

## Agenda

When you are developing your presentation, it is important to keep in mind the purpose. **The purpose is to enlighten them about how your company and specifically your products will grow their sales and profits.** Retailers need to see you as supporting their position in the market, driving traffic into the store and selling products. The purpose of the meeting is not to do a commercial for your business and educate them on all the great things you are doing. Category managers do not have time for a commercial about your business.

1. Cover page
2. Agenda
3. Introduction
4. Point of differentiation
5. Sales plan
6. Costing
7. Sampling
8. Credibility
9. Conclusion

The following outlines the purpose and content suggestions for each section:

### Cover page

Your presentation should start with a cover page. The cover page should include your brand or a photo of your product, your name, contact information and the date. This might sit on their desk so it should be a billboard for you. Retailers always like to see their own logo. Make sure it is correct and good quality!

### Agenda

Start the meeting off with a very quick summary of what you will review. It also helps keep the questions focused on the topic as opposed to an item you have coming up later in the presentation. Include page numbers on the agenda. Some people prefer to forward this in advance of the meeting.

## **Introduction**

Develop a very brief introduction to your business. What you do, where you sell your products and most importantly why do you do it. You should include your unique selling proposition. What makes you different than the last 5 people trying to sell their product in the chair you are occupying. Remember, they are most interested in why and how the item will sell at their store, not that you had to work 20 hours a day for 8 weeks to get your line up and running.

## **Point of differentiation**

Your point of differentiation must be tangible and if possible, quantifiable. You can do this with ingredients, format, ease of preparation, health benefits, production techniques or process, packaging or best of all; it is unique and they do not have anything like it in the store.

Illustrate to the category manager how your point of differentiation is reinforced on your product and your advertising. How will this lead to a sale?

You must be objective about your point of differentiation, the category manager will be. If you are looking for a new listing, they will have to decide that another item will be delisted or lose some shelf space to make room for your product. The place where the product is manufactured is not a point of differentiation. It is only a point of differentiation if consumers will come to the store for it in that market.

## **Sales plan**

Sales are the number one priority for retailers; you must explain how your item will perform. Forecast sales and make sure you and your customer agree on the number. Be realistic in your sales forecasting. Category managers are familiar with sales in their category. They will not see a decline in the winter as a negative, if it is a reality.

## **Costing**

Category managers spend considerable time on product costing. They have an advantage here in that they know what your competition costs and they will expect you to be reasonably close. Present a cost per case and a cost per unit. This should be a delivered cost to their warehouse or the store if your item is direct store delivery (dsd).

It is advisable to look at the category and understand the right retail for your product then allow for retailer's category margin. This will provide a good estimate of your

delivered cost. Be prepared to negotiate and if you are willing to offer any special costing for promotions this is where you must include it.

You should have a retail price for your product in mind. Do not tell them what it should be, but be prepared to answer with a suggested retail, only when they ask. You should also know what your product is selling for in other stores.

### **Sampling**

This is the most important demo you will do. Be prepared and give your product the best chance. Make sure the category manager and others in the meeting experience your product at its best and as the consumer would. If it needs to be served hot, figure that out. Your sampling is a reflection on your business. Protect the cold chain as you would going into the warehouse or store.

### **Credibility**

You must build credibility with category managers in your ability to execute. The previous segments of your presentation have built a foundation. Now you must bring this together in a plan that outlines what you will be doing to ensure that you will produce, deliver and sell the product.

Your plan needs to include a reference to production, packaging, distribution, marketing and finance. One of the biggest challenges for retailers working with different suppliers is credibility. You must prove to them that you and your organization will meet or exceed their expectations. Only include commitments in this section you are prepared to deliver. If you do not follow through it is worse than leaving them out.

### **Conclusion**

The final page of your presentation should be one line from each of your key points.

- A. Your point of differentiation;
- B. Your annual sales;
- C. Cost;
- D. One line summary of your plan;
- E. Reinforce your credibility.

This is the last chance you have to make an impression. This page should leave them with no doubt that this is right for their stores.