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Five Great Ways To Warm Up Your Cold Calls

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by Patricia Schaefer

Whether you're a business owner, consultant, or salesperson, chances are at some point you will be making a number of cold calls. Yes, sometimes they're a necessity.

Does the thought of making a cold call send shivers down your spine? Is your heart beating a little faster? If it is, you're not alone.

Cold calls strike fear in the hearts of many a mortal man and woman, and for good reason. Some of the top fears that keep people from getting what they want in life are the same fears we have about cold calling:

- Fear of failing.
- Fear of being judged.
- Fear of emotional pain.
- Fear of embarrassment.
- Fear of rejection.

It doesn't have to be that way. You can learn to warm up to making cold calls and also learn how to make your cold call prospects warm up to you.

1. Take a Deep Breath, Relax, and Ask Yourself, "What's the worst thing that could happen?"

Relax before you make your cold call. The worst that could happen – someone hangs up on you or rejects your call in a belligerent manner – really isn't all that bad in the scheme of things. Don't take a rejection personally; instead, remember the words of billionaire Donald Trump, "It's not personal, it's business."

2. Gain Power from Knowledge

Knowledge reduces or eliminates fear, and knowledge empowers you to be confident, relaxed and effective.

Learn all you can about each prospect before you place your call:

- Check out the company website.
- "Google" them to see if you can find any current bits of

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information that might clue you in on the company's present needs.

- Talk to people you know in the same industry; they may have some "inside" information about your prospect.
- Find out beforehand the name and telephone number of the appropriate company contact; namely, the decision maker. This is the person who has the authority to give you a "yes" or "no."

Focus also on your own knowledge. Do you constantly strive to stay informed about your company's products and services, as well as your industry's trends? Do you spend enough time on a daily basis staying current on local, national and worldwide news? Today's news can significantly impact what you do or propose for your customers tomorrow.

3. Don't forget there's no "I" in Cold Calls

When your first and foremost commitment is to focus on others – more specifically your service to others – then the "I" concerns tend to disappear. When your commitment is to take the best of what you and your company have to offer – and to present this to prospective customers with the sincere intent to provide them with something that will truly benefit them – then that commitment will come through in your every communication. People will be less guarded and more accepting because they will sense that your focus is on their needs, not yours.

4. Ask Questions, Really Listen to the Answers, and Provide Solutions

When you call a friend, do you have a script and become an incessant talking head? Of course not; it's a give and take. You care about each other and you ask each other questions ... and a good friend really listens, and offers help when needed.

Apply these same principles when making a cold call. After you identify yourself and your company, you can start with a question that will let your prospect know that you are interested in their needs. Really listen to what they have to say so you can target and match their particular needs to what you have to offer.

The familiar feel of a reciprocal verbal exchange will put the other person at ease, and will allow you to comfortably propose a solution to whatever problem or needs they may have. At this point you should feel confident enough to take it to the next step; i.e., setting up an appointment or follow-up call.

5. Utilize the three P's: Practice, Persistence and Perseverance

The old adage "Practice makes perfect" is certainly true when it comes to cold calls. With each additional call you make, your comfort and confidence will increase as you hone important skills such as choice of words, tone of voice, and articulation. Focus on a positive attitude, and this will be conveyed as well.

Actress and singer Julie Andrews said, "Perseverance is failing 19 times and succeeding the 20th." How fitting this is for cold calling; in fact, persistence and perseverance are the hallmarks of cold call

success. Your results may be less than you hoped for at first, but with a little “P” & “P” to get you through the rough patches, success is more likely to follow.

Making cold calls can be frightening and challenging, especially when you’re first starting out. Apply these five principles to help you feel more relaxed and confident the next time you need to pick up that phone – and you just may find the “cold” in your cold calling melting away.

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