

Tradeshow Tips to Have a More Successful Show

Step-by-step guide that includes:
strategy, tactics, and a complete,
proven script to boost sales and
become a better salesperson at your
booth. The do's & don'ts of tradeshow
selling.



Tradeshow attendees are special. They are there to discover something. Unlike when they receive a cold call that interrupts their day, they are at your event already in buying mode. Additionally, tradeshow attendees are more likely to have buying authority. Here are some statistics from a study conducted by the [Center for Exhibition Industry Research \(CEIR\)](#):

- 86 percent of show attendees were the decision-maker or influenced buying decisions.
- Closing a sale that begins with contact at a tradeshow runs about half the cost of closing a sale that doesn't have the exhibition advantage: \$550 and 1.4 sales calls compared to \$997 and 3.6 sales calls.

This Ebook contains a tradeshow-ready sales script that is a proven winner—along with essential advice for making it work.



Tactics



Strategy: Don't pitch. Instead, have a conversation. *Take listening breaks* if you notice you are the only one talking. Prospects don't want a long-winded rundown of your complete product line, that's what your website or brochure is for. Don't push your products on people. When you ask questions and listen to the answers, **you learn**. The rule: get information before you give information.

It may sound obvious but greet people who seem interested in your booth. Extend your hand, smile, and learn your prospects name.

Attitude: You are a helper who creates win/win relationships for all involved. Approach your tradeshow as an opportunity to help the attendees do their jobs better. Key to this attitude is do not present your solution until you have found your prospect's pain. Be genuine. Forced smiles and being overly polite suggests insincerity.

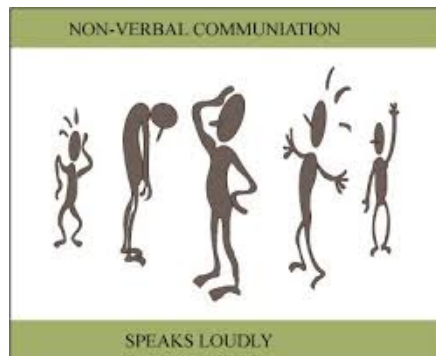
Preparation: After determining a need, you will need to be able to quickly explain why your product or service helps your prospect better than anyone else's. Equip your booth staff with the mindset that they are problem solvers there to help people meet their work challenges. Refine your 30-second pitch.



Tactics



Timing: Don't jump the gun. Instead, let customers have the forum to describe their pain points. Notice body language. Do they appear bored? If they are interested and ready to close, take steps to move the business forward.



Behavior: Realize that a tradeshow attendee is probably fatigued. Be empathetic to their weary brains. Be concise. If you start to see their eyes glaze over, stop talking. The idea is to get them talking and keep your pitch brief. The more your prospect talks, the better.

Setting the Scene

Here's the script, with explanations for each element, starting with your opening line. For example, let's pretend our sample exhibitor sells electronic displays. *The exhibitor sees someone coming near the booth and studying the signage.*

1) Greetings



Greet first. Extend your hand, smile, and learn your prospects name.

Pro tip: Look at the attendee's name badge. Remember their name and use it. This could be your next big sale, especially when you sell helicopters.

Even if you are busy, always acknowledge them and say you'll be right with them. If you can't talk acknowledge with eye contact, a nod or by putting up your finger as if to say, "one minute"

You say: (Icebreaker) Hey, Danielle look, we are wearing the same color today.

You'll notice the exhibitor didn't even introduce themselves or describe their services yet. The old school way said to establish rapport and trust that you should identify yourself immediately. However, if you think about it, an attendee walks up to a booth to determine if you have a good solution to their problem. So instead of "Hi my name is Jim," say something about them—not you. Prospects are interested in themselves first, and you and your product next. The goal here should be to quickly identify what your prospect is struggling with.

2) Identifying Needs

You say: *What are you looking for today, Danielle? or What brings you to the show today?*

Notice these are open-ended questions. They require more than a yes or no answer.

Pro tip: If you don't have the appropriate solution, recommend another exhibitor (preferably) or non-exhibiting company, if you can. Your visitor will appreciate your forthrightness. You might win future business, as a result. If you refer another exhibitor, suggest that your visitor mentions that you made the recommendation. The other exhibitor may return the favor.



3) Pay attention! Ask questions. Listen to answers.

You say: *We specialize in electronic displays for corporate use, how would you be using this electronic display?*

We have three models that run between 1 and 3 thousand dollars. Do you have a ballpark budget for your electronic display?

Save time for everyone when you learn the budget range, up front.



Warning: Ask about budget only if prospects already decided they are in the market for what you have. Don't expect a planned budget for an unplanned purchase.

3) Pay attention! Ask questions. Listen to answers.

You say: Is purchasing a electronic display a priority for you, Danielle? We can help you.

Be aware of their language here, they may not be qualified, they may just want to check things out—

because displays are cool. If they say, “No not really,” you can still engage with them, but if there are people waiting, it’s polite to say “Thanks for stopping by, enjoy rest of the show, here’s a tchotchke.”



4) The Pitch



This next section demonstrates respect for the attendees' time and an understanding that your booth is not the only one they are visiting that day. It's important to refine your pitch.

You say: Danielle, I'm sure you're busy and I respect your time, so I'll be brief. Since you are a corporate/VIP operator working around the globe you have specific needs. Our premier display is easy to read, has high definition, and is light weight. This is what makes this display a great value.

(Show a demo on iPad) This display is easy to use by adults, children, almost anyone! With screen touch technology becoming the norm, we recommend this display.



4) The Pitch



The key here is, before you tell a prospect what your product does tell them how it will benefit them.

