

## **42 TELEMARKETING TIPS YOU CAN USE RIGHT NOW TO GET MORE BUSINESS AND AVOID REJECTION**

Telemarketing, telesales, cold calling ... whatever you want to call it, the professional use of the phone in sales is a **process**, not a technique or a gimmick.

### **PRE-CALL PLANNING**

1. Have a primary objective for every telemarketing call, defined as, "What do I want them to DO as a result of this call, and what do I want to do?"

2. Prepare questions for your telesales call using your call objective. Ask yourself, "How can I persuade them to take this action as a result of asking questions, as opposed to talking?" Remember, people believe more of their ideas than yours.

3. Also have a secondary objective for each telephone sales call...something you'll strive to accomplish, at minimum, every time. Pick something you'll have a reasonably good chance to succeed with, such as, "Getting their agreement they will accept my literature and place it in their 'Backup supplier' file." This way, you can enjoy success on every call you place, and that does wonders for your attitude.

### **BEFORE REACHING THE DECISION MAKER**

4. Treat the 'call screener' as you would the customer--this person determines whether or not you'll even have a chance to speak with the buyer.

5. Gather as much information as you can from whomever you are able, prior to speaking with your prospect; busy decision makers get bored when they have to answer your basic qualifying questions. Use the "Help" technique: "I hope you can help me. So I'm better prepared when I speak with Mr. Big, there's probably some information you could provide me..."

6. Before cold calls, think of a good reason for needing to speak with the decision maker, and be prepared to sell this to the screener. What they're thinking about you:  
"Does this person have anything of interest, or of value for the boss?"

7. If leaving a message on voice mail, or with a screener, be certain it offers a hint of a benefit/result that sparks curiosity, but doesn't talk about products/services.

## **INTEREST-CREATING OPENING STATEMENTS**

8. The objective of your telemarketing opening is to stimulate curiosity and interest so that they will willingly and enthusiastically move to the questioning. You must answer, "What's in it for me?" for the listener, or they will immediately begin the getting-rid-of-you process.
  
9. Don't use goofy, resistance inducing phrases on your telesales call, like, "If I could show you a way to \_\_\_\_\_, you would, wouldn't you?" The only decision you're looking for in the opening is the one to continue speaking with you.
  
10. When cold call prospecting, don't start the call with, "I was just calling people in your area..." People want to feel like they're the only person you're calling... not just one of the masses from a list of compiled names.
  
11. Use vague words when opening cold prospecting calls: "depending on," "might," "maybe," "perhaps," and "possibly." These are non-threatening words that intimate you might have something of value for them, but you really need to ask questions first. For example, "Depending on what you're now doing in the area of employee benefits, I might have something that could potentially increase the number of options you offer, while possibly decreasing your overall contribution. I'd like to ask you a few questions to see if this is something you'd like more information on."
  
12. Have something of value to say on every telemarketing call. Particularly those regular calls to existing customers. Avoid, "Just checking in with you to see if you needed anything," and, "Just calling to touch base." These are more nuisance than service. Be certain they're able to say they are better off after your call than they were before it, even if they didn't buy anything. Call with news they'll have an interest in; ideas you've heard from other customers they might be able to take advantage of; mention that you were "thinking of them" and tell them why. One of my printing salesmen called to say he "just came back from a trade show and saw something interesting, and thought I could benefit from it." It's little things like that, that cause customers to say, "She always has something good for me when she calls," as opposed to, "Every time she calls she's just looking for an order.")

## **EFFECTIVE QUESTIONING**

13. Get information before you give it. How could you make an effective presentation otherwise?
  
14. Don't use a "benefit list" to present from. Instead, use it to create questions to determine if those "benefits" truly are of value to your prospects and customers. Some "benefits" could actually be liabilities.
  
15. Avoid asking go-nowhere questions like, "Is everything going OK?", "What are your needs?", "Are you having any problems now?", "How's service?", and, "What are you looking for in a supplier?" These all force the person to think too much. Instead, get them emotionally involved in seeing and feeling the pain or problem that can be solved with your product/service-especially problems you know they're likely experiencing. For example, "What do you do in situations when you need parts shipped overnight, but are unable to get them?"

16. Ask one question at a time. That's how many they'll answer at a time.

17. After asking, be quiet. Resist the urge to jump in if they don't answer immediately. Don't be intimidated by silence. They're likely thinking about what they're going to say.

18. After they've finished, count to two (silently, of course). This ensures they're done, plus they might continue with even better information.

19. Be confident in your questioning. One reason telemarketers ramble with questions is that they're not prepared or confident. Prepare your questions. Role play them-with yourself if necessary.

20. Always know where you'll go with answers. Regardless of the answer.

21. Follow up their answers with related questions. Too often telemarketers work from a rigid list of questions, losing the opportunity to pick up on prospect statements which are just the tip of the iceberg of their real feelings. For example, if a prospect said, "I believe the main reason production isn't higher is a lack of motivation. The best move is to follow up with, "I see. What specific signs of poor motivation have you noticed?", or, simply, "Tell me more."

22. Quantify the problem whenever possible. "How often does that happen?" "How much do you think that is costing you?" "How much time does that take?"

23. Resist the tendency to present. Some telemarketers get so excited when they hear the slightest hint of an opportunity, that they turn on the spout of benefits. Hold off, ask a few more questions, get better information, and you're able to craft an even harder-hitting description of benefits, tailored precisely to what they're interested in.

24. Learn more about the decision-making process. There could be many behind-the-scenes influences on the decision. Ask about actual users of your products/services, anyone else who could influence it, who has to sign off on the ultimate decision or OK the money for it, and perhaps people who would rather not see it happen.

