SOUNDadvice

10 Do's and Don’ts for Productive Sales Meetings ©

Field Guide

from the article **Sales Meetings? What For?** by Wayne Ens

1. **Do** plan and prepare meetings from a sales person’s perspective. With every item on the agenda, answer the question; "what's in it for me?" from a sales person's point of view.
   Do not use the meetings for a forum to discuss individual problems or other ‘downers’ which don’t apply to the group as a whole.
2. **Do** start and finish the meeting with positive, upbeat topics. Have the sales people each share a ‘good news’ story about your company, your market, your products, a sale or a customer satisfaction story.
   Do not dwell on topics which do not pertain to the majority in attendance. Such topics should be dealt with one-on-one.
3. **Do** have an agenda, and circulate it to the staff ahead of time. This forces you to prepare for the meeting, and gives your staff a chance to prepare for it as well.
   Do not be the only speaker on the agenda. . . Bring in other staff members, suppliers, experts, department heads or even customers to answer questions or help train the staff.
4. **Do** take minutes of every meeting and circulate them widely within the company. Minutes document answers to questions, and can keep other non-attending department heads and team members in the loop.
   Do not circulate the minutes until you have approved them to avoid misinterpretations or publicizing confidential information.
5. **Do** recognize any group or individual staff accomplishments.
   Do not reprimand anyone at a meeting.
6. **Do** encourage participation. Assign certain topics to be presented or chaired by staff members, encourage questions and as often as possible compliment and thank them for their participation.
7. **Do not** let the participation escalate into ‘mutiny sessions’. Don't ignore complaints, but answer them quickly and move on, or suggest you’ll answer the concern in a one-on-one after the meeting.

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8. **Do** have your sales meetings on the same day and time consistently. This way the staff can plan around them and you avoid the old; "I thought the meeting was next week" excuse.
   Do not change the meeting day or time for ANY reason. Changing the meeting sends a signal that sales meetings are not important, and shows a lack of respect for your staff's time. Also never delay the meeting start time because an attendee is late.
9. **Do** have a central theme or objective and keep meetings within the allotted time.
   Do not try to cover too many topics at one meeting.
10. **Do** hold morning meetings. Research has proven the human mind is much more receptive, and retention levels are higher, in the morning.
    Do not (if possible) always hold meetings on premises. Off-site meetings can add excitement and impetus to special meetings.
11. **Do** lighten up. Have surprise visits by Santa at a Christmas sales meeting, or have coffee and birthday cake if a member is celebrating a birthday.
    Do not limit attendance to ‘sales’ people. Everyone who has customer contact, from the receptionist to the service manager should be invited when your agenda covers areas of interest to them.

Properly planned and executed meetings can be one of your most effective management and communications tools.

The litmus test is to ask your staff how they feel about sales meetings. If they say you have too many, they are too long, or they are in the 89% that think meeting are “usually a waste of time”, yours probably are!