

Cold call selling is always difficult, but good salesmen learn how to "Lessen the Chill" of cold calling with a Warm Introduction created by a little Sales Research.

Selling Is Hard Enough, But "Cold" Call Selling?

It's amazing the mind set we have on contacting target prospects to conduct a needs analysis to determine if indeed the product or service we are selling would provide value to the prospect by meeting a current or future need.

Sounds like a warm enough thought, so why do we label it "Cold" Calling. It is labeled cold calling in my mind because that raises enough FUD (Fear - Uncertainty - Doubt) in the minds of enough sales leaders to keep a great deal of sales trainers and consultants in business.

That's why you see marketing headlines like:

Sometimes cold call selling can seem downright impossible, especially if you don't have the confidence you need to make the sale.

Then the ad goes on to say

"Come to our seminar and we'll help you develop the confidence you need." :-)

Save The Seminar Money

Here's some proven ideas that will save you the time and money of another "Tips & Tricks" seminar:

Ways To Warm-Up Your Prospects

- 1) Do some research on each prospect before you make the call.

- 2) Know what they do and why they might have a potential interest in the product / service you are selling.

- 3) Use that area of potential interest to tailor your standard opening statement:

Ways To Warm-Up Your Prospects

Example:

Hello -----,

This is Dave Kalstrom, I'm a Process Engineer with BrightTALK.

We've just developed a New webcasting platform for media companies that allows you to schedule & run sponsored webcasts right on your website, to increase your on-line revenues.

I saw the article you wrote on CPI Compliance Standards, and was wondering if you'd have an interest in running a complimentary webcast on the BrightTALK platform to test out the response from your sponsors and your audience.

Ways To Warm-Up Your Prospects

Or:

I'm looking at your website now and see that you have a great deal of banner ads but I don't see any listings for webcasts, and was wondering if that's something you're looking at now or how it fits into your digital strategy ...

Or:

I see on your website that you have run a number of webcasts on the ----- platform, and was wondering if I could share a couple of ideas with you that might help lower your costs

Ways To Warm-Up Your Prospects

4) My belief is, once you find an opening line that peaks the interest of your prospects, carve it in stone. But the bridge you build from your opening statement to the qualification / needs analysis should be highly tailored to the interests and potential needs of your prospect.

5) As I mentioned earlier, I am doing a market analysis study on a new webcast platform so the ideas I share here are supported by thousands of recent calls and real life experience.

I get through my introduction and into my needs analysis on about 90% of my prospects. I have spoken to one ornery prospect in the past two months. Forget about all the tricks and tips. Prospects will show you respect, when you demonstrate your respect for them and their time.

Ways To Warm-Up Your Prospects

6) Prospecting is the key to selling. If you don't prospect, you lose your job or you go out of business. So don't let all the nonsense you hear about "Cold" Calling being a "Necessary Evil." That's all marketing hype.

Try some of Jacques Werth's - High Probability Selling - and you'll see just how wrong most conventional methods of selling really are.

7) Increase the receptiveness of your prospects by learning as much as you can about each prospect and how a 1 - 2 specific products and the value of the products could potentially benefit the prospect.

Does the prospect have a need for my kind of product?

The most fundamental question that needs to be answered is whether or not the prospect even needs the kind of product you are selling.

Trying to convince a prospect to use a product he doesn't need is about as effective as selling a steak to a vegetarian - no matter what you say or do, you're going to walk away empty-handed.

Who is the decision-maker?

This is probably the most important piece of information you need to have before you make initial contact. You could spend days, even weeks, pitching your product only to find out later that the person you were talking to didn't possess the authority to make purchasing decisions.

Another reminder, almost every contact you will ever need to reach a target prospect is available on the internet for little, and usually "no" money. Go to the library and ask for a demo on their business databases. Then get a demo on their remote access services. Then get a library card and access all the companies, and all their contacts, and all their locations, and all their goals and risk factors to achieving those goals, from any computer at work or at home.

Check out NetPropex and Jigsaw for contacts. (Notes: I do not make a dime promoting any company. You will see proof of this by the fact I accept zero advertising on my website. If I provide information, it's because I believe you as a reader will benefit from it.)

Does the prospect already use a comparable product? **& Who is the current vendor?**

If possible, find out which product the prospect currently uses. This information is invaluable because it gives you the ability to tailor your approach in a way that undermines the competition. One approach to getting this information is to call the prospect's office a few days before the call to your targeted decision maker and ask the receptionist, if they are currently using the product you sell without actually pitching your product.

Another is to call and make a prospecting call to one or more of the subsidiary locations. I call this "Triangle Prospecting." Call two subsidiary locations and get a full understanding of the needs and challenges and decision makers, and budget and buying cycle, before you ever call the real DM at the tip of the triangle.

Then when you make the "Real" prospecting call you're calling to address a "Real" issue and propose a "Targeted" solution that has already been proven to overcome that challenge and is backed by a case study or referral you can send with a click of a button.

Then see how "Hot" your prospecting calls become.

LEVERAGE BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE

Most of the information you will ever need to warm up a prospecting call can be found on the internet. Look at the prospect's website, type in the contacts name and see if there is some information on a social networking site.

Think I'm making this up? Well, called a company this week that has been very difficult to engage in a needs analysis, but the research I've done indicates that they match up nicely with our Ideal Customer Profile.

The President picked up his phone (for some reason), listened to my introduction, and then said, "I have someone that takes care of all those type of things for me." Her name is xxx yyyyyy, and I want you to send her an e-mail, and then if there is interest, she will contact you. He would provide no telephone number, and neither would the receptionist. This contact was a contract employee that worked from home.

Here's Proof That Research Works

I knew I had zero chance of her responding so I typed her name into a couple popular social networks and based on the information I discovered, here is the reply I received to the e-mail I sent her:

David,

I must say that I was taken aback by the personal information you included in the email below. Then I realized it all came from an old Friendster profile. Quite savvy of you to use that info!

I am interested in learning more about BrightTALK and how it can work for us.

We currently host Web seminars and are always looking for ways to cut production costs.

Can we chat about this more after the Thanksgiving holidays...preferably after 12/3/08?

I hope this works with your schedule.

Look forward to learning more about BrightTALK. Have a wonderful weekend!

Best Regards,



The Keys To Effective "Cold" Call Selling

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Helping You Become Highly Efficient & Competitive

We're Sales Process Engineers, our goal is simply to analyze existing Sales & Sales Management Processes and then develop ways to make them more Efficient and Effective so you can become more Competitive and Win More Sales!

I hope these thoughts and ideas help each of you achieve those goals.

David Kalstrom
Chief Process Improvement Engineer

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