

How to Negotiate for a Location with a Landlord

See It From His Point of View

Keep in mind that the small amount of rent that you will generate is not likely to be the Landlord's greatest concern or motivation. His primary concern is his own primary line of business. If he is a property manager overseeing a plaza or a business complex, he will be concerned about how your business will affect his other tenants. If he is a large store owner, he will be concerned about how your business reflects on his store's reputation and affects his customer traffic.

In fact, don't even bring up the matter of rent. If the subject of money is to be raised, let him be the one to bring it up.

Motivate the Landlord

- First highlight the benefits that your hot dog cart will bring to his establishment:
- Your cart will draw more business to his business.
- Your cart will not take away from existing business but will enhance it by adding variety.
- Your cart will improve employee and customer morale.
- Your cart will keep his employees from leaving the area for lunch and taking long breaks.
- Your cart is attractive and can be used in promotional ads.

Impress the Landlord

Also emphasize how you intend to operate your hot dog cart in a manner that will enhance his business environment. Mention the following:

- You will operate your cart in a professional and safe manner (meeting all health guidelines, snappy uniform, area clean-up, etc.).
- You will create a positive atmosphere that will be good for his business as well.
- You can be flexible and reasonable to deal with.
- Show the Landlord your Business License and Health Dept Permit as these will establish your credentials as a professional food service.
- Show the Landlord your employee rules of conduct policy and vendor cart dress and deportment policy as these will allay his fears and build his confidence in you as a reputable vendor.

- Show the Landlord a picture of the cart you intend to use as well as its specifications and features.

Sell Yourself as a Professional Business Person

Negotiate in person. Look professional. Dress the part. First impressions really count the most.

- Men should be clean shaven. Dress in business clothes and wear a tie.
- Women likewise should dress as business person not in casual or revealing clothes.
- Show him your employee standards of conduct handbook.
- Rehearse your presentation so you can handle any objections professionally.

Other points to keep in mind

Know exactly what you want and need from him to be successful – the location and amount of space you will use, AC power, hours of operation, etc.

Have a copy of the rental agreement for him to sign.

Monthly rent should not exceed two days gross sales.

Rent for special events should not exceed 15% of gross sales.

Do not allow the Landlord to dictate your working hours.