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Cold Calling Opening Lines - Don't follow the crowd and ruin your chances

By: Peter ODonoghue

If you are prospecting by telephone then you have to be extremely careful what you say in your opening few lines. Old style Telesales Training used to say you had 30 seconds to make your case. In today's attention deficit society you will be lucky if you get more than 7 seconds to make your case.

So what can you say in such a short time to grab enough attention to be invited to the next stage of the call?

When I started out in sales, I read everything I could from Brian Tracy, Zig Ziglar and Tom Hopkins. Twenty years ago they pioneered attention getting lines such as:

"If I could show you a way to reduce your operational costs by 27% and increase profitability by 33%, you would be interested wouldn't you?"

In there day these were ground breaking ways to open calls. Times have changed and lines like this are old hat. Use them at your peril. You see they have been used by too many salespeople (and too many bad ones) for too long.

People you call would have heard them a million times and they are just plain old cynical towards them.

So what do I recommend you use?

How about something simple like:

"Hi, Mr Davies?" and then pause and let the other person respond. They will obviously respond with a yes.

"Mr Davies, I'm not sure if this is relevant to you."

This is delivered in a confident clear voice. This works on many levels. Firstly it is non threatening and you are not jumping down the other persons throat telling them what you can do for them. Especially when you know very little about them yet. Secondly, it plays on psychology because most people will either be curious to find out what might not be relevant and also some may also be thinking "I will be the judge of what's relevant for me!"

So now you are effectively in a conversation. You can now deliver your high value impact statement. This may go something like this:

"We have just worked with ABC Corporation (maybe a competitor) where we reduced their staff churn from 29% to 19% which has saved then well over \$500,000 in 6 months. How relevant is staff churn in your business?"

Now you have name dropped a competitor, mentioned a performance improvement, a \$ value saving and finished off with a question which invites an opening to the next stage of the conversation.

Forget old used and abused Telesales Opening Lines and use the human approach as shown above to significantly increase your telesales success rates.

Article Source: <http://bizymoms.com/business>

Why not sign Up for '21st Century Selling' - The Bi-weekly Sales and Marketing Newsletter. It's free and it's jam packed with Information to help you make more sales. Use the Easy Sign Up box at [Online Sales Training](#). Also - check out the [Free Sales Training Videos Here](#)- [Online Sales Training](#).

Stop Wasting Postage on Returned Mail - Keep Your Data Clean

By: Barbara Spagnola, Concept Marketing Group Inc

Creating a successful direct marketing program involves clean data records with highly deliverable addresses. Cleaning, enhancing and filling the gaps in your in-house files will mean cost effective postage rates, minimal bounces in mail pieces, and an increase your company profits.

1) Keeping Your List Clean

Are there key pieces of information missing from your database that could increase customer sales? Statistics show that most company's customer and prospect databases are missing key pieces of information:

- Phone numbers but no addresses
- Out-of-date information
- Details that could effect your marketing strategies such as homeowner, presence of children, income level, marital status demographics; business size, employee size, sales volume demographics and more.

Keeping your data files up-to-date and complete with data hygiene services is an important component of a direct marketing campaign. The end result is improved deliverability, savings on print material and postage. Cleaning and data enhancement is a proven method to ensure that you're maximizing marketing dollars.

Statistics show that up to 20% of records within a typicalhouse data file are undeliverable. In addition, up to 5% of records are identified as small- to mid-sized businesses, which typically require a separate marketing strategy than a consumer campaign.

2) Connect with Customers via Data Enhancement

Take the time to learn about the people behind those records. When you know who you're dealing with, you know how best to approach them. Here's a tip: Enrich your data with appended information. Here's just a few examples of popular appends provided by the most reputable direct marketing data solutions firms:

- Add postal addresses to records that only contain email addresses. Or add phone numbers, names or business titles to your current file
- Add revealing consumer details, so that you can target your messaging for a higher response. You can find out whether your records include homeowners, parents, members of particular ethnic groups, or even customers who are connected to the Internet.
- Add revealing business details, including SIC codes, sales volume, business site type (for example, headquarters or branch office), number of employees, or contact names.

3) How Data Hygiene and Enhancement Boosts Your Bottom Line Sales Results

- Saves you money on printing and mail-house fulfillment
- Allows you to control mailing waste and save on postage
- Gives you the opportunity to target your selling messages to the right audience at the right time
- Opens up new channels to reach your consumer or business customers using the methods they prefer
- Drives higher response through more specific, personalized offers (as opposed to generic, one-size-fits-all promotions)
- Helps build loyalty programs that drive up lifetime value
- Leads to more profitable prospecting, through modeling and forecasting

Data enhancement and hygiene can open doors to new sales opportunities, make your marketing efforts more efficient and cost-effective, and help you get the most return on investment for any campaign. Most of all, it keeps your customers happy and loyal, by making their mailings more relevant and accurate.

