

# Making sales conferences deliver results

By Kim Currin

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Many companies throw lavish sales conferences annually, but are these conferences resulting in just a fun event or do they actually impart knowledge, sending a driven, passionate and more skilled sales-workforce back to the grind the next day?



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As sales motivation and training guru Mark Hunter once said, “It’s not about having the right opportunities. It is about handling the opportunities right.” The key to knowing how to handle opportunities correctly lies in having the skills required to do so – skills that can be gathered at sales conferences, if they are run correctly.

The objectives of the conference must be determined at the onset, ensuring that goals are mapped. A sales conference is aimed at communicating key company messages to a large group of people at one time. It is essential to ensure that all employees are given the same key messages. This encourages employees to learn more about the company, to get to know their fellow colleagues in a more social light, and to develop interpersonal working relationships – all while allowing employees to have fun at the same time.

The trick is to translate these goals into workable, implementable skills when the staff return to their offices. A good conference that incorporates all the key aspects that need to be fulfilled will be hugely effective in communicating the correct messaging, as well as allowing employees to translate those skills back at the workplace. An effective conference should not be seen as a once off event, but rather the main catalyst in a stream of communication methods to ensure employees are understanding, remembering and following through on items discussed at the conference.

This brings in an element of mentorship, where senior managers guide sales staff in implementing what they have learnt. The key is to follow through with the conference messaging. The conference is not to be treated as a single, isolated event, but rather the start of a series of messages which need to be reiterated once employees return to the office.

It is important to remember that implementation in the office will only be possible if the event itself was a success, and if the intended skills were in fact conveyed. Therefore, an essential element to success lies in the service provider chosen to manage the event. In essence, companies should do their research before committing to an events company.

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