

## Warming up to Cold-Calling

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Do your hands get clammy just thinking about it? Cold-calling can be intimidating for many salespeople, but it doesn't have to be. Using a few cold-calling tips can help your sales pay off in a big way. Here are some effective ways to make this process less scary - and more productive:

### 1. Make a Plan

What's your objective for this call? An appointment? Information about the contact's company? Whatever it is, state your purpose clearly. If you don't have a reason or an expected outcome, you'll stumble. Your contact will think you're merely reading a name off a list and trying to get 10 minutes on the phone.

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#### TIP...

**Introduce yourself- and give your message immediacy—with a customized fax. Chances are, a fax with some information that can directly benefit your prospect will end up on top of her "in" basket.**

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### 2. Research the Best Time to Call

Keep in mind that everyone and every business is on different schedules. Track your prospects' schedules and look for trending -then call at the appropriate time. Block out times in the morning, midday and afternoon to reach your target. And keep a record of your calls, so you'll know when you reached whom and on what day.

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#### TIP...

**Different health care offices have vastly different schedules. Do your homework. Calling a pediatrics office first thing on Monday morning and expecting to talk with your contact won't get you through. but calling at a less hectic time might.**

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### 3. Outline Your Call

Organize your thoughts and know what you're going to say. Remember that this isn't the time to do a lot of "product dumping" or giving too much information. By having a lot of good questions planned and having a good objective in mind, you'll get that much closer - and feel more comfortable,

### 4. Get In Touch with Technology

The phone isn't the only way to make first contact with your target. Use technology to your advantage. Rather than sending a whole packet, send a professional-sounding short fax with information and the message that you're seeking 10 minutes on the phone. Indicate when you'll check in. And make sure you do!

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**TIP...**

**E-mail is a great tool for communication, but it's also pretty personal. Steer clear of using e-mail as a first approach. If you want to reach decision makers, you also need to respect some level of privacy and personal choice.**

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**The Pros and Perils of Voice Mail**

Voice mail is everywhere these days. But it's still not a selling tool. You can, however use voice mail as an opportunity to introduce yourself professionally to your contact.

It's wise to script your voice mail message. Clearly state your name, organization and phone number at the front and end of the message make sure you speak clearly and slowly enough so that people can write down your information.

Indicate that you'd like the courtesy of a phone appointment (at a minimum or to discuss if there's a reason to meet face-to-face. 'I'd like three minutes on the phone to identify if my service is appropriate for you. When we're done, we'll be better able to determine how we can meet your needs.'")

And let your contact know how you intend to follow-up. "I'll be in my office today from 10 to 2 if it's convenient for you to return my call. If not I'll call you back shortly." You are in charge of calling back.

**5. Keep Your Word**

If you promise to follow-up with a phone call, then call. If you don't, your credibility is lost. Rather than trying to reach too many people too broadly whittle down your list to a few strong prospects—then send your fax or make your call. You'll be sure to follow through on your promise, and thus earn your contacts' trust.

**6. Sell Benefits**

Know the prospect's business. If you've done your research and are customer-focused and oriented to the benefits for her—not you—you will never have to sell a widget.

Your customer will buy the service and the solution. Customers will always buy the benefit if it's relevant to them.

**7. Put Pen to Paper**

Before you pick up the phone, write or at least outline what you want to say - word-for-word, as if you were talking. Write what you think your target would say and write your answer. Note key points you want to make. Before you call, clear your desk, have the questions in front of you with the client information there and literally read through it and keep your script in front of you while you're doing the call.

**8. Practice Makes Perfect**

It's the best way to sound natural and sincere. Live your script and practice it. You'll sound professional and you won't stumble over your words. And when you've perfected your delivery you'll be able to be a better listener. In fact, you'll feel so at ease, you'll be able to focus on your prospect, his company and his product.

**9. Cultivate a Friendly Voice**

Keep a mirror on your desk and look into it when you're on the phone (it may feel funny the first few times, but it works!). You'll start smiling and you'll hear a new warmth in your voice,

it's a great way to send your energy level over the phone. Plus, you'll sound like you're talking face-to-face with someone.

## **10. Be Comfortable**

Use a headset to give yourself flexibility in your neck and shoulders. Stand up at your desk if you want, Pay attention to your body postures. Visualize the person you're talking to. Use your hands. Smile, It helps your conversation have personality and energy.

## **11. Set a Number for Success**

Keep track of the number of calls you make and see how you're doing, "Out of every 30 calls, I believe 5 will end in appointments." This is a good tool for sales management and the sales person as an individual it gives you focus and helps you realize there's a reason to make so many calls per week.

## **In Summary**

Finally get in the habit. Make cold-calling a part of your life. Do it regularly and soon it will become so ingrained in you that you'll do it well, and you'll find yourself doing it even when people call you. You may even find that it's actually fun!



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### **TIP...**

**Your voice is an important first Impression. But most of us don't know how we sound, Take time to listen to yourself .record your voice or listen to your own voice mail message. If you have issues related to enunciation or grammar and usage, do what is necessary to fix them.**

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