Article Source: <http://bizymoms.com/business>

In today's corporate world every business is presented with challenges and gaining a competitive edge can be difficult. With over 30 years of experience, Concept Marketing Group Inc. assists companies in developing and implementing effective sales and marketing strategies. We believe collaborating with Concept Marketing

Group Inc. on your marketing efforts will deliver noteworthy results to your business. For more information, visit www.marketingsource.com or e-mail concept@marketingsource.com

“Nobody listens to me!”

By: Patrick T Malone

This is one of the most common complaints you will hear from employees. It occurred to me that what they are really saying is simply “acknowledge” me. The following excerpt from our new book, *Cracking the Code to Leadership* on acknowledging may help you listen and acknowledge more effectively.

100% Attention

Giving someone your 100% attention means you listen carefully enough to determine the other person’s point of view. You both listen to what the person says and watch how she says it. You also suspend all other activity - no phone calls, no emailing, no Blackberry. You literally pay attention to every word the other person says.

The paradox of doing this is that when you listen for the other person’s point of view, you automatically give her your 100% attention. Being able to maintain this high level of attention with anyone, in any mood, is the crucial skill of effective listening.

As you listen, with 100% attention, remember to:

- Be interested, not interesting.
- Suspend all activities including your own point of view for the moment.
- Stop multitasking. (Computers are truly effective at multitasking. People are not.)
- Wait until the other person is completely finished before thinking about your response.

Response

The purpose of a response acknowledgement is to prove you are listening, that you received the message, and that the message has an impact on you. Done correctly, a response acknowledgement shows a person much more than polite words ever could convey.

By your responding to the other person, you are telling her that she has some power in the conversation. The paradox here is that the more power you give away, the more you get back because the other person knows you are the source of that power.

Here is another pointer. As you respond, do not try to be impressive. Instead, demonstrate that you are impressed. Again, the more impressed you are, the more others are impressed by you.

Basically you have two kinds of response acknowledgements, non-verbal and verbal. Non verbal responses include nods, facial expression of interest or concern, steady eye contact, and hand gestures. You can use these alone or combine them with verbal acknowledgements and tone of voice to reveal your sincerity.

With verbal acknowledgements, the inflection in your voice can go up or down depending upon your response. Down acknowledgements signal that you received the message and the speaker can now change the subject or move on to another point.

Sample down inflections include:
“Got it. “Thank you.” “Fine.” “OK.”

Up inflections signal you want the speaker to continue talking or expand on a particular point and that you are following the speaker’s logic path.

Up inflections include:
“Oh?” “Really?” “And...” “Then?”

When you use response acknowledgement appropriately, you demonstrate to the speaker that she got through to you, and you eliminate any need for repetition. People appreciate having their communications acknowledged. This is true even with email and voice mail. Not receiving a response to a message is both frustrating and annoying. Be a good communicator and acknowledge the other person by responding to his

message as soon as possible, even if only to acknowledge that you received his email or voice message.

Understanding

All too often, people attempt to acknowledge others during a conversation by saying, "I understand." Unfortunately, this understanding statement is usually followed by another statement that proves the person really does not understand and has no idea what is the other person meant or said.

Rather than tell the other person you understand, we urge you to prove you understand. You do this simply by summarizing or "netting out" what you just heard. A few words are usually sufficient. You can also ask related questions. You only need to let the other person know that you are there, and more importantly, that you got the point.

Here is a key point to remember: Do not provide feedback to show you are listening. Do it to prove you understand. The difference in these two intentions transmits remarkably different messages when you communicate.

Once you start proving you understand, you will soon discover that you are getting to the heart of matters faster and making quick analogies or parallels instead of delivering rote repetitions which are common feedback techniques. Being able to quickly and accurately net out complex messages and ideas is an executive caliber skill. When you cultivate that skill as your own, communicating and problem solving become so much easier.

Respect

To build rapport, you must prove and demonstrate respect for other people's points of view, not just proclaim respect. Just telling someone, "I appreciate your position" or "I know how you feel," is not enough. You have to prove it. How many times has someone politely told you, "I know how you feel, and you were immediately turned off by the insincerity of the remark?

