

# 42 Tips for a More Effective, Powerful Telesales Campaign

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Whether your goal is an immediate sale or to begin a process that may result in a future sale, telesales (telephone sales) represents a powerful sales tool for your company.

## Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 1

Set clear goals for your sales campaign before you start calling. Who are the best prospects for your product or service? What do you expect to happen as a result of the telephone call? How will you measure its success or failure?

## Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 2

Choose your audience. Some products are very specialised and appeal to a narrow market segment; others are well-suited to a variety of potential buyers. If your product or service is the first kind, you know who your audience is; but if you have multiple types of prospects, you need to decide which one you are trying to reach with this telephone sales program.

## Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 3

Set an objective. "To sell more," is not enough. Before creating your telephone sales call plan or script, write a brief sentence like this: "As a result of receiving this telephone sales call, I expect (types of individuals) to (take this specific action)." Then, as you write the telephone sales call plan or script, refer back to this objective and ask yourself whether what you plan to say would reasonably make people respond as you intend.

## Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 4

Before writing any other part of your telephone sales call plan or script, write your call to action. For your call to action, go back to your original objective. What do you want people who receive your telephone sales calls to do? Whatever it is, your call to action at the end of the call needs to tell them exactly what to do.

## Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 5

Write the opening for your telephone sales call plan or script. A sales script's opening is very closely related to the call to action. They work together to state the same point in two different ways. Write a script opening that maximises buyer interest by telling people exactly what you have to offer, and to whom.

## Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 6

Write the body of your telephone sales script. Think of telephone sales scripts as a sandwich. The opening and the call to action are important. The first makes the prospect stop and listen to the script, and the second induces them to take an action; but the middle is where the meat is. The job of the body is to amplify on the promise of the opening and to fill in enough details to make the call to action attractive.

## Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 7

Write your telephone sales call plan or script as if speaking to a single person; don't make it sound like advertising copy. Try to imagine a prospective customer sitting in front of you. What would you say to them as one person to another? That's the way you want to write your phone sales script -- like one person talking to another using language you would be comfortable using in a conversation.

## Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 8

Keep your telephone sales message focused. Avoid the temptation to describe all of the advantages of buying from you or all of the models you offer. Confine your telephone sales call plan or script to points, which support your immediate objective and call to action. If you say too much, you may actually chase some customers away.

## Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 9

Don't use unnecessary puffery. Too many telephone call plans or scripts claim to be the best, to be the "leading" something, to have the lowest price, highest quality and so on. Use the body of your script to communicate facts, not claims.

## Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 10

After you write the body of your telephone sales call plan or script, edit and then edit some more. Most people won't spend a lot of time listening to your presentation, so make every point as concisely as possible. Keep cutting out extra words until all that is left is pure steak with minimum frills.

## **Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 11**

Sell one thing at a time. Your goal is to convert each prospect into a customer. After the first purchase is completed, then it is time for add-on sales.

## **Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 12**

Measure, measure, measure. Try out your new telephone sales call plan or script and measure the percentage of calls that convert to active leads or sales. Then vary just one small part of the script and measure again. Continue this process to learn what works best in practice.

## **Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 13**

Don't feel compelled to change a good telephone sales call plan or script. If your script is working -- producing the same results every time -- leave it alone. If you feel its results are slipping, and there are no other factors in the marketplace that would account for this slip, try a variation on your usual telephone sales call plan or script for a brief period of time. Then go back to your old telephone sales call plan or script.

## **Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 14**

Everyone in your company, all your friends, your spouse -- and perhaps your dog -- will give you advice on how to improve your sales scripts. All of them spend less time than you do actually listening to your customers. So follow your own instincts about what makes your business special to the customers you value most.

## **Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 15**

Tell the truth. If you say or imply something, which people later learn to be untrue, you've lost them forever as customers. Lies and exaggerations nearly always cost a business more than any benefits they generate.

## **Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 16**

Shorter is better. Short sentences, even if they are grammatically incorrect, work better than long sentences. Short words work better than long words. Start by writing your telephone sales call plan or script the way you think it should be. Then attack every sentence and find ways to delete words and shorten words.

## **Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 17**

Talk like a real person. Before you start writing your telephone sales call plan or script, try this: using a tape recorder, describe what you have to offer in 50 words or less. Then transcribe the tape and edit it as little as possible.

## **Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 18**

Sow what you want to reap. Price-oriented script openers lead to customers for whom price is important. Ditto quality, service, expertise, etc. In your opening, and throughout your sales script, promote something you are very good at. Then be prepared to offer other advantages to help you close.

## **Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 19**

Tell customers what action to take. It's not enough to make people want your product or service. You have to tell them the next step towards purchasing it. That's why the last thing in your telephone sales call plan or script is a statement asking the buyer to take some specific action -- and what will happen of benefit to them when they take that action.

