



We're Back! After a brief hiatus, **Marketech Memos** is back. This is Marketech's move from print to electronic transmittal of our quarterly newsletter. We hope that you find this helpful in dealing with the daily challenges that event marketing presents us.

If you do not want to receive this newsletter that focuses on the staffing and measurement issues of event marketing, then just e-mail us to remove your name from our distribution list.

If you know of other professionals that might benefit from receiving this electronic periodical, e-mail us at info@marketech360.com, so we can add them to our distribution list. Send us a name and we'll send you a copy of "Trade Show Truths."

Fast Company interviewed Jeffrey Immelt, CEO of General Electric in their April, 2004 issue. I am sure that Mr. Immelt has attended at least one trade show in his career, but his article was not about event marketing, but leadership in general. **His Top 10 Leadership Tips are applicable to event management.**

1. Personal Responsibility – take personal responsibility for your events, from planning to execution and follow-up. You can lead your event managers by creating effective teams of constituent groups that meet the sales and marketing needs of your organization.
2. Simplify Constantly – you work in a most complex environment. In order to stay focused and keep the team focused on the objectives defined in your event plan, constantly keep simplifying your systems.
3. Understand the depth, the breadth and context – keep top of mind of how everyone on your event team fits into your marketing mix. What role do they play? What objectives do they achieve?
4. The Importance of Alignment and Time Management – focus on what is really important and delegate other responsibilities that may not be as critical. Focus on what is *Urgent* and what is *Important*, and then let the important get done when it fits.
5. Learn Constantly – set time aside every day to learn something new whether it be to read an article in an industry magazine, find an online resource or talk to an expert on a subject. Be a life-long learner.
6. Stay True to Your Own Style – always be aware of your own style, one that is comfortable for you.
7. Manage by Setting Boundaries with Freedom in the Middle – avoid being a micromanager. The generation of answers to difficult questions is derived from setting the boundaries and allowing those to whom you have delegated to provide the solutions. Stay out of their way and let them rise to the occasion.

8. Stay Disciplined and Detailed – Create a structure that is comfortable and be disciplined so that you stick with it. Involve yourself in whatever detail is important so that you know and understand the event business.
 9. Leave a Few Things Unsaid – let your team find its own way, even if you know the answer. It allows the team to grow.
 10. Like People – be a people person. Know your people and your internal team. Understand what motivates and drives them. It will help when things go awry.
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What are the six most common mistakes that exhibitors make:

1. They just show up. They don't take the time to understand the event, prepare what they want to say to get conversations going and comprehend the key messages that they are expected to deliver. They treat the event the same as their everyday activities.
 2. They don't think about how to get visitors attention. It takes an integrated approach – eye contact, smile and engagement. What can you say to get the conversation going that is interesting to the visitor and gets them talking about their agenda?
 3. Focusing on the visitor's badge and not the visitor and their needs. Too many exhibit staffers are so product oriented, they say, "Welcome to our exhibit, and now let me tell you about our products". A Great Beginning is an open-ended question that asks the visitor to tell you why they are there, what is on their agenda and what they want to know. This is taking a visitor-focused approach and the responses become a guide for the staffer as to what to talk about. Once the visitor's needs are satisfied, the staffer can talk about their messages.
 4. Focusing on product features, not on finding qualified visitors who are there to understand what benefits you are offering to them.
 5. Demonstrations can provide proof and benefit. But too many staffers move right to the demo without ever qualifying the visitors. The staffers do not consider what role they want the product or service to play in the demo, nor do they think about the one BIG IDEA they want to communicate that will be remembered. They take too long to demo a product – 5 minutes maximum. And if they are too long, too broad and have too much information, visitors will tune out.
 6. 55-60% of an individual's communication is nonverbal. Staffers who don't pay attention to nonverbal communications often deliver messages that are negatively interpreted by visitors as "you are not approachable" or "not interested" as they talk to each other or stand with their backs to the aisle, or "have other business elsewhere" while talking on their cell phones.
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There are three types of objectives when planning face-to-face marketing events:

Communications Goals – these goals address awareness, perception and corporate position

- Affect perceptions.
 - Establish/enhance awareness.
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- Reinforce/change or create a position for the company/organization such as leadership, dominant, aggressive, proactive, etc.
- Generate a specific message such as, “the only solution,” or “a global player.”
- Identify capabilities such as new products/services/solutions.
- Differentiate your company for competitive offerings.

Measurable Objectives – these objectives deal in quantifiable numbers and ROI. Anything that can be measured such as leads, qualified leads, dollar value of sales-

- Total number of prospects vs. qualified prospects
- Percentage increases/changes in numbers from the previous year’s show
- The total number of quality leads your company needs to generate through the promotion to make the investment worthwhile
- Exit surveys to test perceptions before and after the visit to the booth
- Establish qualified leads
- Build a database for subsequent advertising activities
- Generate specific dollar volume of sales
- Increase sales with existing customer or clients
- Establish new distributorships/suppliers/representatives for your product/services
- Recruit employees for the company

Logistic Goals – these are goals that deal with how you communicate and what you want to provoke or see happen on the show floor, such as facilitate desirable traffic flow, attract attention, generate excitement.

- Attract attention among attendees who are not familiar with your organization
- Generate excitement in the exhibit and around the convention
- Increase pre-show awareness of your participation
- Educate customers/prospects about specific solutions in the exhibit or to specific product/service areas
- Schedule time to prepare the staff for effective execution in the exhibit and around the show floor
- Prepare a response in order to capitalize on the opportunities created by the promotion

Why Use Sponsorships to Promote Your Event?

- Reach your targeted audience in a visible manner.
- Differentiate your organization/company, its products/ services.
- Create mind share – competitive advantage.
- Eclipse advertisers with larger marketing budgets.
- Showcase product attributes – proof and benefit.
- Provide merchandising opportunities.
- To entertain your audience.
- Drive sales.
- Change perceptions.
- Communicate commitment to a set of values or your culture.
- Shape attendee attitudes or perceptions.

Designing an exhibit is more than what property do you need and what color should it be? Before you sit down with a designer, you need to ask yourself:

- Why are you exhibiting?
Generating leads for new sales, consummating sales, enhancing your brand, positioning, meeting with existing customers, or learning and teaching
 - Who is your target audience?
Can you describe the audience you want to visit your exhibit?
 - What do you want to communicate?
What messages do you want to deliver to this audience?
 - What do you want to take home that is a measure of your success?
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Learning to Listen

Marjorie Brody, in *Incentive Magazine* gave us an acronym for listening – SOFTEN

S – Smile: your facial expressions can be the difference between inviting and discouraging a good communication.

O – Open posture: body language can make or break a dialogue. Crossing your arms is a sign of defensiveness and does not promote conversation.

F – Forward leaning: body positioning speaks volumes. Again it can invite or discourage communicating.

T – Tone: the sound of your voice can promote listening. Show enthusiasm with pitch and reflection.

E – Eye Communication: making eye contact is critical. It shows that you are paying attention to the speaker.

N – Nod: Demonstrating your agreement and also aids listening.

Thanks and Good Exhibiting.

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