

More On Advertising

Ted Lawrence,
Advertising Director
Missouri Press Service



Liz Wendling, President of Insight Business Consultants, says cold calling is in some cases very effective, and in some cases, it's not at all.

In an article online, she said she has recently received a higher number of cold calls in the past few months than ever before. "Most of them were train wrecks," she says.

Here's a summary that could help anyone who uses cold calls as part of their repertoire:

The vast majority of callers were more interested into launching into their monologue and sales pitch than asking questions about her business.

"They assumed that I needed what they had to offer. Funny how they knew that, when the only question they bothered to ask was "Are you the decision-maker for the business?" I ended each of these calls saying the same thing – "thanks but I'm not interested."

Because of the high volume of such calls she received, she decided to write an open letter to cold-callers everywhere.

An Open Letter To Cold Callers

Dear Cold Caller,

Recently you called my office and I willingly picked up the phone to have a conversation with you. You immediately launched into what you had to say. Instead of finding out what was important to me, you told me what was important to you.

I might have been interested, might have listened a little longer and might have given you a referral, but you put up too many roadblocks for me to do that. You made too many cold calling mistakes, and they cost you this sale and probably countless others.

I don't want to see you keep making the mistakes that compel me and others to hang up or find an excuse to end the call. I am open to hearing about what you offer, but it's not about you. Remember, you called me.

If you want your cold calls to turn out differently, please change a few things in your approach. Be willing to stop sounding like everyone else and I'm sure our next call will be different.

Here are 5 elements of cold calling approach success that I'm positive will change your game:

1. Research Me And My Company

It's simple these days to obtain solid information on a prospect, prior to picking up the phone. Spending a few minutes on research will yield big results. Otherwise I will know that I am just another number on your call list.

2. Ask Questions

Take the time to ask me questions to find out what I need and what is important to me. If you don't, it makes me feel like you're just in it for the sale, your quota and your paycheck. Asking questions keeps me on the phone with you longer. It works like magic.

3. Listen To My Answers

Please stop talking long enough to listen to me. When you dismiss everything I say with another reason why I should work with you, I have no interest in you and will rush you off the phone.

4. Don't Tell Me You Will Be In My Area

There is nothing worse than hearing those words from a cold caller. Everyone you talk to knows that you're not going to be in my area. That sales technique went out in the 80's. Be honest and ask to set up an appointment if there is any interest on my part.

5. Honor Your Words

If you declare that you will do something for me, do it. If you say you're going to send me an email with some information or get back to me with an answer to my question, do it. I won't chase you down or follow up with you; that's your job.

Cold calling doesn't have to be a painful experience for you or the person you're calling. If your calls are going nowhere and you keep getting the same dreary reactions and results, then your cold calling approach is off.