So how does acknowledging respect work? You initiate respect by being willing to communicate with another person at his level of understanding and attitude at any moment in time. You are not being condescending. In fact, showing respect for another person is an absolute must if you are to build rapport and stay in a conversation. There is no technique or gimmick to showing respect.

You already do this with people you care about. You naturally adjust your tone of voice, rate of speech and choice of words to show you are trying to imagine being where other people are at that moment. You do not have to be perfect at acknowledging respect, but you do have to show the other person that you are trying.

A note of caution: Respecting another person's point of view does not mean you agree with that viewpoint. Agreement and respect are not synonymous.

By acknowledging another viewpoint, you are simply respecting the other person's right to a different point of view at this moment in time. You are not throwing your point of view away; you are just putting yours on hold while you try to understand the other person's view.

Now the good news... if your words, tone of voice and body language communicate respect for the other person's point of view, the other three acknowledgements naturally happen. Processing the four acknowledgements while you are in conversation and trying to reach a decision can be difficult. That is why we want you to remember just one point - Respect. Do this and the other acknowledgements automatically occur.

Article Source: <http://bizymoms.com/business>

Patrick T. Malone is a Senior Partner of The PAR Group, an international training and coaching firm headquartered in Tucker, Georgia and the co-author of **Cracking the Code to Leadership**. A frequent speaker at industry and management conferences, he is also the President of LMMA Inc, a non-profit motorcycle awareness organization, and has served as the National Board President of The Compassionate Friends (TCF) and trustee

Types of Marketing Activities You Need to Schedule

By: Jody Gabourie

Scheduling your marketing activities is key to ensuring you are consistently and successfully getting the word out about you and your company and all the great services and products you have to share with people.

There are several formats that people use to schedule things - to-do lists, activity lists, calendar items, list of projects, sticky notes all over their desk, and so on. It doesn't really matter how you do it as long as it works for you.

There are going to be three general types of marketing activities that you'll want to put into your schedule:

- 1) ongoing everyday activities
- 2) specific one-time projects
- 3) idea generation

Ongoing everyday marketing activities include those that you do regularly. Some examples are:

- writing your ezine
- adding new auto-responders to your email series
- writing blog posts
- contributing to online forums and blogs
- networking events
- writing content for your monthly teleseminar
- adding content to your website
- writing articles for submission
- checking your website analytics
- communicating with your affiliates
- sending out press releases
- networking on social media sites such as Facebook and LinkedIn

Specific one-time projects would be marketing tactics that occur as a special or one-time opportunity. For example:

- a workshop you're putting on
- creating a new product
- setting up a referral program
- a joint venture with another company
- flushing out the specifics of a new service you're going to offer
- a speaker series you've been invited to share at
- setting up your affiliate program
- running a special promotion
- writing a book
- a new website
- setting up a blog

Time set aside for idea generation is important. You need to schedule this in just like any other marketing activity. Things you'll "think" about during this time can include:

- researching possible joint venture partners
- thinking about ideas for a new product, service or book
- taking a look at some colleagues websites and blogs to see what they are up to
- daydreaming about the direction you'd like your company to go
- brainstorming about your professional and personal goals

Write down a list of all the different marketing activities you currently do and start scheduling them into

your calendar and to-do lists. Make sure you look at your schedule first thing in the morning and different times throughout the day to make sure that you're staying on course.

Commit to your marketing by having a schedule and you'll see your business grow and attract new and old clients on a consistent basis.

Article Source: <http://bizymoms.com/business>

Jody Gabourie Marketing Plan Queen helps small business owners get into marketing action fast with done-for-you products and services such as her Ready Made Marketing Plan™ ebooks. To learn more about how she can help you attract more clients and grow your business, and to sign up for her FREE ezine, articles, and special report: 5 Massive Mistakes Small Businesses Make with Their Marketing Plan, visit her site at **www.MarketingPlanQueen.com**

Create a Great Elevator Speech - AKA - 60-Second Networking Commercial

By: Stephanie LH Calahan (@StephCalahan)

What is a 60 Second Commercial/Elevator Pitch?

A 60 second commercial is a concise, carefully planned, and well-practiced description about your company that your mother should be able to understand in the time it would take to ride up an elevator.

It is not just a "sales pitch." Be careful not to get caught up in using the entire pitch to tell the individual how great your product or service is.

WHY BOTHER LEARNING ONE?

When you think about how many people you, your employees/contractors or even your family members come in contact with on a daily basis, it is probably more than you realize! Having a 60 second commercial that adequately describes what you do, in a way that is easy for the other individual to understand is a great marketing tool!

