

If you've completed the first exercise, you're on your way to a successful exhibit. You have at least three SMART goals backed up with written action plans.

Now it's time to give careful thought to...

## **CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTOR #2: MANAGE YOUR VISITOR'S EXPERIENCE**

Managing your visitor experience means carefully addressing three areas: 1) your stand, 2) your product/service presentation/demonstration, and 3) your stand staff.

### **1. Keys to a Successful Stand**

Think of your stand like a billboard on a freeway. Attendees are driving down the aisle at 70 miles per hour. The first thing your stand must do is grab their attention and force them to look at it. Effective ways to make your stand more visible include using bold or brand colors in your stand property, carpet and images, using strong lighting to draw attention to product displays or imagery, large imagery that is relevant to the audience, using motion or things that blink or flash, and integrating technology such as flat panels, video walls and interactive touch screens.

Once they look, your stand must quickly and visually answer the questions of 1) what do you do?, 2) why should they care?, and 3) who are you? Next, your stand must be easy to enter, navigate, find what they are looking for, and exit. Finally, your stand should strongly reinforce your brand identity.

**EXERCISE:** *Set up or look at a picture of your stand and assess how well it's addressing these factors. If it's weak in any of these areas, consider making changes before the show.*

### **2. Keys to Successful Presentations and Demonstrations**

CEIR research found the #1 way attendees want to engage with stands is through interactive presentations and demonstrations. Give very careful thought as to how you are displaying, presenting and distributing your samples, products and services. **Try making it as interactive as possible.** Show them, tell them, and get them to do something to create maximum impact. Be sure to reinforce your key takeaway messages with well-placed static and or A/V graphics.

**EXERCISE:** *Think through your product or service presentation with emphasis on multi-sensory interaction with visitors.*

### **3. Keys to Successful Stand Staffing**

Your people will make or break your success at tradeshow. Be sure to have enough staffing during all open exhibit hours. If you're in a medium or larger stand, make sure it is easy for visitors to identify who your staffers are. Have multiple types of staffers, including sales, marketing, technical, customer service, and executives. Be sure everyone looks and acts like they want to be there. Stand up, smile and engage visitors on the perimeter. Quickly welcome and engage visitors who enter your stand. Spend the first few minutes asking questions about the visitor; who they are, why they are visiting, and what prompted their interest in your products/services. Avoid staff behavioral mistakes that reduce stand traffic like sitting, looking

disinterested, talking with other staffers, texting or talking on cell phones, and eating or drinking in the stand.

**EXERCISE:** *Get your stand staff together and discuss your staffing game plan and the rules of effective exhibitorship before the show.*



**Got Questions About Completing this Exercise?**

Email your questions to Jefferson Davis, Trade Show

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