THE DREADED COLD-CALL

Coffee is for closers.

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CASE STUDY

The Psychology Department at the Georgia Institute of Technology is historically distant from library services and has little interaction with the subject liaisons or faculty. The department has access to the library's databases, and monographic needs. This has led to a requested relationship between the liaison and the individual faculty members. As a new liaison, I wanted to build relationships with the faculty and the student body. I knew that in order to do this successfully I would need to follow the cold-calling best practices. I immediately made a spreadsheet with the following variables: (1) Contact Information, (2) Research Agenda, (3) Class Taught.

Following, the initial research I continued the best practices of salivation and cold-calling, and used the data gathered to craft a personalized message to be delivered by phone and email.

28 Personalized Emails
28 Personalized Phone Calls
Nurture leads & get face time

MY SALES STORY

In 2010 when I began my first semester of my MLIS program I answered an ad on Craigslist for a sales position. If I had read the fine print I probably would have declined the follow-up interview, however, I didn’t read the small print and that turned out to be beneficial. After a brief interview with a charming, engaging salesman I was hired as the newest sales associate for a car wash membership club. Obviously was short on cash.

The day to day was challenging, I was going in blind and every conversation was a cold-call. I went from door to door selling, car wash membership with very little training and a thick skin. Sometimes I would be cursed out and other times the door would be slammed in my face. Although it was not all horrible, if it was in a good mood and feeling confident I could make a lot of money in a short amount of time. Even with that perk, I wanted to quit almost every day. I eventually did when I got my first full-time academic position, but not before I learned a valuable lesson in perseverance and method. The skills I cultivated and the knowledge I gained have been invaluable.

I learned selling like outreach is how you see it; I learned your attitude dictates your success. I learned it is not about the numbers contacted but the numbers reached. I learned you can create your own path and make things happen without the assistance of a previous relationship. I learned perseverance in a project and how to succeed when you initially fail. Cold-calling and selling comes down to preparation, listening, information & educating, connecting, and keeping in touch in the future. The lessons learned as a salesman have helped me immensely in my liaison duties.

COLD CALLING BEST PRACTICES

A TOP-DOWN APPROACH: CALL THE DECISION MAKER

1. CONTACT
2. QUALIFY
3. SELL

DOS
OK. GO!
1. WHAT
2. WHY
3. WHAT TO DO NEXT

DON'TS
1. USE SCRIPTS
2. MAKE YOUR FIRST 30 SECONDS MEMORABLE
3. QUALITY SEAMS COMING APART

NURTURE YOUR LEADS

Within two semesters there has been a dramatic increase in subject specific instruction. This includes an increase from 20% of the faculty requesting instruction to 14% percent which is a 400% increase in less than a year. I cannot generally for future requests, but I will continue to follow the best practices through nurturing my current leads and will continue to follow up with potential leads.