



# Rental Meeting Survival Strategies

Dawson Flinchbaugh

## About Rental Meetings

Rental meetings (if conducted in your area) are usually hosted by the music director in the school's band room, library, or cafeteria. Occasionally, you may be the only vendor at the school. Other times, there are more vendors than parents. Most of the time, however, there are two or three vendors invited to the rental night. As with the rental season, your preparation and involvement will directly reflect your volume at the end of the night. Here are some suggestions:

## Preparing for Battle

- Verify the date, time, and place of the meeting with the music director. You may also want to call the school office as acting as a parent and see if they give you the same information. It's always a good idea to double-check!
- Call VIR to request additional flyers. We will provide you with the same coupon version that was mailed to the schools on your behalf. We also have care kits available for sale (\$7.50 net for all common student & upgrade instruments).
- If you are planning to attend several meetings this season, you may consider investing in an instrument display rack and/or some signage. Black wire racks and hangers are very inexpensive and look great.
- In addition to instruments, bring a big plastic storage bin filled with flyers, rental contracts, pens, staplers, calculators, and any accessories you have available. Don't forget to bring RENTAL CONTRACTS!
- Make several copies of the Inventory Control Sheets so everyone knows exactly how much each instrument is valued at during the rental process.
- Don't go alone! Get help from employees, family, and friends. It will make a big difference! Make sure all of your helpers can hustle and fill out contracts quickly and accurately. Many times, it's not who's better at these meetings; it's who's faster!

**What to Bring:**  
Instruments  
Flyers w/ Coupon  
Rental Contracts  
Clipboards  
Pens  
Staplers  
Calculators  
Method Books  
Accessories  
Cash Box  
Tablecloth  
Candy & Dish  
Instrument Stands  
Plastic Storage Bin  
Quality Helpers  
Inventory Sheets

## At the Meeting

- Arrive early and identify the parent-entrance to the room. Naturally, you'll want to position your table & display in the most visible area, thus, giving you an obvious advantage.
- Staple a flyer to each rental contract and post a helper by the entrance. Each parent should be greeted with a smile and a flyer/contract. Many times, parents begin filling out contracts before the meeting begins. Hopefully, it is YOUR contract.
- Peek at the competitor's brochure and identify what their special promotion is so you can match or beat their deal.
- If you have an opportunity to speak, GO FIRST. All other speakers will be put on the defense with words like, "We do that, too..." or "Like their program..." It draws attention back to your pitch. If the teacher is not planning on speakers, ask to talk for a minute, anyway. It's a good thing to get up and introduce yourself to your customers.
- Refer parents to your flyer as you go through the details of your program. Use the backside as a feature reference. Remember: Local Service, No Interest, Cash Discounts, Upgrade Instrument Rentals, Up to 24 Month's Credit on Exchanges, and so on. Don't forget to tell them about your store hours, location, and other related services.

## After the Meeting

- Cross-check instruments rented & instruments left against the Inventory Control Sheet to make sure all instruments are accounted for.
- Gather all white copies of contracts (and initial payments) and mail them to Veritas the following morning.