – there the badge is both clearly visible and easily read.
10. The best place to stand is usually near the aisle carpet. Be open and available to interact.
11. A common occurrence is that your mouth tends to dry out. Since drinking in the booth is a no-no, stick a roll of breath mints in your pocket or booth storage area.

Body Language

1. Arms should hang straight down by the side, not in pockets or around chest – the most non-threatening position. An alternative is to have staffers hold clipboards with lead forms attached.
2. Match and mirror your visitor's body language.
 - Posture – a formal person may not feel comfortable with someone who is casual. He/she is not like them. It will be more difficult to build rapport with him/her.
 - Gestures – Some people are more demonstrative than others. Match your hand movements to your visitor's.
 - Physical proximity – Respect other people's space. Take your cues on how close to get from your visitor. As rapport builds, you may notice that the space gets smaller.
3. Pay attention to signals. If person looks around or at watch, find out why. Do they need to get to a meeting or seminar or are they bored. If contact needs to leave, finish up quickly. If not, try probing again with a couple open-ended questions.

Posture & Fatigue

1. Stand up straight. Don't slump. Don't stretch, bend, or rub kinks from neck while in the booth. If you feel fatigued, go to the rest room or lounge area and sit down for a few minutes.
2. When possible, breaks should be scheduled every four hours. When on break, go out of the booth and away from the show floor.
3. Wear good shoes, eat healthy, drink water, and get plenty of rest.
4. Recognize that visitors also suffer from fatigue.

Summary

1. Your job at the show is to take full advantage of the first four minutes of any interview.
2. Find out how you can help the visitors by qualifying them.
3. Take care of their fatigue, as well as your own.
4. Take the first steps to building rapport and building business friends.
5. People are most comfortable with those most like themselves.

Show Follow-up

1. Business cards should be entered as soon as possible. This may be accomplished automatically with the digitized card reader.
2. Before the end of the show, decide what material to send to prospects and develop it.
3. Have a post-show meeting with all participants within a day of the show ending to summarize what went right/wrong. Use this as an opportunity for "Lessons Learned". Start a trade show planning book so success can be duplicated and errors avoided.
 - After the show, arrange a meeting to discuss follow-up and lead tracking specific to the show and track results. There are many shows available to exhibitors and results count!
 - Find out if the show managers have a database of trade show attendees for a post-show mailing. It is simply another marketing tool.

Hints for Successful Trade Show Staffers — “What message are you sending?”

1) How Not to Do it

- a) Don't wear just anything
- b) Don't let visitors see your backside. (No digging into boxes, bags, etc. when show is in progress.
- c) Don't have lengthy chats with other staff members, sit back in chairs, or eat in booth.

2) How to Do It

- a) Wear business attire or booth uniform (shirt/sweater with company logo)
- b) Stand around the edge of the exhibit; smile warmly at the crowd, not talking with each other.
- c) Make people feel welcomed and comfortable

3) Present Yourself

- a) Voice, body language, and appearance impacts credibility and first impression
- b) Fifty-five percent of a first impression is based on your appearance.
 - i) If your clothing, demeanor, stance, or body language is inconsistent with what is expected, your message never get through to visitors...they've already tuned you out.
- c) Thirty-eight percent is based on the tone of voice you use.
 - i) Speak calmly and with authority, without being aggressive. Speak slowly and clearly in easily understandable words. Project warmth along with a little bit of humor.
- d) The actual words you speak account for only 7% of a first impression.

4) The Impression You Make/Appearance

- a) Look you best. Avoid buttons hanging from a thread, worn shoes, etc.
- b) The correct placement of the badge is high up on the right (the right-hand notch of jacket lapel) – there the badge is both clearly visible and easily read.
- c) Eating, drinking, smoking, chewing gum, slouching, sitting, and chatting with fellow staff members are strictly taboo.
- d) The best place to stand is usually near the aisle carpet. Be open and available to interact.
- e) A common occurrence is that your mouth tends to dry out. Since drinking in the booth is a no-no, stick a roll of breath mints in your pocket or booth storage area.

5) Booth Uniforms

- a) Standard business dress is the norm when exhibiting.
- b) An alternative is a booth uniform. Uniforms create a consistency in presentation and reinforce the theme of the booth and are seen outside of the booth.
- c) Uniform should match theme...new name/logo—shirts with new logo and corporate colors...baseball player signing autographs—baseball uniforms...fishing theme—hats with fishing lures and matching sweaters, shirts, khakis and sneakers.
- d) Custom ties and scarves (where and distribute to “special customers.”)

6) Body Language

- a) Arms should hang straight down by the side, not in pockets or around chest – the most non-threatening position.
- b) An alternative is to have staffers hold clipboards with lead forms attached.
- c) Mirror the stance and pace of the people with whom you’re speaking
- d) Don’t forget to ask what action should next take place
- e) Pay attention to signals. If person looks around or at watch, find out why. Do they need to get to a meeting or seminar or are they bored. If contact needs to leave, finish up quickly. If not, try probing again with a couple open-ended questions.

7) Posture

- a) Stand up straight. Don’t slump. Don’t stretch, bend, or rub kinks from neck while in the booth. If you feel fatigued, go to the rest room or lounge area and sit down for a few minutes.