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Should we Cold Call?

By Bob Hazell

Not many people like trying to sell to people that they don't know. Networking is a great way of improving business. Often someone we know will know of a connection into the company we would like to sell to. That can warm things up a bit for us. However, it can still be daunting to telephone that person out of the blue and seek to get an appointment to see them. Sometimes, when we can't get an introduction we will need to telephone 'cold' anyway.

What stops us?

Why is it that we don't like to do this? Should we be doing it at all? These are questions that deserve an answer, so here goes.

- If I could guarantee that every time you picked up the telephone and asked for an appointment you would get one, would you do it? The answer is 'yes' isn't it? The only reason that we don't do it is that we fear (and expect) a 'No'!
- All over the world today salespeople will make 'cold' calls to companies and be successful in getting appointments. From these appointments they will go on to get millions of pounds worth of business. Would we like to have a slice of that business? The answer to that is also 'yes' isn't it?

So perhaps we should do it?

Many large corporate companies still do their business 'traditionally'. They expect to get sales people ringing them up; they practice how to say 'no'; they resist approaches from new companies and often prefer to stick with the 'devil they know'. Yet that business could be our business. We don't want to sit around with no business when there is loads out there to be won do we?

How can we go about it?

Send them a letter first. I said a letter, not literature. The letter is simply a soft introduction, and shouldn't contain too much information about us. Literature gives away what we do and enables a quick 'No thanks'.

Then we need to telephone them. We do have a genuine reason for calling them. "The reason I'm calling you is to find out whether you got the letter I sent you" So now it's not really cold.

Things to avoid

If we can sell our product or service over the telephone we don't need an appointment. If we can't then we do need one. So avoid trying to sell your product or service over the 'phone and only sell the value of the appointment.

How do we do that?

Read the article entitled "Getting appointments by telephone"

We've got loads of other top tips like this one.

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