

# THE WHY BEFORE WE BUY

We all enjoy “free stuff,” but this stuff comes at a cost. We need to make informed, responsible choices when it comes to swag. Consider the discussion question section before purchasing your next swag item. For help making sustainable choices, consider the tips section.

**Definition:** Swag stands for “stuff we all get.” It includes items like shirts, pens, water bottles, etc.

## Discussion Questions

- 1 When was the last time you kept a piece of swag from an event, conference, or orientation? What was it, and why did you hold onto it?
- 2 What’s a piece of swag you have recently tossed and why? What kinds do you typically toss?
- 3 What aspects of a table or event drew you in when there was no swag present?
- 4 Will this swag align with the message or values we are trying to communicate?
- 5 What is our audience looking for? Consider characteristics of students: frugal, mobile, seeking experiences, etc.

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## Tips: Reducing Swag and Improving Experiences

### Offer Experiences Instead of Things

- Sporting event tickets
- Massages
- Food coupons
- Photo booth



### Give Food or Other Natural Products

- Healthy snacks
- Local produce
- Flowers or plants



### Use Raffle Prizes for Larger Giveaway Items

Connect the prizes to your mission!

- Bicycle
- Campus store gift card
- Event tickets



### Pay Attention to What Items are Made of

- Avoid plastic, polyester, rayon, and acrylic
- Prioritize sustainable materials such as bamboo, cotton, hemp, wood, and cork



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## Tips: Reducing Swag and Improving Experiences

### Say No to Poorly Made Gadgets

Give out durable, useful items that help people live more sustainably

Reusable cutlery sets, handkerchiefs, mugs



### Rethink Tabling

Host a make or repair table instead  
Provide a demonstration



### Reduce the Variety of Swag Items

Make tabling easier on yourself and the environment by picking one or two swag items.

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### Foster Connections Before Giving Swag

Have people play a game or answer trivia about your department to make it engaging and fun!



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## Tips: Reducing Swag and Improving Experiences

### Give Subscription Trials

Music  
LinkedIn Premium  
Audible



### Reach Out to Other Units and Reuse

Someone may have extra swag, use the business admin. chat to see if anyone has items to purge.

Reuse your leftover Swag



### Avoid Branding Dates or Specific Events on Swag

This prevents the swag from becoming irrelevant, providing you with the opportunity to reuse it if there is extra left over!



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