Individuals will commonly downplay what they do, especially if their work is in a complex industry. By having a 60 second commercial already strategically thought through, you eliminate comments like, "I work with computers." The previous statement would not really tell anyone about what the company really does and how it helps people, yet it is a good example of how someone might downplay their position.

SHOULD I HAVE MORE THAN ONE?

Employees of your organization should learn one commercial that is general enough to be able to speak to your overall customer base. Depending on your business, however, you (and your sales force) may consider having different sections that would vary depending on the audience. Be careful, however, your talk should be natural and flowing. Try not to create so many variations that you forget which one to use!

CREATING THE 60 SECOND COMMERCIAL - OPTION 1

There are 4 questions your "commercial" must answer:

1. Who are you? Your name, the company name and an overview of the company should be stated here. This section should not take up more than 10 seconds of your talk time.
2. What is your product or service and what are the benefits? Briefly describe what it is you sell. Do not go into excruciating detail. Stay high-level and focus on the "what is in it for me" factor. Why would the person you are talking to want to learn more? Maybe one of your clients has had significant dollar savings from working with you. Maybe the training you have provided has allowed one of your clients to advance in their field much faster than anticipated. This section should take up about 30 seconds of your talk time.
3. Who is your market? Briefly discuss who you are selling the product or service to. What industry is it? How large of a market do they represent? Make this section a request for a referral by starting with "Who do you know who..." or another appropriate open ended question. This section should take up to about 10 seconds of your talk time.
4. How do they contact you? You can choose to repeat a phone number, email address or web site. If you have a free give away of some kind, or a great web site with free information, make sure to say that here as well. Choose a contact method that will be the most likely to get you quickly. If you don't answer the phone, but you check email right away every time something comes in, then use email, etc. This section should take up about 5 seconds of your talk time.

There are 4 things that your talk must contain:

1. A "hook" - Close your pitch by getting the individual's attention with a "hook." Use a statement or question

that piques their interest to want to hear more.

2. About 150-225 words Your pitch should go no longer than 60 seconds.

3. Passion Energy and dedication from entrepreneurs is contagious. Make them want to learn more without being "fake."

4. A Request At the end of your pitch, you must ask for something. Do you want their business card, to schedule a full presentation, to ask for a referral?

Sample Commercial

This is a sample of the commercial our organization consultants use:

Hello. I'm _____, Independent Organization Consultant for Calahan Solutions. We provide productivity and organizing solutions busy, intelligent business owners. We were founded in 2002 and are members of the National Association of Professional Organizers as well as the National Study Group on Chronic Disorganization.

If you spend more time looking for items than you do using them, we can provide solutions to streamline your business operation for optimal efficiency, and free your time to concentrate on building your business and serving your clients.

We have helped our clients save money and time and reduce stress. Our business clients note significantly reduced errors and more confident employees. Our coaching clients say we are their trusted partners and note more efficiently used space and a sense of calm that they have not felt in quite a while.

Who do you know who could use more time or stress reduction? Who do you know that could use a dynamic speaker for group presentations or workshops? We would love to talk to them about how we can help them.

You can get 100s of free tips on our site as well as our free monthly newsletter at www.calahansolutions.com or you can reach me at 309-826-5263 309-826-5263.

Guiding you to your solutions - Its not about us, it's about you and getting you to your goals.

CREATING THE 30 SECOND COMMERCIAL -- OPTION 2

List the 3 things you believe your company should be known for.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Write your ideas for each of the 7 elements below.

1. Your Company Name _____

2. Target _____

3. Need or Opportunity _____

4. Product or Service _____

5. Your Competition _____

6. What is Different _____

7. Key Benefit _____

Using the 7 elements listed above, and the formula below, write your 30 second commercial for your business.

(COMPANY NAME) is for (TARGET) who (NEED) we offer (PRODUCT OR SERVICE).

Unlike (OUR COMPETITORS) we provide (WHAT IS DIFFERENT) which means you will (KEY BENEFIT).

Here is how our 30 seconds would sound:

Calahan Solutions, Inc. is for business owners who are overwhelmed with paper and information or want to reclaim time to do important things in their life. We offer consulting and coaching services that meet your specific needs as well as many self-guided opportunities.

Unlike other organizers in the industry, we do NOT provide cookie cutter solutions, which means that you will receive advise that is custom tailored to your business' needs.