## **Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 20**

Offer choices. If you offer one option, you leave the customer to choose between "yes" and "no." Offer two or more options, and the customer is more likely to choose one of those instead of no.

## **Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 21**

State the benefit. You know that a particular fact or specification is good, but do all of your prospects? For every fact, state the benefit: "We have a dedicated group of service specialists, so you're in and out without delay." "Every item is thoroughly tested in our labs. You know it will work perfectly the first time and every time."

## **Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 22**

Make one clear point. Sure, there are lots of reasons why you're the best. But the more of them you include in your sales script, the more you diffuse your message.

### **Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 23**

Use the power of "free." More than just a free brochure or catalogue. Your free offer has more impact if it has a high perceived value -- an educational guide, a reprint of a government publication, a small tool -- something the prospect wants to have whether they think they will buy from you or not.

### **Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 24**

Follow up punctually. Whatever you promise in your call to action, deliver it punctually. If you say you will send out information, do so within 24 business hours of the call.

### **Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 25**

Go slowly at first. The person you are calling is not prepared to discuss the subject you have in mind.

### **Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 26**

Give the prospect a headline. After your opening greeting, the headline helps direct the prospect's attention to the topic at hand. Tell them the purpose of your call: "I'm calling to follow up on the literature you requested."

### **Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 27**

Don't ask whether the prospect has read your literature. Most people will answer "no." The ideal sales conversation does not start with a focus on whether or not the prospect read your literature or has heard of your company; it is about the prospect's needs.

### **Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 28**

After your headline, give the prospect a moment to think about the literature (or other actions they have taken towards considering your products). You'll be tempted to fill the dead space in the conversation by talking, but you're more likely to get the prospect involved in the conversation if you give him or her a few seconds to think about what you have said and then respond.

### **Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 29**

Once you have started to build rapport with the prospect, ask a series of open-ended questions to get the prospect talking. Closed-ended questions (answered by yes, no or a fact) tend to shut down prospect conversation. Open-ended questions show you are interested in the prospect, they involve the prospect in the conversation, and they tell you the key issues that will contribute to the buyer's decision.

### **Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 30**

When you understand the prospect's needs, and the prospect is totally involved in the conversation, it is time for you to present your company and your products as the solutions:

### **Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 31**

If you don't know the right name to call, ask for the owner, MD or senior manager. Don't ask for the person in charge of a special department, or you'll often get someone who can't make a decision on their own. You may even get the person's assistant. This can lead to months of wasted time because you are talking to the wrong person.

### **Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 32**

Start at the top. If your first meeting is with a non-decision maker, it is difficult to go over their head without antagonising them. If, however, your first meeting was with the top person, you can always go back to him/her later if you don't get results with the subordinate.

### **Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 33**

Use the name of the person at the top. If the top person, such as the MD, gives you the name of the vice president, when you call, tell him that the president (using his/her name) told you to call.

### **Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 34**

Get past the receptionist. Top decision makers use their receptionists to screen their calls. Since receptionists generally work set hours and decision makers don't, if you call early (7:30 am - 8:30 am) or late (5:30 pm - 7:00 pm), you have a better chance of having the boss answer the phone directly.

### **Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 35**

Find out if the decision maker is in. Ask whether or not the person you're calling is in before you ask to speak to them. This way it's hard for them to say the boss is not there when he/she really is.

### **Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 36**

Have confidence and energy in your voice. If you sound nervous, they know you are a salesperson and will block your call. You must have an assumptive attitude that you know you will get through to the person you want. It shows in your voice. You sound like someone of authority who should be put through.

### Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 37

Use first names. With accounts that are hard to reach, use your first name and their first name to sound like a friend, so the secretary puts you through without asking questions.

### Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 38

Use assured, commanding words. Don't say, "May I please speak to Mr. Jones?" Instead say, "I need to talk to Bill Jones." People respond to commands automatically and do what you say.

### Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 39

Get the secretary's first name and use it. The secretary decides which messages get to the boss first, if at all. If you make her a friend, she can ask her boss to call you or put your messages on top.

### Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 40

Don't leave messages. Clients don't say, "Oh boy, another salesperson. I'll call him." They simply don't call back.

### Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 41

If you have to leave a message, leave your name and number only with an interesting message that will arouse curiosity.

### Telephone Sales - Telesales Idea No. 42

Don't immediately introduce yourself to call screeners. You tip them off that you're a salesperson by saying, "This is Sally Smith with XYZ Company. I want to talk to the person who buys office equipment." The receptionist will block your call; or if your message does get through, the client will say, "I don't want to talk to a salesperson." Then all your future calls are blocked.