

Time To Ditch The Stale Sales Pitch



We have all received calls from telemarketers, and most of us have cut them short, asked to be taken off the calling list, or even hung up the phone. Within five seconds of answering you were probably already irritated because, before you could even get out "Hello," they were spilling their sales message at 150 words per second. The main problem is that the intrusive, pushy voice (which might as well be a recording) is usually rushing to get you to commit to purchase something that they don't even know much about. And now, with the prevalence of caller ID, you're probably already frustrated *before* even picking up what you suspect to be a sales call – that is, if you even pick up at all.

Although this is the norm of how telemarketers are perceived, it does not have to be the case for an experienced and professionally-trained salesperson armed with communication tools designed to peak the prospect's interest.

If you are having problems closing the sale, it might be time to try a new opening.

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Engage the Prospect

Gain the attention of the prospect and *relate to them* through communication - not a scripted sales pitch. Consider how you converse with family and friends in a targeted yet casual and non-intimidating manner. If the prospect is drawn in by your conversation, then you will not only get a better response, but will also be allowed the opportunity to build a relationship and get to know the prospect and their business needs on a more personal level.

Because time constraints can be an issue, try to discern the prospect most likely to purchase from the prospect least likely, and devote more time calling and engaging the former. However, you still need to engage the prospects that are least likely if you decide to make the effort and call. Remember the basics: 1) be polite; 2) if they're not interested, ask if they know of someone who may benefit from your services; and, 3) always thank them for their time.

Change Your Agenda

When calling a prospect, what is your goal? It probably has something to do with closing the sale, generating another lead or reaching the next step in the sales cycle. Many times these goals are apparent in your attitude and tone, and overshadow how the prospect can benefit from your product or service. Most people can easily tell when you just want something from them, as opposed to when you have something to offer them. And oftentimes this attitude triggers a negative response such as hanging up the phone or requesting that you not call again.

Constantly Look Toward the Future. Once your prospect becomes your customer, find out additional goals and issues where you may be able to assist.

When planning the call and during the conversation, focus on the long-term goals for you and the prospect instead of an immediate payoff. Long-term goals include establishing trust and building relationships, as well as discovering together how they will benefit from buying your services. Try thinking about how you are there to serve the potential client. You will stand out in the mind of the prospect if you take time to learn about them and their business perspective on a personal level.

Remove the Sales Pressure

Often the sales process is terminated because the potential client feels too pressured by the salesperson. It may have nothing to do with you or your offering. It could be as simple as bad timing or as complicated as past experience with another company. They could be confused about what exactly you are offering them or there may be some misunderstanding on how it will benefit them. Instead of relentlessly targeting a prospect, allow them some time to consider your offering and schedule an appointment for a follow-up conversation to discuss the next steps. Instead of being instantly defensive about the prospect's doubts, take time to uncover why they feel a certain way. If you approach the conversation with openness, allow time and space for them to voice any issues, and turn the call into a relaxed exploration of potential benefits, you will strengthen the relationship and turn a possible client into a lifelong customer.

Removing the sales pressure, getting to know the prospect, and taking the time to understand their concerns, allows you to reveal how your offering could be a solution to key issues within their organization.

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