

# Warm up your cold calling

Gavin Ingham suggests key steps to help you become more professional in making cold calls

In this tough economic climate many companies are increasing new business activity in a drive to generate more clients and opportunities. One sure-fire tactic for reaching new prospects and building up your sales pipeline is cold calling – but only if you do it well.

## Remind yourself why cold calling is extremely important

Spend time focusing on your reasons for taking positive cold calling action every day. Stick pictures on your PC and make notes in your diary to remind you why cold calling, and the results that you get from it, is important to you.

## Cold call consistently

Make cold calling one of your sales success habits. Cold calling is something that you should do regularly, not just when you don't have enough business. Making calls all the time ingrains positive sales habits – and positive sales habits mean consistent sales success.

## Record your cold calling successes

The most important things in your life are worth recording. That's why many top salespeople keep a sales success logbook. Record what works, what doesn't, what you learnt, what you're proud of and how you are going to do things differently next time. Keep a record of your ratio of dials to conversations, conversations to meetings, meetings to opportunities,

and opportunities to deals. Knowing this will enable you to measure your progress and your skills.

## Motivate with team competitions

Set your own expectations. Don't wait for your sales manager or director to organise competitions to get you fired up – organise them yourself and set your standards higher than anyone else could ever have set them for you. Make sure that you reward yourself for activities completed and not just for results. These positive behaviours and activities will ultimately bring top sales results so it is these that you most need to reinforce.

## Be well prepared

Being well prepared enables you to make more targeted and more professional calls. It increases your confidence in your ability to make a great call and focuses you on your prospect. Don't worry when you make mistakes – everyone does. The key is to learn from them. Accept that you 'can't win them all'. Even the best cold callers don't get an appointment or close a deal every time.

## Maintain your intensity levels

Cold calling is more proactive, more productive and more fun when you keep up a healthy pace and a high level of intensity and energy. Challenge yourself to 'go for it' and maintain your intensity levels every time you are on the phone. Despite this, you need to remain cool, calm and in control – dealing with your



emotions is one of the keys to becoming a cold calling superstar.

## Don't put the phone down when between calls

Maintain your energy levels by keeping the phone in your hand once you start your cold calling sessions. Putting the phone down between calls can slow you down and impede your motivation. And why not try standing up? This is a particularly useful tactic when you are feeling your enthusiasm beginning to cool off – it will inject much needed energy and vitality into your calls.

'If cold calling goes wrong, learn to get up, get over it and get on with the next call'

## Avoid interruptions

These will ruin your flow and distract you from this most important of selling activities. Divert incoming calls, turn off your email and ask colleagues not to interrupt you when you are on the phone. Many salespeople make one or two cold calls and then stop calling to send out literature, do research or consult colleagues. In fact, they do anything rather than stay on the phone. Don't make this mistake – once you've got over your initial inertia, keep going.

## Avoid sales losers

Avoid sales losers, sales whiners and mediocre wannabes! Sales superstars don't let themselves be dragged down by dead weights. Spend your time with sales winners or, preferably, with clients. And cultivate a sense of humour – if cold calling goes wrong and you don't get your desired results sometimes, learn to get up, get over it and get on with the next call.

## contributor

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