

**SBMA's Meeting to Win**  
**Building Material Sales Team Meeting Agenda**

**Summer of Experts:**  
***The Dos and Don'ts of Product Demos***

**Expert: Geoffrey James**

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Dear Building Material Sales Leaders,

This week we are highlighting a popular article from top sales consultant, Geoffrey James of Sales Machine. His topic is ***The Dos and Don'ts of Product Demonstrations***. The goal is to help your team apply the lessons to your business. Simply follow the agenda to enjoy this lesson from the expert.

At some point in the sales cycle, a salesperson expects to demonstrate their product or service. This can be a powerful moment. The following agenda will lead your team through a set of exercises to help them do this in the most compelling way possible. This week's expert is Geoffrey James of Sales Machine and the topic is ***The Dos and Don'ts of Product Demonstrations***.

Thank you,

Larry

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Pre-Work Alert:

1. Read through AGENDA to prepare for each topic and learn your role in the meeting.
2. Please read the article **The Dos and Don'ts of Product Demonstrations** by **Geoffrey James**.  
**Article is below.**
3. Each salesperson, please be prepared to role play a current product or service demonstration that you would give to a prospective customer.

**AGENDA**

**Meeting Success Team Members:**

**Timekeeper:** \_\_\_\_\_ (Should be a different person each week.)

**Scribe:** \_\_\_\_\_ (Should be a different person each week.)

**Welcome/Set up for Success**

**Duration:** 10 Minutes

**Meeting Success Team - Topic Leader:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Objective:** Organize and start meeting.

1. Welcome
2. Review Agenda and Meeting Success Team assignments
3. As a team, review this sales team meeting agenda and set a goal for this meeting.

**Goal of Meeting:**

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**Summer of Experts: The Dos and Don'ts of Product Demonstrations**

**Expert:** Geoffrey James, Sales Machine

**Duration:** 40 Minutes

**Meeting Success Team - Topic Leader:** \_\_\_\_\_;

**Product Demonstrator:** \_\_\_\_\_ (This person will role play a product or service demo step-by-step during the team's exercise. They will simply take the lead to walk the team through a typical demonstration so, as a group, you can analyze a standard demo.)

At some point in the sales cycle, a salesperson expects to demonstrate their product or service. This can be a powerful moment. The following agenda will lead your team through a set of exercises to help them do this in the most compelling way possible.

What opportunities do you currently have to demonstrate your products or services? (If you sell a service, how do you show your service to a potential customer?)

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Describe a standard demonstration of your product or service?

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What are the reasons you demonstrate your products or services in the way you just described (marketing slides, plant tour, product demo, etc)?

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What about your current demonstration seems to excite prospective customers?

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What about your current demonstration seems to disinterest prospective customers?

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Each salesperson, please share your thoughts on the article from the pre-work. Do you agree or disagree with any of the Dos and Don'ts?

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What other Dos or Don'ts would your team add to the list from the article?

Dos	Don'ts



Action Items:

What is one action each participant will take after this meeting?

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The team should decide if the meeting goal(s) was met? If so, great. If not, why? What should be done differently next time to make sure the meeting goal is met?

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\_\_\_\_\_



**REINFORCE, ADVANCE & APPLY**

**Bring Sales Team Meeting Topics to Life in the Field**

Sales Managers, use the following ideas to reinforce, advance and apply the lessons from today's sales team meeting.

- 1. Encourage your team members to practice their product and service demonstrations before delivering them.
- 2. Help them to plan every moment of a product or service demonstration. Anytime they are showing their work, they are in a demo.



**FIELDWORK ASSIGNMENT**

**Applying your Sales Meeting Topics in the Field**

The Field Work Assignment is optional homework. The objective is to apply and practice the lessons from your weekly sales team meeting.

*Practice product and service demos weekly. They are a performance and should be rehearsed regularly.*



## **The DOs and DON'Ts of Product Demonstrations**

By [Geoffrey James](#)

Many products require a demonstration as part of the sales cycle. Many sales reps take this fact for granted and think that learning how to use the product is sufficient preparation to demonstrating it. That's dead wrong.

A product demonstration is actually a type of sales presentation. The intent is to sell, which means that a demonstration requires as much preparation as a sales presentation. More, in fact, because PowerPoint slides are usually pretty foolproof, while real-life products often behave in surprising ways.

Unlike most of the subjects that I write about in Sales Machine, I have EXTENSIVE experience with live product demonstrations. Over the years, I've compiled a list of DOs and DON'Ts. Here they are:

- **#1: DO use the demo as a proof point.** A good demonstration should reinforce the sales message and “prove” that the sales claims are true.
- **#2. DO focus on the decision-makers.** Make sure that the demo shows clearly what in the software for THEM!
- **#3. DON'T try to show too much.** Focus the demo on an appropriate goal, like “show the CFO how the ROI claims are true”.
- **#4. DON'T repeat yourself.** Repetition doesn't add credibility. It just makes the demo boring. So don't show a feature more than once.
- **#5. DON'T anticipate feature needs.** Unless you are 100 percent certain that a specific feature is of interest, don't demo it.
- **#6. DO test to see whether you're done.** When you have given your demo, check to see whether the prospect understands and is satisfied.
- **#7. DON'T demonstrate to non-stakeholders.** Demoing to all and sundry creates opportunities for something to go wrong.
- **#8. DO take control of the demonstration.** If you let the customer lead the demo, you could get into areas that your product doesn't do well.
- **#9. DO give demonstrations at the right time.** There's a natural time in the sales cycle when the demo will have the most impact. Use it.
- **#10. DON'T talk too techie.** Focus on what the product will do for the prospect's firm, not on how your product functions internally.

## SBMA's Sales Management Guide

- **#11. DON'T use the jargon.** Phrases like “best in class” and “bleeding edge” just make you look foolish, especially in front of a tech-savvy audience.
- **#12. DO have a plot.** A good demo tells a story with a beginning, middle and end. The plot ALWAYS stars the customer (not YOU!).
- **#13. DO prepare for disaster.** Provide, prior to the demo, a plausible excuse why it might not work, ideally one that can't be blamed on you.
- **#14. DO have a backup plan.** Have some other sales-oriented activity that can fill the gap if the demo encounters a problem.
- **#15. DON'T use a spokesmodel.** Hiring eye candy to do your demos just tells customers you think they're stupid and easily distracted.