

Cold Call Success Strategies Professional Communication and Presence



Sales over the phone, especially cold calls, are sometimes intimidating and difficult for the best of executives. Try these six strategies to improve your presence, your communication, and your odds.

First, loosen up! Breathe in as deeply as you can and slowly exhale (to a slow count of 20 or so). Get a good healthy dose of oxygen in your bloodstream and in your brain. You'll be calmer and think better. Next, do five or ten shoulder rolls, neck stretches, jaw stretches (opening your mouth as fully as possible), and jumping jacks. Get your energy at the "just-right" level.

Remember, **you're** the business developer. You're not a magic potion sales guy. You develop relationships and business. You bring strategy and solutions to the problems your customer is facing. You know your products and, better yet, you know yourself. You have gravitas and you are your customer's best resource. Say this over and over. Stay positively focused on your customer and your results.

Anticipate your **customer's** questions. Your old customer service training still applies. Have a prepared answer that you've said out loud a couple of times. Why? Because anticipating your customer's questions eliminates the scary unknown. And saying it out loud lets you hear it and make it stronger (clearer, better, more definitive, etc.) before you say it to your customer.

Put a smile on your face. We can hear the difference it makes. (Don't believe me? Turn away from your spouse or child when you answer him or her. The first time say it with a smile, the second time with a flat stare. Which one do they like better?!) Your smile changes your tone to one that is more believable and credible. When you want people to believe your important message, say it with a smile. Not a big, toothy grin. An easy smile, with your eyes, that tells them you care about both them and your product. Put a picture of a favorite child or friend near your monitor. Smile and talk to her or him.

Give an example, a short story or vignette, of your **product's** success or the way it helps solve the **client's** issue. Stories speak to the emotion centers of the brain, which are responsible for decision making. We are moved to make decisions, sometimes expensive ones, when we connect emotionally with the need to make that decision. Stories connect us.

And, lastly, remember that the person on the phone might not be your ideal customer. Yet he or she may know your ideal customer. It's good to know soon that he or she is not your ideal customer (no need to waste more time, right?) — and it's excellent to ask them who they might know who could use what you're offering. Get on that phone and start the relationships...they lead to gold!