You don't have to do it our way, because we help you find your way! (tm)

FINAL THOUGHTS

Regardless of the method you use, having a crafted introduction that you are comfortable with will put you at ease and make for more productive networking.

Article Source: <http://bizymoms.com/business>

Want more ideas on getting things done? Visit our blog **Productive and Organized - Finding Your Way** and participate! I regularly answer questions and help my readers out! Better yet, **connect with me on a social networking site**. Stephanie LH Calahan is a speaker, coach and productivity consultant. She founded Calahan Solutions, Inc. to help you make the most of your time, space and information.

Improving the Quality of Your Life

By: Andrew Rondeau

Imagine if we could live our lives completely free of stress.

Now wake up and stop dreaming, because you can't.

No matter what job you have, no matter where you live, you will have stress in your life. What causes your stress is different to what causes me stress. What you stress about is different to what I stress about. The amount of stress you can cope with is different to the levels I can cope with.

But...we all suffer with stress.

The chance of us living completely without worries or stress for the rest of our lives are as much as us finding out that Father Christmas really does exist.

Although, stress can never be avoided, we can reduce it, if we know what to do when it comes.

In the times or situations when you find yourself overwhelmed with problems, worries and stress, just remember what the famous Lao-tzu once said, "The journey to a thousand miles begins with a single step."

Very simply put.

It is better that we tackle and finish our tasks one at a time rather than give up altogether.

Here are a few ways to be more efficient when dealing with stress and pressure:

1. Plan out your day's work, in advance. Agree what you need to do and add a timeframe. Do your best to match the timeframe you've allotted for each task.
2. Prioritise your tasks. Consider the "must do" items only, write them down, and then schedule the necessary time for those activities.
3. Brush up on your delegation skills and start to delegate. People you know may have the skills needed to help you and relieve you from stress.
4. Limit distractions - some people work better with the radio blasting. If you're one of them, then go for it. Just surround yourself with things that'll help you with concentration and will inspire you to be more productive.
5. Know when to take a break. Go for a walk, take in some fresh air, do some exercise. Doing something different can refresh our bodies and minds and reenergize us to go back to work in top form.

Everyone has their breaking point and they are all at different levels. If you reach yours, this is in no way an indication of weakness. Just know that you have to surround yourselves with people who can give you the support that you need at the time you need it.

With your own personal strength and the right support system, stress no longer needs to be a scary word.

Article Source: <http://bizymoms.com/business>

Andrew Rondeau is the author of the free guide "The Simple Steps To Deliver A Dazzling Presentation". Grab your complimentary copy at www.greatmanagement.org/blog/ today and start **mastering public speaking**. You can also grab the FREE course "Discover How to Maximize Your Income and Minimize Your Effort"

Google News

By: Jennifer Horowitz

The past few months have been very exciting with lots of changes in the search industry. Here is a recap of everything you need to know about what's been going on.

There have been changes with: Google Caffeine, Google Real-Time Search and Google Personalization

Let's break down all three of those areas:

Google Caffeine: This happened in November: As you know from my previous Blog posts, Google Caffeine (being tested at: <http://www2.sandbox.google.com/>) is different than current Google. For my original PDF on Google Caffeine, click here. (<http://www.ecombuffet.com/SEONow.pdf>)

When you visit the Google Caffeine test page now, you see the following message:

"We appreciate all the feedback from people who searched on our Caffeine sandbox.

Based on the success we've seen, we believe Caffeine is ready for a larger audience. Soon we will activate Caffeine more widely, beginning with one data center. This sandbox is no longer necessary and has been retired, but we appreciate the testing and positive input that webmasters and publishers have given."

So, the time has come. Caffeine is being rolled, data center by data center.

Making sure you rank well in the new Google is important. Just because you rank well in the current Google doesn't mean you will in Caffeine. That doesn't mean panic though - if you are following best practices and are aggressively and actively optimizing your site, you should still do OK.

Google Real-Time Search: December breaking news: We knew it was coming and now it's here! A few days ago Google launched real-time search.

Real-time search is the catch phrase used to describe indexing what's happening on the web, in real time. They will pull in Twitter feeds, Facebook updates, Blog posts, Google News Feeds, Yahoo! Answers and even MySpace feeds.

Back in October Google announced a partnership with Twitter and Bing announced a partnership with Twitter and Facebook. Now Google has Facebook and MySpace as well.

Although it will take a few days to roll out this feature for everyone, you can see it now in a "Hot Topics" feature that's been added to Google Trends (<http://www.google.com/trends>). Click on any trend, then click a "Hot Topic," and you'll see the new "Latest Results" area of Google search results. Social media is a rich source of information, with opinions, insights, and even breaking news and the engines want to tap into this current information and deliver it to searchers.

