

Why Sales People Hate Cold Calling

Cold calling is a fact of life for most people in sales. Sure, the vast majority would prefer to rely on referrals, word-of-mouth, or some other lead source that reduces or eliminates their need to make cold calls. However, unless you deal with an established set of accounts, you will, at some time, be required to cold call in order to generate sufficient leads for your business.

Having said this, even the most seasoned sales professionals often resist this strategy unless they are poked, prodded and pushed by their manager. Excuses include:

"I don't like the rejection."

"I don't want to come across like I'm desperate for business."

"I don't want to sound like a telemarketer."

"I don't like interrupting people at work."

"I don't know what to say."

However, I believe that two other dynamics prevent people from embracing cold calling.

1. Cold calling is hard work.

We know that cold calling seldom generates quick results. It takes a lot of effort and energy to make call after call, navigate voice mail systems, and to gain the support of receptionists and executive assistants.

You need to make dozens of dials to connect with live people. It takes finesse to deal with receptionists, gatekeepers and executive assistants. It takes a certain amount of creativity to deal with the barriers that get in our way. It takes multiple attempts and a bulldog sense of persistence to finally connect with decision makers. And, finally after all that work, we eventually manage to make contact with our prospect only to hear, "No, thanks."

It's no wonder sales people resist incorporating this strategy into their daily/weekly routine. Most people like to take the path of least resistance and cold calling certainly does not fall into that category.

2. The need and desire for instant gratification.

I once read that there are two types of people. People who are willing to wait for a reward and those who want the reward now even though the payoff may be higher if they wait. I suspect that people who have the ability to wait for a payoff also possess the ability to make more calls than individuals who need immediate gratification. Let's face it. Capturing a sale is highly motivating and many people have a difficult time making call after call with little to show for it. Making fifty or sixty dials and not capturing a sale or being unable to connect with a buyer or decision maker can be extremely frustrating. Spending an entire day on the telephone is even more challenging and difficult.

Experts on this subject say that you need to recognize that every 'no' brings you one call closer to making an appointment or landing a sale. Some people say that you need to "go for the no" and to use those 'no's' as a stepping stone to hearing a 'yes.' While these philosophies are technically true, it takes much more than that.

It takes big picture thinking. It requires the ability to postpone the pleasure of getting the reward and developing the discipline to work through the pain and challenge of making dozens of calls with little to show for it.

So, here's the \$64,000 question: how do you develop this ability?

I'll warn you; it's not easy. In order to develop the ability to get used to a delayed payoff you actually have to make these calls, as painful and challenging as it is. You need to condition yourself that you will eventually get a reward for your efforts. I know, you were hoping for a magic answer or quick result. Unfortunately, the quick-fix solution exists only in infomercials, novels and movies.

Let's take a look at this from a slightly different perspective. When you learn a new hobby, sport, language, etc., it takes time to just to become comfortable. It takes longer to develop a level of consistent proficiency. And, it takes even more time to develop your skill to the point of excellence. The same concept applies to cold calling. You can't expect to make ten or fifteen calls and master the skill. In fact, that number of calls won't even get you to the point of feeling comfortable. You need to block time in your schedule on a daily basis to make calls. The more calls you make, the easier it will get and the more proficient you will become. As your skill improves, so will your ability to generate leads and secure appointments. You will become more adept at dealing with receptionists and executive assistants. And this will eventually translate into sales.

I guarantee that it will be a grind at first. However, if you can push through your initial resistance you can develop the ability to postpone your need for instant gratification. And as you do this, your results will improve.

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