## **SALES RECOMMENDATIONS**

25. You should only talk about your product/service after knowing specifically how it will solve the problem, meet their need, etc. Then you can tailor your remarks specifically and personally for the listener.

26. Get feedback during your discussion of benefits: "Do you feel that would work for you?". "How do you feel that would solve your problem?" Some trainers might tell you that gives the prospect an opportunity to tell you "no." Precisely. And that's good. Because if there's a problem, and they don't see enough value in what you've presented, now is the time to find out.

27. Avoid the question, "Anything else?" when attempting to up sell. Just like when a convenience store clerk asks the same question, the answer is usually, "No." Instead, give them a suggestion, and help them answer. For example, after they agree to buy an item, or a service, say, "Many of our customers who get \_\_\_\_\_ from us, also find that \_\_\_\_\_ is also very beneficial for them. What are you now doing/using/buying in that area?"

### **GETTING COMMITMENT (Closing)**

28. This is not the major event in a telemarketing sales call. It's the natural, logical, validation of the professional sales process up to this point. But you still must ask. Commitment must be gained on every contact in order to move the process forward. If there is to be a follow-up contact, and information is to be sent or faxed, there must be commitment on behalf of the prospect regarding that material.

29. Ask large. Think big. Buyers will often move down from a large recommendation, but they rarely move up from a small one. Those who ask the biggest have the largest average order size. Never suggest more than is in the best interest of the customer, but not making a large enough suggestion when appropriate is actually hurting the customer.

30. When in doubt, ask. Do you have a 'foot-dragger' in your follow-up file who is perched squarely on the fence? Ask for a decision! Get some movement. A "no" today is better than one six months and 15 additional calls from now. Move them forward, or move them out.

31. If you're going to schedule a follow up call, get a commitment of some type. Why would you call back otherwise. If they won't commit to doing anything--reviewing your literature and preparing questions, surveying their existing inventory, etc.-they likely have no interest.

### **ADDRESSING RESISTANCE (Objections)**

32. Objections can be avoided by doing everything else correctly up to this point in the call. When they do occur, resist the tendency to attack in defence. You must back up and revisit the questioning stage of the call. The voiced objection is simply a symptom of the real problem. Start by saying, "Let's talk about that."

33. If you have an indecisive prospect, get their mind off the buying decision, and on the problem or pain. For example, "Jan, let's look at this another way. What would happen if you did nothing about the situation? Remember, we detailed the fact you're missing sales opportunities every day. What will that amount to over just the next six months?"

34. Most price objections start in the mind of the salesperson. Many sales people aren't 100% sold on the value of their product, therefore they're apt to offer price concessions even when the prospect doesn't flat-out ask, or they present price with a shaky tone of voice. Ask the right questions, present the results of what your product/service can do, and state the price boldly.

35. Avoid Common Objections Mistakes: Using slick, prepared, objection rebuttals that only tell people

they're wrong and intensifies the resistance; giving up before attempting to understand the reason behind the problem.

### **WRAPPING UP AND SETTING THE NEXT ACTION**

36. When sending information, samples, demos, etc., know precisely how they'll evaluate the material. How will they know if they like it? What criteria will they use? This way, you'll both be clear as to what would need to happen in order for them to buy.

37. When sending material, prepare them as to what they should look for. Otherwise, they'll get a package of materials and say, "Oh, there's a package of materials," and then toss it on the mountain of other stuff in their office. But, if you tell them to look for the catalogue that will be opened to the page with the product they are interested in, and you'll have the three or four models highlighted that are most appropriate for them, there would be a greater likelihood they'd look at it.

38. The success of your follow-up call is directly relational to what you accomplished, and how you ended the previous one. Never say, "I'll send you out some stuff, and we'll go from there." From where? Summarize agreed-to actions by both parties, including what happened, what they're interested in, and what will happen next. And set the agenda for the next call. Makes it so much easier to prepare for the follow-up call, and helps you avoid starting calls with the useless question, "I sent you the material, did you get it?", or "What did you think?" For example, "Ok Pat, I'll send the proposal detailing the quantity price breaks. What you'll do is compare that to what you're getting now, and if we're within 5%, you'll agree to a trial order on our next call, is that right?"

### **ATTITUDE AND SELF-MOTIVATION**

39. You never have to experience rejection again. After all, what is rejection? It's not an experience-it's your definition of the experience. So, ensure that you accomplish something on each call, and you can hold your head high with a sense of achievement. Remember, a decision of any type is better than shadow-chasing someone who will waste your time with wimpy or misleading statements that cause you to believe there's a chance, when, in fact, there's not.

40. A good way to end a call where you don't accomplish your primary objection (and to never experience rejection) is to plant a seed for the future. Give them something to look for, based upon what you uncovered during the call ... something that might just cause them to call you back. For example, "Pat, it looks like we don't have a fit here, today, but I suggest that if you ever find yourself needing an emergency job finished, and don't have the staff to handle it, give us a call. We specialise in those type of projects, and would love to talk to you." Everyone has been surprised by those written-off prospects who later called to order. This is a way to proactively make it happen more often.

41. Imagine every day is the end-of -period day. Sales people tend to pick up the pace and behave like tornado in a hurricane when they reach the last couple days of a sales period, doing whatever is necessary to squeeze out those last few sales. When you coast, you're going downhill. Get focused on a goal, and pursue it with single-minded determination.

42. As a sales professional using the phone as your main method of communication, you perform a function that very few people in the world could do well, or would even want to try. And that's persuading someone to take action and make a decision, based almost solely on the words and ideas that come from your mouth. It's quite an awesome feat when you think about it. And do think about it. It takes a talented individual to be able to do that well. You are that person. Feel proud of what you do, and always strive to get better!