What's Does It Look Like?

Bing has had a section for tweets in the search engine results pages (SERPs) since late October. Yahoo began relying on tweets to point out hot news stories in its results last month.

In Google's version of real-time search, there will be a section of its main results page that will include scrolls relevant information within a few seconds after it pops up in the web index.

Previously a new search query was the only way to see the blog posts, status updates and other information that Google had collected since the previous query. Now the stream of tweets, Blog posts, videos, photos etc will stream through the results page.

Google's real-time information will eventually include streams from Facebook and MySpace, but not until early next year, said Marissa Mayer, Google's vice president for search products and user experience.

Microsoft and Yahoo already have access to some Facebook updates. "People expect search engines to make all kinds of information available to them," said Amit Singhal, a Google engineer who oversaw the development of the real-time tool.

What Does This Mean To You?

Social Media (Twitter and Facebook and I guess MySpace) are more important than ever and if you aren't Blogging yet - you also need to be doing that. Keeping up with the trends is the best way to keep your site competitive and coming up on top.

Google Personalization: More December breaking news: For a while now, Google has been offering personalized search results when you are logged into your Google account.

They have now extended personalized search functionality to users who are not signed in.

This applies to Google users around the world, in over 40 languages.

"This addition enables us to customize search results for you based upon 180 days of search activity linked to an anonymous cookie in your browser," Google says. "It's completely separate from your Google Account and Web History (which are only available to signed-in users). You'll know when we customize results because a 'View customizations' link will appear on the top right of the search results page. Clicking the link will let you see how we've customized your results and also let you turn off this type of customization."

Don't worry, Google lets you turn personalized search off altogether. For users that are not signed in, just click "web history" in the top right corner of a search results page, then click "disable customizations." You can also clear your browser's cookies.

What Does All This Mean To You?

As a searcher, you may find you are getting better results. They will keep track of what you've been clicking on over the past 180 days and in future searches, the results will be fine tuned towards the sites and topics you have indicated an interest in.

As a site owner, it isn't a bad thing. So many people are questioning "can you still rank on top with personalization" and the answer is yes. If you continue to have quality content and quality links, then your site can still come up on top. If your listing in the SERPs (search engine results) page is compelling and you earn clicks, then personalization will work in your favor because you are more likely to come up again when that person queries other similar phrases.

SEO Firms will find ways to improve your results, even with personalization in place. Focusing on longer tail phrases and less generic phrases will be important.

This probably sounds like I'm pushing my own agenda a little (and I am, but it's also true)....with all the changes lately, an SEO team working on your behalf and staying current on all these changes and what they mean is crucial.

Article Source: <http://bizymoms.com/business>

Jennifer Horowitz, Director of Marketing for **EcomBuffet.com** has been helping clients grow their business by increasing traffic and improving conversions for over 10 years. Jennifer is widely published, and has spoken at SEO Conferences and trainings. For more information and for a free downloadable book on SEO, visit **EcomBuffet.com**

Make Selling The Easiest Job In The World

By: Maura Schreier-Fleming

Selling is the world's easiest job. Just ask anyone who is not in sales. They think we gab and go to lunch five days a week. We get to the office at nine and quit at three to go play golf. Nice life, but it's not the one you know. Your selling day probably starts early, ends late while you look for ways to serve your customers better. How about serving yourself?

Love to plan.

I remember one of my first managers who taught me about the Rule of the Five P's. Prior planning prevents poor performance. Are you managing your time by allocating time for the tasks you need to do? This means writing down starting AND ending times for scheduled tasks. Do you have tasks that can be streamlined? An organized system for your sales and technical literature (and other regularly used tools) is mandatory. Ask other salespeople how they do it and adapt their systems to your needs. My rule is I create folders for the paper I need and immediately put the paper to be filed in the folder. No messy desk for me!

Learn to make the job easier.

Instead of gearing up to deal with crises, how many problems can you anticipate and then prevent? That's how the professional does it. If you're having problems creating ideas on what areas to work on, measure where you are spending most of your time. Are you currently doing what is most productive? If you're at a loss to figure out how to avoid crises, learn how to be creative. Creativity is a process to develop new ideas. Creativity is a skill that can be learned. Books on creativity will help you on your way. I recommend A Kick in the Seat of the Pants by Roger Von Oech.

Reward yourself.

