

# 8 Tips for a Successful Sales Call

Too many people in [business](#) look at the telephone as an anchor--that's how they feel about lifting it when they have to make outgoing calls to potential clients. For some, you'd think it was covered with spiders or that it might electrocute them if they touch it. That reaction revolves around the fear of rejection. Granted, not too many people are brave enough to willingly put themselves in a position to be rejected. However, those who do will find all sorts of long-term rewards for the temporary pain they'll experience.

With the right attitude and by paying close attention to what happens, each rejection you deal with will be a learning experience. You'll learn what not to say and when not to call. The key here is to turn that around so you can master what *to* say and when *to* call. With every rejection, you'll want to take a quick moment to analyze the situation in order to benefit from it. Rather than letting it ruin your attitude for the next call, you should find yourself saying, "Well, that didn't work. What's a better way to say it?"

With proper fine-tuning, you'll soon find your calls being well received and you'll experience fewer rejections. To save you some time on this learning curve, here are eight points you need to consider before making any business calls.

**1. Develop a professional greeting.** Don't just say hello and jump into your

telephone [presentation](#) without taking a breath or allowing the other party to participate. Your greeting should err on the side of formality. Begin with Mr., Mrs. or Ms, as in *"Good morning, Mr. Smith."* Or *"Good evening, Mrs. Jones."* Everyone else says, "Hello." Be different. Be professional.

**2. Introduce yourself and your company.** *"My name is Sally Smith with ABC Company. We're a local firm that specializes in helping businesses like yours save money."* Don't get too specific yet. Don't mention your product. If you do, that allows the other party to say, *"Oh, we're happy with what we've got. Thanks anyway,"* and hang up. By keeping your introduction general, yet mentioning a benefit, you'll peak your prospect's curiosity and keep them on the line longer.

**3. Express gratitude.** Always thank the potential client for allowing you a few moments in his busy day. Tell him that you won't waste a second of his time. *"I want to thank you for taking my call. This will only involve a moment of your time so you can get back to your busy schedule."* Don't say that you'll *"just take a moment."* The feeling evoked by them hearing that you'll take anything from them will put them off.

**4. State the purpose of your call.** It's best if you can provide the purpose within a question. *"If we can show you a way to improve the quality of your product at a lower cost, would you be interested to know more?"* This is very likely to get a yes response. At this point, you're ready to start selling an opportunity to meet this person or to get their permission to provide them with more information. You're not selling your product yet--you're selling what your product will do for him.

**5. Schedule a meeting.** Get a confirmation to meet, either in person or to teleconference to get the [information](#) you need in order to give a solid presentation. If he's so interested that he wants to do it right then and there, that's OK.

**6. If a face-to-face meeting is the most appropriate next step, use the alternate-of-choice questioning strategy.** Offer him two times, *"Mr. Johnson, I can pop by your **office** at 2:15 p.m. today to discuss this further. Or would 9:45 a.m. tomorrow better suit your schedule?"* You didn't say, *"When can we meet?"* When you use the alternate of choice, you take control of getting the appointment. And note: Asking for an off-hour gets you noticed. There's something about setting a meeting at an off-hour that says you're a salesperson who'll be punctual and respect your prospect's time. Try it.

**7. Thank them for their time today and for the upcoming appointment.** Reconfirm the date, time and location of the appointment. Ask for directions if you need them. Tell him how much preparation you'll do in order to make the best use of the time you'll share. Give him your contact information this way: *"If anything else comes to mind that I should be aware of prior to our meeting, please contact me at (212) 555-1212."*

**8. Follow up.** If your meeting is more than a few days in the future, send a letter of confirmation immediately. If the meeting is tomorrow, send an e-mail confirmation. Keep it short and upbeat.