

Telephone Sales

How to Prepare, Execute & Close



Making sales happen

During your career In Sales, an industry built on establishing key relationships, you will inevitably spend a lot of time securing deals over the phone. Whether you can effectively approach a customer with a sound proposition can determine how successful you are as a sales person.

Despite the importance of this skill, telephone sales still seem to strike fear in even the best of people, whether they've been in sales for a week or a few years.



WHY THIS GUIDE?

Telephone sales will always be essential because they are an active and open point of contact which spreads your reach to a wider audience.

Being competent is no longer good enough, in order to stand out from other businesses and secure lasting relationships with clients, you need to excel at telephone sales. This guide breaks the process down into stages so you know when you should be applying and relieving the pressure when you're selling over the phone.

Before the Call

Sales is a competitive environment in which you are driven to success by consistently reaching and exceeding targets. It may sound obvious, but to guarantee that these targets are met you should carry out research on the people you're contacting to ensure they are the best fit for what you're selling.

Once you're ready to reach out to the most suitable people, turn off all distractions. How are you going to focus on what the customer is saying if an important e-mail pops up when you're on the phone?

Like wise, too much background noise or a bad line will appear unprofessional and could make your prospect distrustful of the product you're offering. Prior to calling a prospect you must check your records to ensure that you're not making duplications.

→ "Most tests can identify inconsistencies, so adopting a persona is unlikely to work, but preparation and focus can help."

During a full day of telephone sales you can call hundreds of people so to avoid confusion, have the name of the person you're calling and their company name written down in front of you. No prospect wants to feel like the hundredth person you've called that day.

Without the extra connection of being face-to-face, it can be difficult to make a personal connection and hold a customer's attention. Because of this, you should have relevant prompts or even a persuasive sales script outlining why you are worth their time.

On the Call

When making sales calls, the first person you speak to is unlikely to be the decision maker who you are targeting for the sale. This can be inconvenient but remember these gatekeepers have invaluable insight on the person you're targeting. If you have time and respect for them, they will be more likely to assist you.

Once you get through to your prospect you have about 15 seconds to grab their attention and keep them from making up their excuses, so seize the opportunity if they're staying on the line. Always ask the prospect if this is a convenient time for the call and if not, schedule a fixed date for a return call with them.

A fundamental basic of selling is to listen, but when you do respond to your prospects, match their tone and phrasing can have surprisingly good results. It is amazing how much more comfortable people are when you use their vocabulary. In a similar vein, telephone sales that mention a prospect's name more than three times are often more effective, so be personal.

Telephone sales when a prospects name is mentioned more than three times have been found to be the most effective, so be personal and engage with them.



➔ “By asking prospects about their needs and what problems they have, you can shape your pitch to their direct requirements.”

It is essential that your tone of voice conveys your enthusiasm and excitement for the product, if you sound disinterested then your prospect will too. In order to convince your prospects, you need to have the confidence that the service you're selling is going to make a huge improvement on their lives.

Both descriptive language and open-ended questions are an effective way to engage customers. However, because you're on the phone you cannot pick up on body language signals so it is best to avoid any negotiation over the phone.

The intention of sales calls are not to secure a sale at first contact, but to spark the prospects interest enough that they'll commit to further contact.

When you're on the call remember:

- No matter how resistant a prospect seems, always try to close them
- Listen to what your prospect is saying and how they're reacting to you
- Try to avoid any negotiation, this is just to secure further contact
- Make it personal and know who you're talking to
- Be enthusiastic about your product
- The first 3 seconds are essential

Closing the Call

By listening to your sales pitch these customers are giving you their time, so as a reward for this you can offer a demonstration or trial period. In providing something of value, prospects will subconsciously feel that they owe you, which will make them more likely to agree to an appointment.

A customer will never ask you for an appointment themselves, so you have to assertively request further contact. Instead of asking when they're available with an open question, tie the customer down to a specific date, for example, "are you free on Tuesday at 10am?"

To prevent repetitive or unnecessary calls, ensure that you keep records of when a prospect was contacted and the outcome, along with any relevant details. It can take numerous calls over a long period of time to secure an appointment, but if you're patient and put the effort in, the rewards are great.



→ "Even if a prospect seems disinterested or reluctant, to keep moving forward it is essential that you attempt a close on every sales call."

Conclusion

Telephone sales are renowned for being met with a lot of resistance but the worst reputation comes from badly executed cold calling. If you research your prospect and make your pitch personal, engaging and informative, then you'll soon be able to exceed the goals set for you. Telephone sales enable you to identify real viable business opportunities and establish central

relationships. By balancing your confidence and enthusiasm for the product with a sensitive and personal approach, you're much more likely to secure future contact with a prospect. Fundamentally, when the correct techniques are implemented over the phone you can establish sound client relationships and secure numerous sales.

Conclusion...



At Genesis, we advise our clients to use all of the above as they can be used to gather further insights than traditional but limited interview techniques. Clients can make more successful,

lasting hires by embracing these techniques rather than probing prepared CVs and the safety blanket they provide for candidates. For as long as these techniques benefit recruiting business, they will continue to be used and as such, candidates need to face up to them. The best talent will be prepared and see any of the above techniques as a chance to show their complete set of skills.

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Genesis Associates (UK) Ltd

Freedom House
Church St
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 1AS
United Kingdom

T. +44(0)1625 446060

F. +44(0)1625 446099

recruitment@genesisassociates.co.uk

VAT Reg: 912 6557 24

Company reg: 5464762