



Know Before You Go

WUSATA knows that preparing and executing a successful trade show can sometimes be a daunting task. With so many details and decisions that need to be made, it can seem overwhelming. To help alleviate some of the guesswork, we offer a few words of wisdom gathered by the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) for companies participating in USA Trade Show Pavilions around the globe.

Never underestimate the importance of your trade show booth staff. They are your frontline ambassadors and the critical links to your overall trade show success. The fast pace at a trade show requires a systematic approach in order to effectively attract, engage and create a bond within a very short period with your competition only a short distance away. You have only a few seconds to make an impression or ignite interest. Here are a few tips:

Preparing

- Matched to the audience and type of interaction required (no extreme introverts)
- People oriented, professional, enthusiastic, and motivated!
- Well-versed in product knowledge
- Keen listeners, who are empathetic to the visitor's situation

Setting Up

- Dress for Success:
 - Decorate your area/booth/table to visually sell your products
 - Bring an appropriate amount of materials for your space, but don't overwhelm the area/booth/table with clutter or boxes of materials you can't hide
 - Display all educational and marketing material for easy access and keep them tidy
 - Match your team to the market's audience – no extreme personalities
 - Have your sales team or booth staff look the part. Wear clothing that touts your branding/theme to support your efforts. When in doubt, dress professional. People are looking at your products and your representatives - image is everything and you only get one chance to make a good first impression.
- Be engaged:
 - Make sure your area/booth/table is always staffed.
 - Don't plan on dismantling your area early or leaving the pavilion/booth before the event closes. An empty space affects your image and selling power. In addition, specifically for trade shows, companies who leave early are at risk for penalties from the organizers.
- Keep an event kit handy:
 - Bring supplies to assemble and disassemble your area
 - Suggested items: box cutter, scissors, two-sided tape, picture hooks/Velcro, zip ties/string, first-aid kit, pain and other medications, extra pens/pencils, writing tablets, post-it pads, stapler, calculator, laptop/tablets, and return shipping labels/account numbers

Showtime

- Strive for approachability at all times. Avoid working on your laptop too often, frequently checking your phone, or only focusing on your coworkers
- Prepare 3-6 questions for engaging prospects
- Be friendly and approachable (build a rapport)



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- Greet attendees by name - if you can't pronounce it, ask!
 - Shake hands; match the strength of the other person's handshake and only "pump" twice
 - Don't leave your booth unattended and do not dismantle your booth early.
 - Incorporate a cultural greeting and be aware of cultural differences.
- Ask open-ended questions and ones that will reveal their level of interest
- Gather information in the form of conversation not interrogation
- SMILE! Get a positive attitude. (Where else, other than in a small retail setting, does the buyer come to the seller? Make the most of it!) Capture contact and interest immediately and systematically for follow-up.
- Proper dress is important, and the policy of "when in doubt, go conservative" should apply. Don't be afraid to turn booth staff away if they are improperly attired. Also, be sure to wear your name badge on your right side so the badge faces the prospect when you shake hands.
- Carry and use breath freshener spray or small mints (tiny vs. large, bulky mints.) Shy away from spicy or garlicky food and alcoholic beverages.
- Booth staff should avoid smoking, chewing gum, eating, drinking, heavy colognes and perfumes and anything else that might bother visitors.
- While working the exhibit, don't sit in your booth or lean on the exhibit counters. Keep the booth neat and tidy!
- Make eye contact - never ignore a prospect, even if you're with another prospect. (Give them a nod and "just a minute" sign.) Include them into your conversation. Any one moment can deliver the single customer who can make the difference between success and failure.