

Guide to good sales meetings

The start-up:

1. Present yourself, shake hands, give your business card directly to everybody who participates. Make sure you give it in a way so the recipient feels that you are taking her/him seriously. Ask for the other person's card. Take your time with each handshake and exchange of business cards.
2. Ask who the participants are and what their function is. Even if it says on the business card. A Sales manager or Purchase assistant can be a lot of things. Make sure you ask questions to their functions.
3. Go through the agenda and agree what the result of the meeting has to be. E.g. "When we are done, we agree if we should go on or stop the process now."
4. Agree on the duration of the meeting. This enables you to get to all the points you want to go through, ask about or explain, before the meeting has to end.
5. Let the client speak in the beginning. Avoid going directly to your presentation. Ask questions about them and their company.

During the meeting:

1. Make sure you look at all the participants in turn. Never only look at "the boss". You can often create good allies by giving attention to the "subordinates" who participate. Bosses will sometimes ask them what they thought of you and the meeting. If they like you they will be your ambassadors.
2. Take notes! If you think you can remember all the details from the meeting you are wrong! Note all the subjects, deadlines and relevant things. It helps you later and gives the impression that you are professional and interested.

Ending the meeting:

1. Call for action. What is going to happen now. Who will do what and when are you going to be in contact again. Make sure you agree on a fixed time and date. If you are the salesperson, YOU will always get back to the customer, even if they say they will. It is your duty to make it easy for the client!
2. Openly ask if you forgot to ask about something. After which you ask if they forgot to ask you about something. This will leave them with the recollection that you and they discussed all the things you were supposed to.
3. If the meeting was really good and you have a good feeling about the customer, ask if they know anybody who would also be interested in talking to you. The meeting becomes a lead generator. Only advisable if the meeting was really good.