

Exhibiting Defined – 10 Important Tips for Success!

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During her 30 years of experience in sales and marketing, Terri has spent hours planning and staffing exhibit booths as well as developing and overseeing the implementation of many tradeshow events. This includes recruiting and managing exhibitors and sponsors and implementing ways to increase attendee engagement with vendors. Participating on both sides of the exhibit space, Terri has learned how to get the best ROI for exhibitors. With experience on what works and what doesn't, Swanson continues her quest to keep learning and sharing.

E is for **EXPANSION**

Think about how attendees will remember you after they have left your booth; this means having plenty of promotional material on hand. If you catch someone's attention, you need to be ready to expand on what you have to offer, keeping in mind that attendees have other booths to visit as well. Be ready with business cards and informational brochures that will go more in depth after you've created an impression and will also allow the opportunity for follow-up.

X is for **XENIAL**

Something that is xenial describes a friendly relationship between two parties; when considering this, think about body language, tone of voice, and the way you are presenting yourself. The goal is to build trust and to create inviting experiences for attendees that are representative of your brand. Don't focus on selling a product or a service, focus on building a relationship.

H is for **HASHTAGS**

More specifically, using social media to your advantage. Does the trade show have a specific hashtag they are using? If so, take advantage of the fact that attendees will likely be browsing posts that include that phrase, and use it to draw attention to your booth. Do *you* have a specific promotional hashtag that is being used? If you do, think about involving attendees on social media and giving them incentive for using your hashtag and promoting your booth! Be creative!

I is for **INITIATIVE**

Take the initiative by reaching out to your current clients ahead of time to let them know you will be exhibiting at an event. Make sure this is complete with all of the information needed (time, date, location, booth number, etc.) for them to be able to attend. Bringing traffic to your booth generates curiosity among attendees, and will urge them to check out what you have to offer.

B is for **BRANDING**

Think about giveaways that promote your brand, but if possible go further than stickers, pens, or keychains. Consider items that stand out, like hats or sunglasses or other types of items that attendees can wear around the event and spark curiosity in others. Consider pop-culture as well, and think about items that would be popular, (e.g., 2017 had a strange obsession with fidget spinners), or consider items that would be useful, like USB power adapters. If your brand can get people to ask, “Where did you get that?” it will lead others who also want to have that item to your booth.

I is for **INCENTIVE**

Games, giveaways, contests, and more! Make people *want* to visit your booth. While at these events, attendees are given the opportunity to learn new skills and to network, but it is safe to assume that they do not want to be lectured the entire day – people want to have fun! Do you have something that stands out and makes attendees want to stop by your booth? A mascot? A prize wheel? A giant cutout for people to take selfies with? Create incentive with an interactive experience that will draw attendees in and generate communication, because there is nothing interesting about tri-fold poster set up on a tabletop.

T is for **TIMING**

Timing is everything. Know the main points and important details of your presentation and make sure you present them in a timely matter, as there are plenty of other booths for attendees to explore. You don't want to waste their time with information they don't want or

need, and you don't want to waste your time by not maximizing on the amount of people you talk to. You also don't want those who stop by your booth to leave without the essential information. Consider the opposite side of timing as well, by recognizing who is intrigued and engaged and allowing time to be spent with them expanding on a conversation and by answering questions or creating more interest.

I is for **INTENTION**

So you've created incentive for attendees to visit your booth by having small favors they can take with them but how can you do more? Having them grab a keychain with your logo on it is nice advertisement but what you really want is to create longevity by taking the time to talk to them and allowing them to further explore what you have to offer. Be intentional in your set up; think of placing these items further within your booth so they have to walk through it, or have them accomplish a task before they can have it, so that they take the time to converse with you.

N is for **NETWORKING**

Build connections while you are there – speak to as many attendees that you can, as well as fellow exhibitors. Most importantly, ensure a quick follow-up after the event has ended. The sooner you follow up with those you've met during the trade show, the better, because a quick follow-up shows that you have made it a priority to give thanks or reach out.

G is for **GAME PLAN**

Do your research ahead of time and consider the demographics of those who will be in attendance, then be sure to plan your pitch, prizes, incentives, and goals accordingly. Being well-informed about who you will be presenting to and preparing activities specifically for that demographic will put you at an obvious advantage over someone who has the same generic presentation each time.