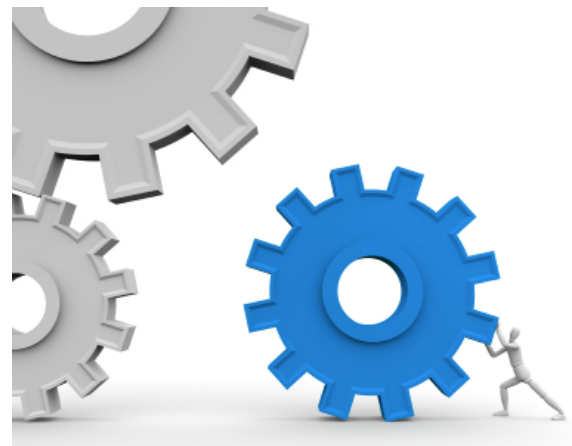
Because our salesperson learned the prospect's specific needs, they are able to present exactly the information Danielle was looking for. If our salesperson talked too much, and did not listen, they might give Danielle the wrong product information and lose the sale.



5) The Offer and Closing

You say: Do you have any unanswered questions about our new touch screen display? I want to follow-up in the best way possible. I'd be glad to send you more customer testimonials and videos and also put you in touch with customers who've purchased from us before, if that will help us stand out among the electronic displays you're considering.

Your prospect may not be ready to sign on the dotted line at the event. Particularly for a purchase of great magnitude, do not expect it. Ask what they need to help them make a decision. The key to making a good connection at a tradeshow is simply following up in a way that's best for your prospect. Discounts, specials, and other incentives are a great way to be remembered by your prospect. Don't lead with the deal, end with the deal.



Pro tip: Make notes immediately after your interaction and reference them in your follow-up. Keep your promises. Send the information requested and call when you say you will.

In the end it's important to be human and stimulate conversation. Be yourself. The script above is meant to be used loosely. Think of the script as objectives your conversation should meet.

7 Principles to Remember:

1

Go for the more complicated sale. Often the easiest sale can be made from prospects who don't have a clear understanding of their needs. Asking questions and listening to the answers lets you see the customer's situation as it really is. Once you have a understanding of your customer's pain, help the customer visualize a better situation. Educate people by sharing with how your product or service will make their life that much easier and business that much more successful.

Pro Tip: Sometimes a prospect can't articulate their biggest job challenge, so don't pressure them. Recognize this and move on to another, less intimidating question.

7 Principles to Remember:



Ask don't tell. Don't provide so much information.

Much of an attendee's decision process (researching solutions, setting requirements, comparing pricing, for example) is complete before the first engagement with a salesperson!

- “57% of the purchase decision is complete before a customer even calls a supplier.” ([CEB](#))
- “67% of the buyer's journey is now done digitally.” ([SiriusDecisions](#))

So ask questions first then, if relevant, share your marketing materials and demo to your prospect.

7 Principles to Remember:



Show it, don't say it allow attendees to share an experience with your brand. People will be more inclined to remember an experience rather than a sales pitch. Put your products in the hands of potential customers.

- 90% of information transmitted to the brain is visual, and visuals are processed 60,000 times faster in the brain than text. (Sources: [3M Corporation](#) and [Zabisco](#))
- Viewers are 85% more likely to purchase a product after watching a product video. (Source: [Internet Retailer](#))

Don't have a physical product, or you sell displays? Get an iPad. Think of all of the things you cannot adequately demo on a tradeshow floor: your newest electronic display and your customers lauding your service. You can demonstrate each of these on an iPad that your visitor can hold in her hands. Once you've demonstrated the product, you can segue right into customer qualification and lead collection.

7 Principles to Remember:



Lead retrieval: If your prospect is qualified and seems interested, politely ask to scan their badge. Who hasn't experienced the exhibitor that scans everything that moves? If your dog

accompanied you to a show, there are exhibitors that would attempt to scan Fido. What are these folks thinking? Is it about bragging rights? "This year we got 973 leads!" Did the fact that you were giving away an iPad every 20 minutes have any bearing on the number of "leads" you got? Focus on lead quality, not quantity.



7 Principles to Remember:



Don't be pathetic. Be enthusiastic about your offering, but don't be so desperate to make the sale that it shows. If a prospect senses you only care about making the sale rather than helping find the product or service that's right for them, they won't trust you. You are speaking to a human being, not a "sale."



Focus on helping, not closing. Your goal is to make sure you can solve a prospect's problem. If you can't, don't pretend to be able to just to make a sale. Have a few qualifying questions ready to ask to weed out the tire kickers. It's very important that you do not waste time with unqualified prospects.

7 Principles to Remember:



No bullying tactics. Though they may help close a few deals, it's not the way you want to start out a business relationship. Don't use aggressive tactics; instead be mindful of the attendee's time. Determine needs and move the business along. If you find yourself saying words like: *final offer, making my numbers, pricing changing soon, reminder, buy right now, then the offer is off the table or that its the end of the month -* you're a bully.

Asking assertive questions like, "When will you be making a decision?" is perfectly acceptable. Also, when they say they are not interested, thank them for their time and let them be on their way.

Conclusion

Keep your pitch simple. Walter Isaacson's biography, "Steve Jobs", notes Jobs' constant recognition of Leonardo Da Vinci's words, "Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication."

Bombarding attendees with an overload of information about your product or service will provoke disengagement.

Think back to when you were in school. When a teacher or professor taught a class, she would break the overall subject into various sub-divisions. From there you would focus on one theme at a time. This is true with exhibits. Focus on one main theme and then work your entire presentation around it. This will be more inviting and far less intimidating for attendees. It makes things simple, clear, and to the point, and in turn helps you sell more. Focus on only a couple of products or services and discuss no more than three main points.

