

YOU CAN ALWAYS SELL MORE ...

“You Can Always Sell More This Month...If You Can Increase Your Cold Calling Efforts”

Cold calling, or contacting prospects you have never talked to, is one of the single toughest activities any salesperson can do. It's not that cold calling is hard, it's just takes a lot of work to generate a little new business and involves the highest rate of selling rejection. Most salespeople hate cold calling, not because it's hard work, but because they can't handle the high degree of negatives you hear when cold calling. No one likes to work in a negative environment where people are always telling you no.

Someone once related selling to farming. Most salespeople just keep replanting and harvesting the same old fields. The older the field, the lower the crop yield, and you keep losing prime acreage to erosion (the slow, but ongoing loss of existing client's business).

Cold calling is like clearing a forest to make a new field, very time consuming but will yield a much higher rate due to the “fresh soil” you now have to work with. How do you feel about all of the time it takes to clear a new field vs. planting and harvesting your existing ones? The ultimate goal is to spend time each week doing both.

Now a lot of salespeople are completely against any type of cold calling efforts. Reasons given include the low odds of success and the difficulty of finding and then talking to the people you want to reach. Both of these complaints are accurate. But how will you add new contacts to your sales territory? Would it be a worthwhile investment to try cold calling a number of prospects for awhile to see if this idea can help you expand your selling contacts?

I always viewed prospecting/cold calling as a game. I knew the majority of time prospects would tell me no or would not change over to me but I had a goal to wear them down with my tenacity and professionalism. After awhile, and after the time period most of my competitors would have already given up, I tended to begin winning this new business over. I've always believed that I can increase my personal competitive advantage if I'm willing to work harder, smarter or more creatively than my competition.

One of the mental attitudes I always thought about was to think, anyone can sell, but it takes a real sales warrior to stay in there long enough to win new cold calling business. Sometimes the toughest part of cold calling is just getting over the fear and negative feeling of not making any progress for all of the hard work you are investing. Once the mental attitude is under control, you now need to focus on your selling skills.

Do you need to improve your foundation skills of selling? How strong are your cold call selling “best practices?” The most important selling skill to improve is your ability to answer the question of “Why, based on all of the competitive alternatives available to me, do I want to buy from you?” That is the toughest question to answer in selling today, but also the most critical issue you need to cover to win over anyone's business.

The reality is that every new prospect you call on is already buying from someone else and is most likely satisfied with their current relationships. You have to prove to them that you can do things better, cheaper, with lower risk, or greater service than their current supplier. How will you change your selling message to reflect these issues?

Prospecting for new business is definitely hard work, time consuming, and one of the few ways that can help you significantly grow both your territory and your income. What can you do this month to either increase your cold calling efforts, or to see if cold calling can work for you?

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