



The premiere education and technology expo uniquely focused on diemaking, converting, foil stamping, embossing, and bindery...

Getting Your Boss to Say “YES”

Given the current economy and reduced financial support for travel and professional development, not to mention staff reductions and hiring freezes, how can you obtain support to attend the 2011 IADD•FSEA Odyssey? The key is to understand the benefits of attending the conference and, ultimately, that you can't afford not to attend! You also have to consider what this means from your employer's perspective.

Why You Can't Afford to Stay Home

Education: The 23 different educational sessions planned over the three-day period will return you to your workplace energized and armed with new money-saving and innovative techniques and strategies to benefit your company and customers. The Odyssey is THE premier educational and networking event for converters. The schedule of programming is designed to maximize your time. The sessions are presented by industry experts and colleagues who provide current information on how to improve profits, increase sales, decrease production costs, and the challenges and solutions that are impacting our industry. Multiple programs running concurrently allow you the flexibility to tailor an education experience that meets the specific needs of your market. The Odyssey is the one event targeted specifically to diecutting, diemaking, foil stamping/embossing, folding carton, corrugated and general/specialty markets such as foam, gaskets, abrasives, composites, leather, film lamination, specialty UV coating, Cast and Cure,TM laser cutting, and more. In addition, as part of your full or program registration package, you'll receive access to all program handouts.

Technology Hall: Meet face-to-face with vendors and preview new products and services in the Technology Hall, saving you time - and money. Nearly 100 vendors will display their products and services in Nashville.

TechshopsTM: Many trade shows and conferences feature traditional classroom educational programs, but only the Odyssey holds on-press Techshops which show solutions in real time on working equipment.

Networking: Every other year you have the opportunity to network, share ideas and insights and connect with fellow converters, industry and association leaders and suppliers. From new technologies to business strategies, this is the place to gain insight from the very people who understand the exact issues you face each day.

Map a Plan to Get Support

1. Plan early! In addition to early bird registration discounts, planning early will enable you to obtain lower airline fares and ensure availability in conference hotels offering significant Odyssey discounts over standard room rates. An early request shows that you are a careful planner.
2. Formalize your request in writing (see sample memo below). Support your request with specific reasons you should attend. Specifically identify what benefits your company will obtain by your attendance at the conference. What sessions meet objectives and learning opportunities that are of critical importance to your institution? Prepare a list of exhibitors that you want to meet with to discuss their products and why.
3. Prepare a budget for the cost of attending and be willing to show your commitment by absorbing a portion of the cost personally if needed. Use frequent flyer miles or hotel points to offset the cost of attending. Would you be willing to share a hotel room with a colleague? Consider using vacation time for some of the days out of the office. Remember that you are making a commitment to your own education as well as your company.
4. Involve your staff or co-workers. Share your conference materials and ask them for input on which education sessions would benefit them. Agree to share the session handouts with them after the event.
5. Share your conference materials with your employer. Ask for input on which sessions and vendor information they feel would benefit the company the most.
6. Identify those individuals who will handle your responsibilities while you are out of the office. Remind your employer that current technology allows you to be easily accessible during your time away from the office.

No Time for Rest When You Return

Maintain an action list of ideas you want to implement or develop further when you return.

Summarize this list and provide an executive report for your employer. By doing so, you demonstrate the value in attending and plant the seeds for attendance at future Odysseys.

Share ideas and vendor information with colleagues and staff.

The Power of One New Idea

Emphasize the most important thing that you learned as a result of attending. Share this idea with your colleagues and co-workers. Show how the power of just one new idea (a change in procedure, policy, learning about a new product or service) made the investment of attending the Odyssey worth it!

Sample Memo to Your Employer

Here is a template you can use to convince your employer to support your attendance at the Odyssey

[Date]

Dear [Supervisor's Name],

I would like to attend the 2011 IADD•FSEA Odyssey, the premier education and technology expo uniquely focused on diemaking, converting, foil stamping, embossing, and bindery, from May 4-6, 2011. The conference will enable me to attend a number of education sessions that are directly applicable to my work and will allow me to network with a variety of industry experts and colleagues from around the world. Many of the presentations are tailored to the [your market] converter and give information on how to [list benefits to your responsibilities]. I am seeking sponsorship for the registration fee, travel expenses to the conference and living expenses during the conference. A detailed cost breakdown is included below.

After reviewing the conference brochure, I have identified a number of education sessions which will allow me to gain knowledge and understanding about how we can improve our processes, improve our product, and better serve our customers. The presentations are facilitated by industry experts and industry colleagues who have faced similar challenges. I chose each of these presentations because they are directly related to an issue we are dealing with currently. Getting the information in a seminar format will greatly reduce the time and costs [your company's name] would normally incur in identifying solutions to these challenges. Incidentally, I have only listed some of the seminars that I will attend. Including them all would make this memo much too long.

[Insert session descriptions which most apply to your responsibilities.]

I also plan to visit the almost 100 vendors in the Technology Hall, where I will be privvy to new product demonstrations and a wealth of information related to our business.

The full price conference fee can be reduced by \$100 by registering before April 4, 2011. The following is a breakdown of conference costs:

Roundtrip Airfare: \$XXX

Transportation: \$XXX

Hotel: \$XXX

Meals: \$XXX

Conference Fee: \$XXX

The total costs associated with attending this conference are: \$XXXX

The opportunity for me to develop better contacts and gain knowledge in specific areas of [your portion of the converting market] makes my attendance at the Odyssey a wise investment, which will yield rich dividends for [your company's name]. I look forward to your approval.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]