

A note from us

Happy Independence Day to everyone here in the US! We hope you had a safe and joyful celebration and trust you paused a moment to remember just what our freedom means and what it costs.

I was in Las Vegas for several days attending a conference for human resource professionals in order to get CEUs necessary to maintain my HR certificate. There were more than 750 vendors there and they ranged from companies like Monster.com to Land's End to Aflac to Target.

There were 57 different categories of industry segments with categories ranging in size from small (3 HMOs) to huge (87 Pre-employment / Employee Testing / Investigation).

I asked the vendors I met what made them different from the others in their category. The best 99% of them could do was tell me how long they'd been around (as if a prospect should buy from them just because they've survived), and they were "better than the competition." Yawn. Some of them stressed they had better prices.

In the words of Dan Pink, author of *A Whole New Mind*, and a keynote speaker at the conference, "When you compete on price, you are in a death spiral."

On the plus side for me, in addition to the CEUs, the conference gave me lots of material to write about. So between the newsletter and the blog, you'll want to stay plugged in to us because there were lots of lessons at that conference.

One of which was don't fly US Airways if you can avoid it.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Winnie", with a horizontal line underneath it.

Winnie Anderson

Featured Article

The 5 Questions You Must Ask Before Committing to a Trade Show

A booth at a trade show or conference can be a great way to raise recognition of your business and make contact with a lot of prospects.

Here are 5 basic questions you have to ask before booking your space. Your answers may encourage you to sign up quickly or take a pass on the event.

Who's going to be there? If the typical attendees aren't those professionals who you want to get your material in front of this probably isn't the event for you. Can the group hosting the event supply you with data from previous events? If not, then save your money or look for another show.

What will you say to them? You've got to engage attendees in a conversation to identify whether they're a true prospect and if they're a good fit for your organization. You should have several open-ended questions ready and be prepared to make notes.

Where will you be positioned? The best booths go to the companies with the most money to spend, who have attended more than once, and who are also sponsors of the event. If you get a terrible location – like a spot in the far corner away from any of the main entrances and exits – you could be wasting your money. You may feel it's expensive to pay for better positioning; but it's even more expensive to attend a tradeshow and not get any leads.

When will the show be held? This is important, not just because you need to check your schedule for conflicts, but also because it will take months to get all your materials ready and to promote your attendance as much as possible. You need time to get articles and other materials in front of potential attendees to help generate interest in stopping by your booth.

Why are you participating? Know your goals before you send in your check. Whether it's getting a certain number of leads, boosting or solidifying your reputation as a real player in your industry, or some other objective, you've got to know what you want before you can go get it. If this event won't grow your reputation or increase your revenue potential enough to make your attendance pay off, then skip this one.

Here's a bonus question for you:

How will you attract attendees to your booth? Even if your booth is in a good spot, you'll need to make some effort to attract visitors. This can be done with a drawing, demonstrations, giveaways, or

some combination. You have to weigh the pros and cons of the costs of these items and the number of low quality leads attracted compared to the increase in traffic you'll get.

Participating in a trade show or conference can be a great way to increase exposure and raise awareness of your company and its offerings. With a lot of planning and a solid strategy you can make attendance your attendance pay off.

Your next step: Consider who are the decision makers you want to get in front of and then find the association they'd belong to. A check of the association's website will give you information on regional, national, and international conferences.



About Abiah

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