

Sales Dialing for Dollars

In today's world of the Internet and wireless PDA's, the traditional telephone is often overlooked as a viable marketing technology. The fact is that the traditional telephone is still a valuable and effective sales tool. **The telephone continues to be an integral part of a successful of sales strategies.** It is important for business owners to learn how to best use the telephone to increase sales and here are some suggestions for using the phone more effectively in your sales efforts.

- When you initiate a telephone sales call, it is important to remember that the prospect is not as prepared for this conversation as you are. Before you called, the decision maker was doing something - talking to someone, reading, working with a customer or paying a bill. His or her mind is still involved in that activity. Thus, your call is an interruption.
- In the first minute of the call, you need to get the customer's mind away from whatever he or she was doing before you called. You will want to generate enough interest in your call so the customer will want to stay on the line. Below are some techniques you can use to turn many of your literature follow-up calls into appointments:
- Identify yourself and the name of your company. Never say, "How are you today?" to a stranger, because it sounds insincere. Only salespeople ever say this to people they don't know, so it alerts prospects that your sole purpose is to sell.
- You should get to the purpose of the call and not try to trick the prospect by making up a story.
- Go slowly with your introduction, breaking it into separate sentences. Remember, prospects are still concentrating on something else. Give them a chance to hear you and understand what you are saying.
- Tell prospects why you are calling: to follow up on the mailing you sent or responding to a prospect query.
- You should inject pauses. Give prospects an opportunity to comment or ask a question if they desire.
- Don't ask prospects whether they have read the information or have any questions about it. They may not have read it or have read it but don't remember much, you will only embarrass them with such questions. It would be better just to offer to provide additional details and answers regarding the previously sent information.

- Refresh the prospect's memory by presenting a brief overview of your company. Personalize this as much as possible by mentioning information you have about his or her company. It would be good to highlight one or two benefits you can provide this prospect.
- As soon as the prospect expresses interest by starting to ask detailed questions, begin to sell the appointment - in order to answer their questions, you need to know more about their businesses. You should respond to their questions while offering to provide more details during a scheduled meeting.
- Ask for the appointment by giving prospects a choice between two days. Do not ask: "When is a good time for you?" You want to make it convenient for the prospects to agree to an appointment, but avoid having them say they have no time to meet. They will likely pick one your suggested dates or come up with a date and time of their own.
- Throughout the conversation, always listen to prospects without interruption. The more they say to you, the more they become involved in considering the purchase.

The most difficult part of selling over the telephone is just picking up the phone. It is common for salespeople and business owners to procrastinate and delay making their sales calls. Remember, if nobody asks for the order, nothing will get sold.