

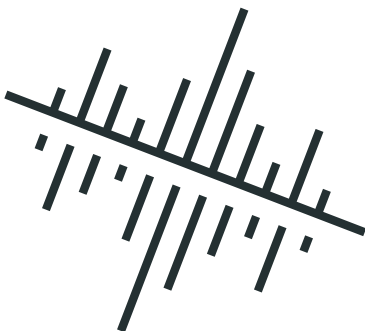
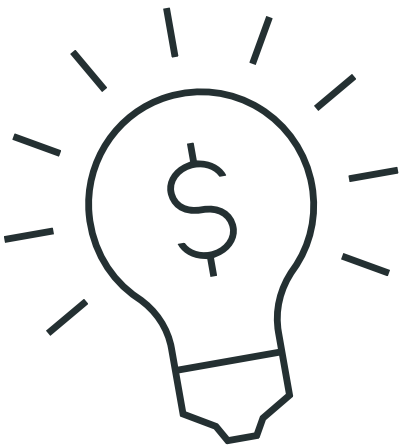
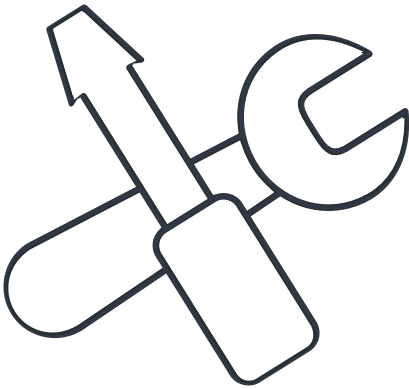
THE FIRST 90 DAYS

CREATED BY:



AVIXA
Young AV Council





Entering any industry as a new professional is an exciting and nerve-wracking experience.

This document is intended to provide new audiovisual professionals with the tools and guidance needed to get further in the AV industry. Whether you've tailored a long-term plan, or you see new possibilities for your future career, these powerful pieces of career advice will empower you as you encounter difficulties within your professional life.

THE FIRST 90 DAYS:

Installation



POSITION

Installation Technician

WHO TO CONTACT

Stay in close contact with anyone who knows more than you and ask lots of questions. Sign up for accounts on manufacturer and industry websites, so you have access to training, news and events near you. Get to know your key manufacturer and AVIXA™ account representatives and communicate your professional goals to them so they can help guide you along the way.

WHAT TO READ

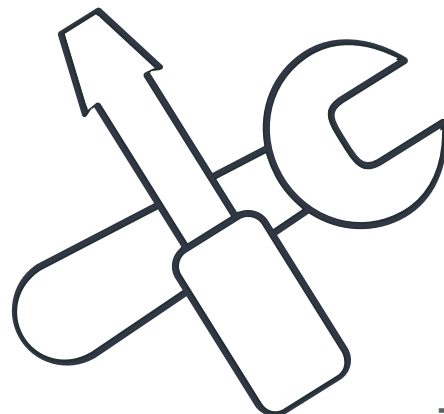
Audiovisual Best Practices and the *CTS Certified Technology Specialist Exam Guide* are must-have books for anyone new to the industry.

WHAT TO SUBSCRIBE TO

There are a lot of great industry magazines that are loaded with interesting articles, relevant industry news and exciting new products. Some industry favorites include *rAVe* (online only), *Commercial Integrator*, and *Systems Contractor News*. An excellent way of gaining a broader perspective of the industry is by following and connecting with relevant companies and industry leaders on LinkedIn.

MENTORING

Find someone (or some people) who have the skill set you desire and the willingness to help mentor you. Spend as much time as possible watching them work and asking the question “why did you do that?” Questioning things is the best way to “learn the ropes” and the more industry professionals you surround yourself with, the quicker you’ll be able to home in on your own skill set.



THE FIRST 90 DAYS:

Sales and Marketing

POSITION

AV Sales Engineer

Sales and Marketing Roles – Account Managers, Business Development Representatives, Sales Specialists, etc.

WHO TO CONTACT

- Existing customers
- Existing customer referrals
- User groups
- Meetup.com
- Technology heads (CIO, CTO, Director of IT, IT Manager, Systems Admins)
- Purchasing departments
- Estimating departments
- Project managers
- Your personal network
- Previous clients (if from another industry)
- Other sales pros in company

REACH OUT TO YOUR LOCAL GROUPS!

You can set Google Alerts for when companies/groups in your area open.

- For sales, make sure you send out emails and make phone calls just to introduce yourself. It helps if customers know you before you start selling to them.

- **Manufacturer reps** – For your top lines
- **Other sales people** – What do they do that works well and what things have they tried that don't?
- **AV professionals** – Connect with people through AVIXA, NSCA, and online forums (see below).

If you are going for your CTS, it is highly suggested to take at least one AVIXA class. The instructors are extremely helpful, and can clarify any AV subject you aren't completely confident in. You are in the online class with other students, and they may ask a valuable question that you hadn't considered.

- **Internal Production Team** – This means designers, engineers, project managers, programmers, installers, and anyone else who actually works on the AV. They will be a valuable source of information for you.