To keep yourself at peak performance, you must want to work hard every day. Lack of motivation is sometimes the challenge. You will be more likely to set and accomplish other goals if you know you're getting a reward after completing a difficult task. Rewards don't have to be expensive. For many people, time is the most precious commodity. How motivating would it be for you to know that your reward is one hour of time to do whatever you choose to do? Share your goals with your family so they can help encourage you and respect your one hour time reward!

Make sure the reward is something YOU want. It has to be meaningful to you to be a source of motivation. If you set goals that will bring you financial gain, choose a reward that you can spend your newly acquired wealth on.

Don't sweat the small stuff- and it's all small stuff.

Learn to identify what is important and what isn't important. If you are frustrated over the amount of work you are doing, ask yourself, "What would happen if I didn't do it?" If nothing will happen or the consequences are minimal, why are you doing it? If what you are doing isn't what your customers value, why are you doing it? Find out what would add value and do that!

Selling isn't the easiest job in the world. You should not be making it any harder than it needs to be. You owe it to yourself to look out for you. If you don't take care of yourself, then who will?

Article Source: <http://bizymoms.com/business>

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How's Your Elevator Speech

By: JM

Look, every entrepreneur and professional sales person needs an elevator speech. Let me explain How many times a year are you asked the question, "What do you do?" I'm sure you hear the question often especially when you're working and at social gatherings.

When I ask people, "What do you do" I'm amazed at how few people can articulate crisply, clearly, and concisely what it is they do.

Last week I joined an organization called Y.E.S. which stands for Young Entrepreneurs of Sarasota. I knew about this organization for quite some time and I assumed "Young" meant under 30.

It wasn't until I read an article in the local paper which declared young meant anybody under 100 years of age. So I joined right away.

It was a networking lunch and boy did I meet some characters. The host of the event asked how many of the attendees was unemployed and I was surprised to see about 20% of the hands bolt upward.

I got to talking to a guy and asked him, "What do you do?"

He says, "I sell insurance and I'm just getting started."

I couldn't resist offering some advice. Of course I asked for his permission to do so.

Look I said everybody who sells insurance says, "I sell insurance." I suggested, "You need an elevator speech" I told him what that was and offered an example.

You could say, "I'm in the protection business. I protect and insure cars, homes, and commercial properties."

Now if I had more time I probably could make it even better. He immediately said, "I like it - it sounds different and professional."

Of course, I already knew that.

There were approximately 100 people at this networking lunch. After the buffet lunch program MC asked for a show of hands for everybody who was attending for the first time. About 20 people raised their hands.

He said, "All first-timers will get 10 seconds to say who you are and what you do." Sounds like an elevator speech to me.

It just so happened to call on David, my friend the insurance guy, first.

David says, "I'm in the protection business. I protect and insure cars, homes, and commercial properties."

The MC gets excited and says that's perfect - that's just like how we want everyone to introduce themselves.

Across the room, David looks at me and I look at him, and we both knew he nailed it.

So what do you do?

You shouldn't have to think about the answer to this question you should know how to respond without thinking and without blinking.

Think of it as your "Elevator Speech." To be effective you have to spend a reasonable amount of time preparing your elevator speech.

Look - if I said to you "Take 20 minutes and describe the kind of work you do" that would be easy. You would just start talking, actually just start rambling on about all the things you do at work.

Ah, but an elevator speech - that's different. This must be short and sweet. So you'll have to play with the words until you get it right. You can't do this in 10 minutes. It's a must if you want to have a spectacular career in sales.

Last year I held an "Elevator Speech" contest. About three dozen people sent me their elevator speech. Most were truly pathetic and horrible. One person wrote a 1000 word essay.

One person however got it right and he blew me away with what he sent me. He was the president of a small public-relations company. Here's what he sent me.

"Our business is making your business unforgettable." It's simply brilliant and it's only seven words.

Let this be your model as you design your elevator speech.

Imagine there were four public relations companies competing to win a large account. Also imagine each company was given an hour for a presentation to senior management.

I'm sure several companies would come in loaded with PowerPoint slides.

I'm also sure that people listening to the sales presentations would be overwhelmed with data and information.

I'm also sure that very little of what was said and shown via PowerPoint would be remembered.

But when the senior management team hears the elevator speech "Our business is making your business unforgettable" they won't be able to shake those words from their minds.

It will stick - and that's exactly what you want your elevator speech to do, "Stick."

Those carefully thought-out words probably will also stick it to the competition.

Give some thought to preparing, in writing, your own brilliant elevator speech.

