

Tips for Tabling Success

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KNOW Before You GO

Get the Details

- Basic details such as date, venue location, & time slot.
- Will you be tabling with another representative?
- Is there a fee?
- How many attendees to expect so you know how many handouts to pack.
- Will you be outdoors or in?
- Will you be provided a table, chairs, canopy (if outdoors)?
- Is there restroom and water fountain access?
- If necessary, is there electrical hookup available?
- What to expect when you arrive such as checking in, to whom do you report, and where your space will be.
- Where can you drop off your gear and where should you park your vehicle?



**“Luck favors the prepared,
darling.”**

Are You Prepared?

- Attend to your basic needs! Make sure to pack a water bottle & snack. If you'll be outside, bring sunscreen, sunglasses, hat, etc. Dress in layers. Remember medications and charge your cell phone.
- If it pertains, arrange for pick up of a tabling kit. If the kit is new to you, do this a few days in advance so you can open it up at home. This way you can practice setting up and become familiar with the contents. This will also allow time to ask any questions about the kit.
- Review your topic(s) before event day so the conversation will flow more naturally.
- If you are new to tabling and would feel more comfortable with a partner, make the request to your coordinator in time for them to make arrangements.
- Look up the event location ahead so you will be more confident traveling to it.
- Get a good rest the night before and fuel up well the morning of.



Show Time

- Make your attire and appearance tidy and approachable. Wear your name tag. You are representing an organization that you believe in so show your pride.
- A smile and pleasant expression throughout the event day will help to draw people in.
- Arrive with plenty of time for stress free set up and dealing with the unexpected. At the very least, don't be late!
- Make and keep your tabling area neat and inviting. Stay on top of replenishing supplies. Use paper weights (rocks work great,) at outdoor events.
- Make eye contact and listen actively to participants.
- Stand in front of your table not behind. Don't be shy about approaching people to grab their attention with a thoughtful question. Have something in your hand ready to hand them to increase fascination.
- Stay on topic unless answering questions.
- It's okay if you don't have all the answers! Let the person know their question is a good one but that you don't know the answer. Offer to take their information and get back to them with an answer.

- Think of phrases that will stick in peoples' minds. When the opportunity arises, use humor to add an entertaining value. Ex. Just say NO to Styro! or Reuse it and you'll never lose it!
- Encourage people to use the hands-on kit materials as you share information. This will boost their retention.
- Ask open ended questions so you can cater your pitch to meet people where they are in their knowledge and interest. Ex. "How do you prevent food waste in your home?" or "What is your recycling routine while at work?"
- Keep the "this is the issue" part of your delivery brief and to-the-point. Focus on solutions and try to keep the conversation positive.
- If you can get children to come to your table, parents will follow. Invite them to come play your "what goes into the recycle bin" game or come touch your owl feather.
- Take the high road during interactions with hostile people. Keep your cool and don't allow yourself to be drawn into their argument. A common tactic is to nod sympathetically while saying that you understand and that change can be hard.
- Remember, most people want to help. Your goal is to have them leave your table feeling confident with a way forward and motivated to make change.
- If you are tabling with a partner, take turns engaging people. Try not to take over conversations. Only add information when your partner requests it.
- If it's part of your outreach, make sure to ask each person to list their contact information.
- Keep a tally of how many contacts you make during the entire event. This includes other tablers! A clicker is helpful so keep one handy.
- Take photos for social media.
- Have FUN! People will gravitate to the table where others are having fun. Thank the event coordinator(s) for hosting your organization.

- Once the event has concluded and you have packed up, leave your tabling area clean and trash free.

This document was developed from the cumulative personal experiences of Roberta Sommer & Lori Gates in outreach tabling.

Other sources referenced:

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