



Protecting Your Position in Tough Economic Times

Last month, we highlighted what may be currently happening to your business and economic trends in the marketplace in an article titled “Special Event Sales in a Tough Economic Environment”. To review this article, you can visit the “Newsletter Archive” to view past issues. While this gave us an overview or “big picture” view of how to protect our business and avoid some common pitfalls, many professionals in our industry are concerned with how this specifically can affect them and their job personally.

First of all, expense cuts are never the way to grow revenue! The only way to grow revenue is to focus on sales (I know, preaching to the choir!). However, the truth is when companies are struggling, they do look to cost-cutting measures and staff cut-backs and lay-offs often become an unfortunate reality. So, how can you safe-guard yourself from losing your position in this environment?

Know Your Value and Contribution

Knowing your personal contribution to your business is critical. Tracking sales, both actual and projected as well as percentages achieved against your budget is a great start. Nerves run especially high when you are in a department with multiple sales people. For example, when looking to make staff cuts, a catering department with 3-4 sales people has a likely chance that it will be “downsized”. Know how your sales efforts compare with that of your peers and always make sure you are “pulling your load”.

Be an Expert. Be Exceptional

People who become invaluable are those that have knowledge that no one else has. You know something critical to run your department and to generate revenue that cannot easily be duplicated. So, become an expert in a particular aspect of your business. And, whatever you do, *be exceptional at it*. You can gain certifications in many areas of expertise such as weddings and corporate meeting planning. You can also subscribe to trade publications that speak to your area of expertise and join networking groups. Explore relevant websites and blogs, and subscribe to free newsletters. Once you become as expert in something, don’t keep it a secret! Make sure everyone knows. Send out press releases, put it in industry newsletters, and send it out to your client base. Make a name for yourself as an industry expert.

Take Initiative

Don’t wait for a supervisor to come to you to let you know your department is in financial trouble. Acknowledge the challenges and create an action plan of how you are going to address the issues. Be proactive, not reactive. Create marketing plans to overcome any year-to-date financial deficits, and plans to address how you will achieve your upcoming budgets. Be aggressive! Take your ideas and action plans to your supervisor and lay out your plan so that it shows you are aware of the situation and are taking an active role in doing everything in your power to help both your department and your company.

Finally, be flexible if changes occur in your company. You may be asked to assume some different or additional responsibilities. Show that you easily adapt and you will show that you are a team member that is valuable because you can contribute in many different ways. And most importantly, do it with a great attitude!

For more information on the **Beverly Clark Hospitality Training Programs**, please contact **Lynne LaFond DeLuca** at lynne@beverlyclarkenterprises.com and visit our website at www.beverlyclarktraining.com

Beverly Clark Enterprises
114 East Haley, Suite K Santa Barbara, CA 93101
800.933.3434