Article Source: <http://bizymoms.com/business>

Jim Meisenheimer is the creator of the new Sales Trailblazer V.I.P. Selling Club for entrepreneurs and professional salespeople. The focus is on common sense sales tips and proven selling strategies. 24 lessons spread over 24 weeks - pure gold. Go here to learn more: salestrailblazer.com

Avoiding Voice Message Nightmares - How to handle voice messaging systems when Cold Calling

By: Russ Lombardo/The Sales Guru

Today more than ever it's really tough getting through to the person you're trying to reach on the phone. It used to be that the gatekeeper screened your call and kept you from accessing the very person you were trying to reach. Now there's technology getting in your way as well. Cold calling is hard enough, but when you are confronted with voice messaging systems, it adds to the challenge.

People tend to get nervous and confused leaving voice messages and as a result the message itself may sound like a jumble of unrelated phrases. More than once I've had voice messages from callers that sounded like really good Porky Pig imitators. Hence, it's very important to leave voice messages that catch your listener's attention, compel them to listen to the entire dialogue, and get them to actually return your call. The following seven tips should help you with this modern-day nightmare.

1. **Curious George.** Be sure to hit my hot buttons with your message so as to spur my curiosity. Specify clear benefits as to why I should return your call. Do a little research on me or my business before calling so you can relate your message to my needs and let me know that you might have something of interest to me. Try something like, "Mr. Lombardo, this is Brenda Johnson with XYZ Inc. I see that you have expanded your operations. I know from my other clients that have experienced similar growth that they encountered challenges with finding quality people to meet their expansion. We help companies find talented people so they don't waste time and money on the wrong choices. I'd like to speak with you to learn more about your challenges to see if we might be able to help. You can reach me at..." If this is truly a concern of mine, you can be sure I'll call you back.
2. **Short & Sweet.** Don't leave long messages. I don't have the time or patience to hear someone go on and on about what they do, how they do it or how they think they can help me without even knowing what my pains are. The example in tip #1 is short enough yet informative enough to get to the point without boring me.
3. **Don't Hang Up.** Always leave a message. Some people say that if you get a voice message, hang up and try again later until someone live picks up. I don't recommend this at all because I can see from the caller ID that you called. And if I keep seeing that you called, I will, a) get annoyed that you are not leaving a message, b) assume you're a telemarketer, or c) fear you are stalking me. Busy business people frequently don't answer their phones directly and let them go to voice mail so they can go through all their calls at a specific time or day. You have to respect that and not expect that you'll actually get them live.
4. **Complimentary Businesses.** Try to find a topic that is complimentary to my business. Perhaps you have a product or service that works well with what I offer and we can work together. Possibly we have something in common like another client or colleague. Maybe you want to purchase my product. Make this clear in your message. Once I call you back, be sure to discuss this complimentary topic first, and then you can segue into how you might be able to help me with your offerings.
5. **Make Me An Offer.** Try offering me something for free such as a free consultation or site-survey. This could be something that you do anyway as part of finding new business. It will get my interest when I hear I could get something for free. For instance, if you would normally do a sales call where you'd ask questions about my business and then present your findings to me, then this can be offered as a Needs Analysis that you are giving me for free. It's all about presenting value to me and getting me to want to return your call.
6. **Be Prepared.** Don't even pick up the phone unless you are first prepared to, a) reach a live person, or b) leave a good voice message. Some sales people are good on the phone when they reach a live person, but as soon as the machine picks up, they fall apart ("Um, yeah, uh, Hi. Uh, this is George from uh...uh...I mean George Carlson from uh..."). Be prepared in advance with a script for handling any situation. The script should be used as a guideline for you to follow and stay on track, but under NO circumstance should you ever read from a script.

7. Don't Give Up. On average, it takes up to six to seven times to get through to people these days, especially in business. The average sales person gives up after two or three tries - not even half-way there. So be persistent and patient. You can even mix it up by rotating emails between calls, if you have their email address of course. Be creative and persevere and do not give up too quickly.

Use these tips to help avoid Voice Message Nightmares and to increase your chances of getting your prospects to return your calls.

Good luck and good selling!

Russ Lombardo
The Sales Guru

Article Source: <http://bizymoms.com/business>

Russ Lombardo is President of **PEAK Sales Consulting, LLC** and an experienced Sales Consultant, Trainer, Author and Speaker. He works with businesses to develop sales processes and provide sales training & coaching. Russ is author of several books on sales and Customer Relationship Management (CRM). He can be reached at Call 919-491-2823 or visit www.PeakSalesConsulting.com



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