

50 WAYS TO MEET YOUR MANAGER

PREPARING FOR A TRADE SHOW

1. **Plan 60 - 90 days in advance.** Come prepared to the show, ready to attract the manager's attention with creativity and flair.
2. **Arm yourself with a profile of your key accounts.** Be prepared to talk with them.
3. **Let your targets know you want their business.** Prior to the conference, send personalized direct mail to your targets. Call or mail in advance with the message, "I'm looking forward to seeing you at CACM's annual trade show."
4. **Prepare direct mail that really sells.** Make sure it is simple, attractive, and compelling enough to bring your targets to your booth.
5. **Use creativity to enhance your booth presentation.**
6. **Choose booth staff wisely.** Staff your booth with those who enjoy meeting people. Your booth staff should be energetic and approachable, and not necessarily those who have longevity within the organization.
7. **Train booth staff.** Set strategies in advance.
8. **Save room for customers.** Successful exhibitors know that too many people in the booth at one time does not promote comfort for a customer.
9. **Set goals and realistic objectives for booth personnel.** Think who and what, not just how many. The trade show is an opportunity to build relationships. Don't focus merely on attracting as many people as possible to see your exhibit.
10. **But do set some numerical goals.** Perhaps on making 5 new valuable contacts and meeting with 7-10 existing clients to reinforce the relationship. Focus on the value of the contacts rather than the quantity and again, set realistic goals.
11. **Design an inviting booth.**
12. **Display vibrant art and photos.** Visuals tell the best story.
13. **Hang visuals so that can be seen when people are standing in your exhibit.**
14. **Keep printed signs brief.** Make sure they are easy to see and read with little more than the name of your company (no acronyms).
15. **Use provocative phrases.** Draw people in with words that make them stop and think.
16. **Run videos.** They greatly enhance your ability to describe what you're selling. Remember your neighbors, though, and keep audio at a minimum.
17. **Rethink how much collateral you'll need.** Even when attendees accept your written materials, these items often end up in the trash outside the trade show doors. Instead of toting heavy boxes of materials to/from the show, offer to mail literature to attendees. They will appreciate the follow-up and will pay more attention to it at their office. And offering to mail is a good way to get someone's card.

18. **Plan a contest or activity.** It's a good way of drawing people to your booth and keeping them involved in your exhibit.
19. **Incorporate the show theme into your booth.** Managers look forward to seeing how exhibitors decorate their booths. Booths are judged and ribbons awarded.

IN THE BOOTH

20. **Be a people-stopper.** Don't blend into the background of your booth or into the crowd of exhibitors. Wear something that might attract attention; an interesting pin or tie. Remember, you are on exhibit as much as your material is.
21. **Wear Comfortable shoes.** If your feet hurt, the discomfort may show on your face.
22. **Don't sit.** Look eager, energetic, and ready to conduct business at all times.
23. **Do network with other exhibitors.** If you meet a potential customer who has a need that you can't fill, tell that person about an exhibitor who can. Better yet, *walk* that person over to another exhibitor. Doing so demonstrates you are truly concerned about customer's needs, plus that other exhibitor will owe you one.
24. **Exude professionalism.** Be as concerned about what other exhibitors think about you as what attendees think of you.
25. **Make direct eye contact.** Keep smiling.
26. **Use effective body language.** Strike a welcoming stance. Don't cross your arms. Keep your hands out of your pockets.
27. **Be spirited.** Enthusiasm breeds enthusiasm. People will *want* to talk with you.
28. **Be relaxed and natural.** Don't forget to have fun.
29. **Practice listening.** You can't learn anything while you are talking.
30. **Play phrases back to your customers.** Repeating some of their words in your responses shows that you were listening attentively.
31. **Take Notes.** Don't trust your memory. Carry a notepad or index cards to recall those you meet so you will remember who's interested in what, and whom you made promises to. Prove to customers that you are serious about assisting them.
32. **Use pre-printed forms.** On the forms, list key questions and leave space to fill in answers.
33. **Use the backs of business cards.** Write personal reminders about the person you met. In casual conversation, did he mention about recently becoming a dog owner? Did she talk about an interesting trip? Use information to personalize your follow-up letters by asking about these items.
34. **Use your business cards to end a conversation.** All of us sometimes find ourselves in conversations that we need to conclude. Exchanging business cards draws the discussion to a close.

AT THE SHOW

35. **Attend Keynote Sessions with customers.** Learn together.
36. **Assign someone to each session that offers a chance to make a valuable contact.** Beyond the learning opportunities are networking and relationship-building opportunities.
37. **Attend receptions and social events.** This is a wonderful opportunity to make additional contacts in a relaxed and fun atmosphere.
38. **Attend awards ceremonies.** Send congratulatory letters to the winners.
39. **When taking a seat at a sit-down meal function, introduce yourself to everyone at your table.**
40. **Turn your exhibit into a business center.** Attendees greatly appreciate the convenience of free on-site services.
41. **Get plenty of rest each night.** Staffing a booth requires you to be “up” constantly. It can be exhausting.

SHOW FOLLOW-UP

42. **Act quickly.** Call your office and have a proposal sent to a potential client on your behalf. Plan for the proposal to arrive before or on the day the customer gets back to his or her office.
43. **Keep a couple of days completely free after you return to the office.** Plan this in advance to allow plenty of time for immediate follow-up.
44. **If you say you'll send something, send it.** The major complaint CACM hears from its trade show attendees is that exhibitors don't follow through with their promises.
45. **Say it overnight.** Send a telegram or Federal Express letter that says, “Welcome Back.”
46. **Don't use form letters based on the registration list.** Write only to individuals you actually met. Think about how you feel when you receive form letters.
47. **Use handwritten notes.**
48. **And personalize them.** Highlight at least one hot button important to the particular customer you're writing to.
49. **Stay on top of current management industry issues.** Reading *Vision Magazine* or *The Law Journal*, published by CACM, will enable you to talk about industry issues with customers.
50. **JOIN CACM and participate in more than just the annual trade show.** Receive maximum benefits by attending more of the scheduled events.