



By addressing the first three critical exhibiting success factors, you are well on your way to a successful exhibiting experience. Don't stop now, because there are two more factors to getting a financial return on your exhibiting investment.

#### **CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTOR #4: MANAGE YOUR LEADS**

If you're not writing orders or signing contracts at the show, and you expect to achieve a return on your exhibiting investment, it's critically important to understand that leads are the real product of the show.

At the top level, a lead can be defined as *"anybody you interact with in the exhibit and around the event that requires follow-up on your part, and that follow-up delivers value for your company"*.

The key to generating QUALITY leads is to make sure that each lead includes four critical factors:

- ✓ Somebody from your company personally interacted with the person
- ✓ Key qualifying questions were asked
- ✓ Answers were captured or documented
- ✓ A next step was **identified** and **agreed** upon by the visitor

#### **1. Get together with your sales team and ask, "What information should we capture to help us better qualify and value the lead?"**

- Typical information areas might include: email address, product interest & level of interest, buying role and/or influence, evaluation and/or decision team, competitors buying from or looking at, purchase timeframe or season, next action step, other?

#### **2. Organize this information into the natural flow of conversation and create a lead qualification and capture device. Whether you use a paper form, or you rent and customize the show lead retrieval system, this will make a big difference in the quality of information you capture.**

- Sample paper lead form:

The image shows a sample paper lead form titled 'Company OPPORTUNITY CARD' with a date stamp 'Show: IFT 2013' and 'Show Day: Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4'. The form is divided into several sections with checkboxes and text input fields. Red arrows point from specific sections of the form to labels on the right:

- Contact information:** Points to the 'Name', 'Company', 'Direct Phone', and 'E-mail' fields.
- Relationship with company:** Points to the 'Customer Prospect Suspect Other?' section.
- Marketing recon:** Points to the 'How did you LEARN ABOUT EXHIBIT?' section.
- Situational questions:** Points to the 'Type of COMPANY?' and 'Job FUNCTION?' sections.
- Area of interest:** Points to the 'GOALS/PROBLEMS?' section.
- Qualification questions:** Points to the 'EVALUATION Stage?' section.
- Next action:** Points to the 'What is our Next ACTION?' section.
- Space for free hand notes:** Points to the 'NOTES' section at the bottom.

- #### **3. Train your booth staff on asking the questions in the proper sequence, and using the capture device, before you get to the booth.**
- #### **4. To get visitors to commit to the next step, avoid assuming that they have interest. Be sure to ask the visitor *what their level of interest in your products is?, and what they think the your next step should be?***

5. Be ready to physically give them, or email them, follow-up information on the spot. Research has proven speed of response dramatically increases lead conversion rate.
6. Develop your lead follow-up plan **before** coming to the show, so you can follow-up quickly.
7. And finally, do not give up too quickly on leads. Your philosophy should be “any lead worth taking is worth following up on”, and that you’re going to stay in touch with each lead for as long as it takes. Be there when the buyer is ready to buy, not just when you’re ready to sell!

Please be sure to view and read these educational materials on the [Success Tools web page](#):

- View this webinar replay:
  - State-of-the-Art IFT Food Expo Lead Management: How to Improve Tradeshow Lead Quality & Sales Conversion
- Read:
  - Closed-Loop Lead Management
  - Managing Tradeshow Leads Through Sales Cycle Milestones

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to us.