

Top tips for face-to-face selling

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It is common for salespeople to seek a path that offers least resistance. For example, a salesperson may prefer sending an email or making a quick phone call rather than meeting up with the customer. What the majority of salespeople don't know is that customers ignore emails and calls, which means selling products and services becomes more difficult.

Meeting a customer creates a better impression as the customer gets to know they are important to you just because you have taken a few minutes from your busy life to make a face-to-face meeting possible. During this time, a salesperson can collect lots of important information and statistics. You can gauge the reaction of the customer, and find out problems they have with your products and services, finally coming up with ways to overcome them.

One drawback of a face-to-face meeting is time. Meetings are time-consuming and research reveals that 7% of salespeople spend their time in a face-to-face meeting. 93% of their time is spent either in the office, in non-sales activities and on the road. This is why it's important to take time and prepare for a meeting to ensure successful results.



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Here are tips to help you prepare for a face-to-face meeting.

Do some research on the company?

Start with your customer's website and company news section. Researching on the company will help you find an angle for your sales pitch. You can also use the information in your meeting. If you meet the customer at an exhibition, find out if they enjoyed it or not.

Research the customer

It is also wise to research the person you are meeting. Check on their background and look for online articles and press releases where they have been quoted. There are several places you can get information about the person – blogs, the company website, LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and media websites.

Take charge of time

It is important to inform your customer how much time the meeting will take. You also need to countercheck the time allocated to avoid clashing with your other activities.

Have the right answers at hand

As said earlier, research is very important as it allows you to know more about the company and the person. As the salesperson, you need to know that your customer will raise problems and objections about your products and services. It is important to be prepared. Think about the person you are meeting that is if you are meeting a person from the financial industry, they will have different objectives compared to another from the engineering industry.

Plan early

Never keep your customer waiting for you at the venue. There is no excuse to be late. Plan your day, especially your journey to the meeting location. Use your GPS if the location is new to you. Check traffic reports early and find a parking spot early.

Dress well

Dress professionally by investing in a suit, leather shoes, a watch (should not be cheap) and a professional hairstyle or haircut. Make sure your shoes are polished and your suit, tie, shirt/blouse are well ironed. Arrive at the venue 15 minutes or more early. This allows you plenty of time to scope the location and prepare your presentation. You don't want to make a mistake and start the wrong presentation belonging to a different company.

Your PowerPoint slides should be tailored to the client. It should focus on their needs in order to entice them into buying your products and services.

Be in control

As a salesperson and the initiator of the meeting, you need to control the meeting by setting the agenda.

Have questions prepared

Just because you are the salesperson does not mean you don't have questions you need answered. This will not only impress the customer, but you will gather more information from answers presented to develop or market other products.

Be an excellent time manager

When spending a considerable amount of time on the road, it is wise to be an excellent time manager. Start by organising different meetings on a single day. They don't have to be in the same location, but again the locations should not be far from each other. This will help in minimising travel expenses, plus it will allow you to market your company's products and services efficiently.

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