AMERICAN ACADEMY OF OPHTHALMOLOGY®

If you've completed the first two exercises, you're on your way to a successful Annual Meeting exhibit. You have three SMART goals backed up with written action plans and you created a Selective Attraction plan. Now it's time to give careful thought to…

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTOR #3: MANAGING YOUR VISITOR'S EXPEREINCE

Managing your visitor's experience means carefully addressing three areas: 1) your exhibit, 2) your product or service presentation or demonstration, and 3) your exhibit staff.

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

   Once they look, your exhibit 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 exhibit must be easy-to-enter, navigate and exit. Finally, your exhibit should reinforce your brand identity.

   EXERCISE: *Set up or look at a picture of your exhibit 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 exhibits is through interactive presentations and demonstrations. Give very careful thought as to how you are displaying and presenting your 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 graphics.

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

3. Keys to Successful Exhibit Staffing
   Your people will make or break your success at trade shows. Be sure to have enough staffing during all open exhibit hours. If you're in a medium or larger booth, 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 visitors who enter your booth. Spend the first few minutes asking questions about the visitor; who they are, why they are visiting, and what they hope to accomplish. Avoid behavioral mistakes that reduce booth traffic like sitting, talking with other staffers, texting or talking on cell phones, and eating or drinking in the booth.

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

To help you prepare, please be sure to view these webinar replays and read these educational and inspirational materials. All are available on the Exhibitor Resources web page:

Watch:

- How to Make Your AAO Exhibit Stand Out From the Crowd
- Secrets of the Aisles: Critical Skills Every Booth Staffer Needs to Know and Apply

Read:

- Improving Exhibiting Effectiveness e-book
- AAO Standout Exhibit Reports which highlight great exhibiting practices from prior Annual Meetings

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us. Thank you!