



International Caterers Association

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Peer to Peer Learning – ICA Roundtable

How to test a new salesperson

Cory Gosik- June 14, 2015

Q: I have a question I want to put out there that I think a lot can relate to. We recently hired a new salesman (came with no current book), what does everyone do to test a new salesperson when they are first hired or even before they are hired? Trial period, shadowing, test sales situations?

A: Melissan Falcone- We have a period of shadowing the existing sales people in a rotation. We give them a training binder with the steps of the sales process, and specifics to our company. We bring them to events and site visit. Typically after a month they start taking their own leads, and we check their work until we feel they've got it down.

Margot Jones- When I first started (1988!!!) in catering sales, my boss gave me the Rolodex (not a Rolex) and told me to call all the people and check the contact name, address and if they were the person who ordered catering. To this day, I think this was the best exercise for a newbie I've encountered.

- 1) Can they cold call.
- 2) Could they make a connection.
- 3) At the end of the week, did they get any orders?

This exercise is a way to show a sales rep that if you call (the simplest act as a salesperson) you will get

Jennifer Perna- We have them onboard in EVERY POSITION so they know how to sell our unique product 😊

Heidi Dietel Brice- Probing interview questions to understand creativity level, dedication, past experience. Once hired, Two week onboard process inclusive of operations team review and preparations in the kitchen, active in Production meetings for the first month by receiving copies of each event to understand all logistics, shadowing of senior sales rep, shadow multiple events.

Cory Gosik- These are great ideas! Having them shadowing another rep and out on events is must. Margot Jones I love the "Rolodex" training haha. I think I am going to have to steal that one from you. As Bill Pannhoff would say R&D (rob and duplicate)!

Margot Jones- I agree with all the other ideas posted. When it comes down to it, though, it's important to see if they are comfortable cold calling and relating to your customers ASAP. Everyone says they are but many are not.

Stephen Zilli- We make them attend all operation meetings several of the same type. We have them sit with each sales person for at least 2 days and we put them through 3 interviews and do Meryls personality test. Many times we tag team with 3 of us.