WHO TO CONTACT (CONTINUED)

- **Internal Sales Team** – This means other sales people, marketing, inside sales/sales support, sales directors, etc. They can give you tips, point you in the right direction, let you shadow them, and help you with work.
- **Customers** – Get to know your customers! Call, introduce yourself, and set up a meeting or call. Do not try to sell them something right off the bat. You need to learn their ins and outs, and gain their confidence. Ask why they like doing business with your company and what you can do better.
- **Local Groups** – These could be anything, ranging from industry specific groups like CoreNet (construction) or NAIOP (Corporate Real Estate) to more general organizations like a chamber of commerce or a business networking group. You will learn a lot and gain valuable contacts.
- **Affiliates** – These are people who work in “allied trades.” You want to get to know people who work in flooring, lighting, construction, cabling, IT, furniture, architecture, relocation management, real estate, engineering, and others.
- **AVIXA** – There is a wealth of knowledge and contacts in AVIXA. You already know that since you’ve sought out this information.

WHAT TO READ

- AVIXA newsletters – Stay current with what is happening in the AV industry.
- Industry articles and proposals – Familiarize yourself with existing technologies and cutting-edge techniques.
- *Essentials of AV Technology* – This is a fantastic starting point to learn about AV and will keep you up-to-date on current standards.
- *CTS Exam Guide* – An in-depth guide into the AV industry, serves as a great resource.
- *The Challenger Sale* – This book teaches a new way of selling. It was developed from massive studies done on sales people, sales behavior, buyers, and buying behavior.
- *Networked AV Systems* – Overview of what you will need to know to sell all elements of networked AV Systems.

Other options include:

- *New Sales Simplified* by Mike Weinberg
- *Commercial Integrator*
- Competitor social media profiles and articles
- Manufacturing partner’s social media
- Prior won proposals and drawings of those projects
- *How to Win Friends and Influence People* by Dale Carnegie
- Any literature by Brian Tracy



WHAT TO SUBSCRIBE TO

- *Systems Contractor News*
- *Commercial Integrator*
- *Development Magazine (NAIOP)*
- *Business Journal*
- *Wall Street Journal*
- *AVNation Podcast*
- *Social Slice Podcast*
- Twitter: #AVTweeps
- Twitter: #AVinTheAM (Sunday Mornings)
- *The Event Production Directory*
- *Residential Systems*
- *Front of House*

MENTORING

It is definitely helpful to find a “sales mentor,” someone in your organization who is successful, follows the process, and knows AV. It is also recommended to take time to sit with the programmers, designers, and other people in your company to learn about what they do. Finally, go onsite and take part in a couple of installs.

Find a mentor through your company, someone with a proven track record of excellent sales. If you would like a greater understanding of the full audiovisual project life-cycle, find a mentor in engineering and design, as well as integration. If your company is small and you don't have a great mentor in each of these areas, reach out to the Young AV Council or AVIXA in general to find a mentor.

There are many industry events that take place all over the world. If you can attend any of them and meet people, you will surely find people willing to help mentor you and give advice. Social media is also an easy way to meet AV professionals willing to offer advice.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

Having a good understanding of the full project life-cycle will not only be beneficial for your career but ultimately your customer's project. Customers want sales engineers, someone who's knowledgeable and understands the full process from conception to integration to maintenance of the AV system. Simplicity of the sales process is the first step to closing more deals and creating better relationships with your customers. The quicker you grasp this, the quicker you'll gain trust from your customers and your colleagues.

CRM

Customer Relationship Management or CRM is a sales person's best friend. It helps manage customers, leads, and projects and ultimately will help you stay organized in the crazy world of sales. Understand your CRM and utilize it properly. The more information you enter, the better analytics you're going to have on determining the reasons you're winning and more importantly the reasons you're losing deals. When using your CRM, always make your marketing emails personable.

THE FIRST 90 DAYS:

Staging, Lighting and Audio

POSITION

Staging, Lighting and Audio Technician

WHO TO CONTACT

- Project manager
- AV system programmers
- Stage manager
- Creative/Technical director
- Venue facility manager
- Production manager
- Lead hands

WHAT TO READ

- *Sound on Sound*
- *Front of House*
- *Sound & Video Contractor*
- *Systems Contractor News*
- *Sound Reinforcement Handbook* by Gary Davis & Ralph Jones
- Wainhouse Research
- *AV Magazine*
- *Live Design Online*
- *CSELive.ca*

WHAT TO SUBSCRIBE TO

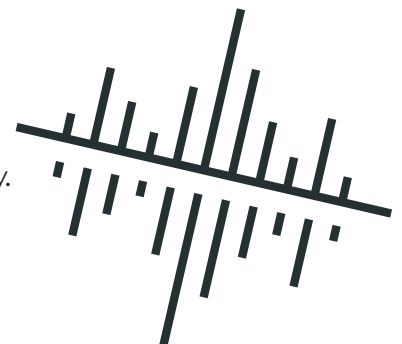
Vendors of all technology used at your site and competitors. For example: Crestron, LG, Samsung, Biamp, Extron, Cisco, Shure, Microsoft, Sennheiser, Polycom, Apple, et al.

- Email updates from manufacturers
- *ProSoundWeb Daily*
- *rAVe ProAV*
- *rAVe Staging*
- *Commercial Integrator*

MENTORING

Many teams have senior roles like break fix, supervisors, and team leads, and they are more than willing to answer questions and help new technicians. Project managers, master programmers, and lead installers are great mentors for their respective fields.

The live events industry is full of veterans who have been working for decades behind the scenes. Befriend the stage crew members willing to talk and show you new skills. Take any job you can. Learn as many skills as possible. Volunteer for a bit of extra time. Eagerness to learn, attention to detail, and willingness to listen are all skill sets that are invaluable in the live events industry.



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