

How to Make a Big Impression on C-Level Executives



Booking a meeting with a C-level decision maker is every salesperson's dream and nightmare. C-suite executives are a different breed; they spend the bulk of their day in meetings or traveling, they receive upward of 150 emails a day, they have to-do lists that run two-feet long, and they listen to hundreds of sales pitches a year.

Simply put, executives have heard and seen it all, meaning the flashy sales strategy and irresistible charm on which you've relied for years won't work. It's up to you to separate yourself from the pack and make a lasting impression. Although it would be great if there were a formula to engage decision makers, one doesn't exist. You can make a memorable impression, however, by employing the following tips and tricks when you meet with C-level execs.

1. Think Like an Executive

Executives have different interests and priorities than mid-level managers. They care about increasing profit margins, improving operational efficiencies, and lowering costs—not the features, advantages, and benefits of your product. Think like an executive when creating your sales strategy to ensure that you hit on all of the points that are most important. What's more, identify any possible objections buyers may have (for example, maybe your product is at the higher end of the pricing scale) and prepare strategies in advance to counter them.

2. Ask Questions Strategically

When asking C-level executives questions, you must think strategically. For example, asking what features they're looking for in a particular solution is a question for mid-level managers. Instead, you should be asking executives questions about their revenue projections for the year and customer retention numbers. Asking about these high-level enterprise markers will give you insight into C-suite challenges, which you can leverage during your pitch. It also demonstrates genuine interest when you address their primary concerns with specific solutions from your company.

3. Share Your Insights

Gloating about your product's features won't impress executives; however, sharing your expertise and industry knowledge will. Armed with industry intelligence—including insights into market trends, opportunities, and challenges—you're able to effectively position yourself as a true business advisor who can help executives overcome their pain points and grow their business.

4. Don't Forget to Follow Up

After making a positive impression on your prospect, don't forget to follow up with an email. Avoid sending a generic "checking in" email as it will most likely end up in the trash. Instead, send an email containing relevant, valuable content that interests your prospect, whether it's a white paper, industry report, or video.

Landing a sales meeting with a top-level decision maker is a challenge. So, when you finally get the chance to deliver your pitch, ensure you make a good first impression. After all, you won't get a second chance.