

Distributors: Fifteen Tips for Winning the Big Brand Interview

Export Solutions conducts over 100 distributor interviews/meetings per year. Many distributors ask... What are these big brands looking for? How do we prepare a standout presentation? What will it take to win the business? See our fifteen tips below.

1. Professional Communications: Frequent email communication in advance. Send re-confirmations. Offer to help with hotel reservation or pickup. Share mobile contact for emergencies.
2. Creative Welcome: Raise flag from visitor's country or a banner with brand name on it. Serve food paired with their brand. Create immediate "wow!" Skip, if confidential interview.
3. Purchase Product Samples: Potential new brand and competitors. Supply price for each item.
4. Participants: Owner/MD, sales, marketing, and potential brand manager. All should have speaking roles.
5. Presentation – Page 1 Company facts: Founding date, sales revenue, # employees, # field sales, warehouse size, key categories and principals.
6. Category Sales Data: Try to obtain category sales data from Nielsen or a leading retailer. Prepare basic analysis.
7. Category Photos and Pricing: Provide recent photos and pricing from target retailers.
8. Retailer Margins: Share estimated retailer category margins, cost of entry, and listing fee expectations.
9. New Principal Management: CEO involved in update calls, retail tracking, and total team approach.
10. Retail Reporting: Demonstrate retail technology and reporting if you have it. Share sample reports.
11. Warehouse Visit: Short inspection, if located on premise.
12. Social Media and E-Commerce: Share local updates. Reinforce your capabilities with recent examples.
13. Case Study: Brand owner's category or aisle. Results and costs. Show photos of shelf and displays.
14. References: Testimonials are impressive. Executive contact information from top five current principals represented.
15. Action Steps: Immediate CEO/MD follow up via email. Deliver presentation stick with your company logo.

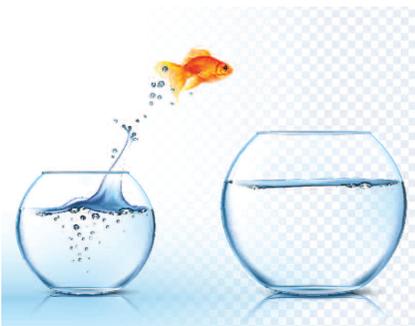


5 Questions for Every Interview

1. Where do you see your company's business in 3 years?
2. Tell me about best practices from a country where your brand has a high market share. What strategies work well?
3. What characteristics do you see in your best performing distributors?
4. Are you open to distributor visit (plus customer?) to your manufacturing facility and corporate headquarters?
5. How do you maintain category leadership?

5 Interview "Bad Practices"

1. Do not send Rolls Royce to pick up brand owner at hotel. Do not laugh, it happened twice last year!
2. Skip company videos: sends old-school message.
3. Avoid speaking badly about other distributors. Be positive!
4. CEO should not handle entire presentation. Let the "workers" who handle the day-to-day business speak.
5. No dinner invitation on first date: brand owners will prefer to meet alone to discuss meetings. Many risks if meal does not go well. Plenty of time for dinners if you win the interview!



Looking for New Brands?
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Contact Greg Seminara
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