

Special Management Series

Oh No, Not Another B****y Sales Meeting!

Presented by J.W. Owens



A Perspective 101 Series



Oh No, Not Another B****y Sales Meeting!

I don't know about you, but as a young sales professional – yes, that was an awfully long time ago –

I used to dread sales meetings:

Typically, they were boring, uninspiring and a total waste of my precious selling time.

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When I moved into management, one of the first challenges I set myself, was **to make my meetings an event to look forward to.**

Here are just ten suggestions you might find useful.

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- **Suggestion 1:**
Insist on **punctuality**, for there is nothing which detracts from a meeting so much as people coming in late with lame excuses or returning late from a coffee break.
- Not only is this disruptive for the meeting but it is bad for group discipline as well and each time a manager allows this, they relinquish a little leadership capacity.
- Start the meeting on time to the minute.
- Do not wait for late arrivals and whatever you do, do not be late yourself.

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- **Suggestion 2:**

Begin the meeting in the way you plan to carry on throughout

- With a friendly smile and a dynamic greeting
- Do not commence in a flat uninspired monotone.
- Be informal, relax and encourage team members to do likewise.

Do remember that a sales meeting is one of those few occasions where you can provide “*collective motivation*” so you need to be at your inspiring best.

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- **Suggestion 3:**
Explain the objectives and always 'sell' the objectives by providing the team with good reasons why each item has been placed on the agenda.
- It is likely that you will want to **discuss performance(s)** since the last meeting and it is essential that you highlight success.
- Whatever you do **never, ever, hand out criticism** because that is the most morale sapping thing you can ever do. **Rather deal with sub-standard performance one to one.**
- However, do feel free to **deliver collective praise** in copious amounts whenever appropriate.

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- **Suggestion 4:**

Use some kind of visual aid during each session.

- **The most common and easy to use visual aid is a PowerPoint presentation;** closely followed by the flip chart, which allows you to be spontaneous should you need to be – one picture really does paint a thousand words!

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- **Suggestion 5:**
- **Make quite sure that you achieve full agreement** at the close of each session.
- You should aim to get **full commitment** from all present at the meeting, that they will definitely do what you have asked them to do.
- **At the end of the meeting an action plan** should be prepared and circulated to everyone present at the meeting.
- The previous meeting's action plan should always be progressed at the meeting.

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- **Suggestion 6:**
- **Make sure that at least fifty per cent of the meeting is taken up with some kind of sales training.**
- You can deliver this yourself or you might consider using specialists from outside of the company.

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- **Suggestion 7:**

Plan the amount of time you can afford to allocate to each session, well before the meeting, and be sure to stick to your schedule.

One tip I always pass on, is to avoid the dreaded “**Any other business**” at the end of the meeting.

In reality, if an item is worth discussing, it should be a full agenda item, allowing for proper preparation.

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- **Suggestion 8:**

Encourage everyone to participate by asking for their views and opinions, **or** by giving them presentation projects to prepare in advance of the meeting date.

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- **Suggestion 9:**
Do not do all the talking yourself. Salespeople (and most other people) hate to be lectured at. Ask questions and listen to the answers. Ask for opinions, and always question the reason for a particular opinion. Do remember, generally people comprehend:
 - **11% of what they hear**
 - **32% of what they see**
 - **73% of what they see & hear**
 - **90% of what they see, hear & discuss**
- **Suggestion 10:**
Finally, do set an example as the meeting leader. The manner in which you package yourself, your cheerfulness, your positive attitude and the way in which you have planned and conducted the meeting

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- **Suggestion 10:**
Finally, do set an example as the meeting leader.
- The manner in which you package yourself, your cheerfulness, your positive attitude and the way in which you have planned and conducted the meeting – all these things will be noticed by even the least perceptive of your team.
- **Do all these things well** and you will strengthen your position as the leader of the group.
- **Do them badly** and you can forget about training and developing your people, for they will take not the slightest notice of anyone who does not practice what they preach.

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- **Summary**

As with all things in life, the success of your sales meetings will depend to a **large degree on the amount of planning and preparation** you are able to do, so do try to consider the following:

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- **The Timing:** Best day, time of the week/month/quarter, regularity.
- **Location:** In relation to cost, facilities and transport.
- **The Room:** Its lighting, ventilation, heating, degree of sound proofing, layout of table, comfort of chairs, seating plan, pencils and paper, flip chart, poster paper, markers, and of course, presentation equipment.
- **Organization:** Arrange for breaks and refreshments.
- **The Meeting:** Prepare the whole meeting
 - Prepare the visual side
 - Prepare the timing
- **REHEARSE!**

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This is a series of Training for your
Management, Sales & Office TEAM

Good Selling !



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