



## PODCAST #34 – SHOW NOTES

### MEETING WITH A PUBLISHER

**Hey creatives!**

You're listening to **Podcast #34 of the Coffee With Camilla** podcast where we will discuss the music industry.

I'm your host Camilla Kleindienst of Banner Music in Nashville TN

Today we are going to discuss what to do (and not do) when you have a meeting with a music publisher. The title of this podcast is ***"I'm Meeting with a Music Publisher"***

When you meet with a music publisher, you shouldn't just meet with any music publisher. You should do your homework to make sure the music publisher is someone you can work with, someone that has had success or seems to be in a position to have a breakthrough.

Remember when you sign a publishing agreement, you are signing away control of your songs. You are splitting royalties 50% with them but besides that you are transferring control of your copyright from yourself to another person or company. As a songwriter, this is a big decision.

Before your meeting with the music publisher, you want to make sure you think about anything that will make your meeting go the best it can. Here are some things to think about -

- Have you rehearsed your songs - if you are singing live in the meeting. Have you fallen in love with the songs you plan to sing.
- When was the last time you changed your guitar strings?
- Do you have the correct lyrics on the lyric sheets you bring to the meeting.
- If you burn a CD with your songs, test the CD in two (2) different players to make sure it plays in the meeting.

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- If you are bringing a Bluetooth speaker, make sure to charge it the night before the meeting
- Have a mental understanding of who you are meeting with and have something nice to say about their company or writers or recent successes.
- Think about how you can add value to the music publisher beyond your songs.
- Know what you want. What deal are you looking for?
  - Are you wanting a full time paid (songwriter draw) staff deal?
  - Are you wanting a staff deal with no pay but seriously belonging to a music publishing company family?
  - Do you need a demo deal publishing deal?
- Be ready to leave with no agreement, yet an awareness by the music publishing company about you.

The day of the meeting here are a few guidelines for you, REMEMBER, this is almost like a job interview.

- Make sure you have all the things you need for the meeting
- Make sure you look right for the part - if you are writing songs but pursuing a career as a performing artist, make sure you look like an artist when you arrive at the meeting. You want the music publisher to catch your vision. If you are a songwriter but not pursuing a career as a performing artist, then simply look neat and clean.
- Be on time, if there is bad traffic - plan on it.
- Let the music publisher get to know your heart as best you can. You want them to get the sense that you are a good fit for their company. Just be you.
- Offer lyric sheets whether or not you sing live or play a recorded version of your songs.
- Hear the music publisher out when they talk. It's courteous and you might learn something. It's unlikely a music publisher will critique your songs in this scenario although they might reveal some tid bit of valuable information that can help you improve.
- If some progress was made in the meeting such as a scheduled "co-write" with a staff songwriter, count this as a success.

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- Follow up. Send a thank you card or email. Contact the music publisher for a follow up meeting a few months later. Watch for news on the music publisher and their staff of writers and send notes of congratulations when you see something positive about them in the trades.

I thought I'd share some stories of a few meetings I've had with songwriters.

**LATE & GIRLFRIEND** - Recently I had a meeting with an artist/songwriter who arrived late due to traffic and brought his girlfriend to the meeting because they were going shopping after the meeting. Neither one of these situations are so horrible I would turn down a songwriter. But here is what I will say. If a wife or girlfriend must come to the publisher office, they should sit in the waiting area till you are finished with the meeting. And if you are going to be late due to some unforeseen issue, just apologize and make sure the publisher knows this is not how you normally handle your business. You have to relay that you value their time very much and take this meeting serious.

**Blow In Unexpected & Pushy**- I had a songwriter come in to our office unexpectedly and say, "I need to talk to the publisher lady". He couldn't remember my name but was certain he had met me before. My staff who greeted him at the door didn't know how to handle him and I heard the conversation so I told them to let him come back to my office. When he came in he said he had spoken to me a while back and he was in town for a doctor appointment so he thought he'd swing by to play songs for me. I told him I was headed out to a meeting and didn't have time to meet so he could drop off a CD. He asked me when I would be back to my office because he would come back after his doctor appointment to play the songs for me at that time. I told him I had a full day and didn't have time to take a meeting with him but I explained (again) he was free to drop off a CD. He replied that he didn't like dropping off CD's because people say they will listen but don't really do it. I picked up my purse and headed out the door so I wouldn't be late for my meeting. He asked if I had time to listen to even one (1) song. I told him I did not. He handed me a CD and said he would leave it with me if I promised to listen and not do what everyone else does: not listen. I assured him "we" would listen (Victoria from our office was in the room). We all left, the songwriter, Victoria and myself.

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Victoria and I had a meeting at ASCAP and the writer went on to his doctor appointment. His CD had like 23 songs on it. When Victoria and I got back from our meeting at ASCAP, I asked Victoria to listen to the songs (at least verse to chorus) and if she found a song that was truly amazing, let me know, otherwise contact the songwriter and let him know we didn't hear anything we need at this time. I promise you, his songs would have had to be TOTALLY FANTASTIC for me to want to work with this pushy songwriter.

**I'm Sticking to My Gut** - Throughout my career I have met with songwriters like this. It's annoying. I recently took a meeting with a songwriter who played 2 songs for me. He brought lyrics (yay). After listening I told him I was passing on the songs. He asked me if I could explain why because he had been getting great comments on these songs from other people in our industry. I explained why on each song. It was something like a few lines in the song weren't strong enough and didn't make sense and a few words were too hard to sing in with the meter. Each song just had a few issues. The songwriter was nice enough but said, he was sticking to his gut and keeping the songs the way they were written. We shook hands and he left.

**Really Good Singer & Interesting Songs** - I recently met with a songwriter who was a really good and maybe great singer with some very interesting songs. He was a great guitar player too. We learned a lot about his abilities, his goals, who he is writing with and we are off to a great start. We have been to his live songwriter rounds and have also scheduled co-writes with our writers.

**Adds Value-** When a songwriter has a strong understanding of how they can add value to your company outside of songs, it's exciting for me. We had a songwriter attend one of our events and eventually write with some of our writers. He explained in a conversation that he does a lot of networking and co-writing and connecting with writers/artists signed to deals. He is giving me signals that he knows how to add value to our company beyond his songwriting. And he is a really good singer. We are moving closer to taking a serious publishing meeting with this writer.

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**Wants a Home** - If you listen to this podcast much or meet me in person, you will feel the strong sense of family at Banner Music. Some songwriters who take meetings with me (us), say they want a home. They want to land at a publishing company where they feel valued and where they feel like its a real home for the them and their songs. I meet on a regular basis with songwriters who say this to me. Recently I met with a writer who I believe is VERY talented. He needs a draw to write full time, I don't have the budget to sign him, but I love having him in our office to co-write because our writers are writing great songs with him. He will likely sign a deal somewhere soon. We can still be a "home" for him even if he doesn't sign with us. Our doors and hearts will always be open to him.

If you are a songwriter, you need a publisher. I can't go into the reasons in this podcast because it will make it too long. But you need one. You don't want just any publisher, you want the right publisher. And you want to attract the right publisher. When you meet, be yourself, be genuine and let your songs speak for themselves. Be prepared, be on time, show how you can add value to the publishing company beyond your songs.

Keep working, keep writing!

Thank you for listening to Podcast #34 *"I'm Meeting With A Music Publisher"*. I hope that this information helps you for your first or your next publisher meeting.

Please don't forget to **SUBSCRIBE & SHARE** this podcast with your songwriter, musician and performing artist friends.

Look for show notes on my website: **CoffeeWithCamilla.com**  
We'll talk again soon! Stay Creative!