

The Science of Sales Prospecting

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Transcript

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Hello, my name is Jacob Pinkney, and this is the Science of Sales Prospecting. I'm making this presentation in order to help people change the way they communicate and have a better understanding, and a great guideline, going into their first sales job.

Sales communication is not unique and not different from the way you would communicate with a friend. That's a misconception that causes people to stumble and fail. By understanding that, and understanding how to create and maintain a good conversation, by asking the right questions that provoke the right thought patterns, can truly help you succeed where others have failed.

Prospecting is very unique, as it's the first stage of the sales process and can greatly affect the overall sales cycle. This is done by the entry-level sales workers, either the sales development rep or the business development rep. Prospecting has been changed through countless forms over the last 50 years.

As technology and media have created, obviously, the use of social media, telephone, email has skyrocketed in overall prospecting. Sales is an extremely lucrative soft skill that, when understood how to be done correctly, can continuously make someone money throughout their entire lives.

Prospecting, put simply, is locating qualified leads and putting them into a sales pipeline in order to then begin proper outreach, to then set up proper sales, develop sales meetings, in order to put the account executives in a good position to make the sale with that prospect.

This is a very nitty-gritty prospect as you are countlessly digging through, searching, either through LinkedIn or telephone books, to find the right people, because it's extremely important to get your products in front of, not just everybody, but the right audience.

Cold emailing is, in my opinion, the simplest, yet still the most difficult, form of outreach, simply because the average person's email box is absolutely stuffed full of clutter, and in the current market, it can be very difficult to get someone's attention through email. That's why using a small but useful tips can set you out from the pack and help you get the reply rate you desire.

Using short subject lines, three to five words max, short and precise sentences in every single email, four sentences, short and to the point, to make sure the prospect is actually reading it. No one wants to read an essay. Talk about their problems and relate to why you're reaching out to them, specifically, and make sure you add some personalization to every single email.

LinkedIn is the business professional social media platform. And using this, the prospect is very unique, unlike the other forms, because you're using LinkedIn, really, to establish a friendly overall connection and grow your network with these people, as well as prospect to them. It's important to talk to these people over LinkedIn like you're their friend.

You're asking "why/how" questions, but you're also being extremely friendly and never coming off as a salesman, keeping the conversation fluid and casual to allow yourself, and to allow them, to feel comfortable, as if they're really just texting a friend back and forth.

A very unique and diligent skill to use when doing this is to have genuine curiosity, and exchange your current understanding with raw bewilderment. As these people tell you about their problems, as they tell you about their day-to-day, they tell you about your pay points.

Live in the moment and fall on your understanding, your experience, and your studying into these issues. And then, you sell them the solution, and how it is that you can help them solve their problems.

Because once again, it's always about them, and sales is about helping the people that you're communicating with. You're not trying to force something, anything, on anyone. Sales is all about, you have a solution to someone else's problem, and you want to help them achieve that solution.

Cold calling can rack up a lot of people's anxiety, and that was certainly the case for me. I've always had social anxiety, and overcoming this was very difficult for me. But putting myself in uncomfortable situations and then getting used to that really helped.

But that still isn't an end-all, so something that I've done, that I've learned along the way, is to package my call, and to look and take it one step at a time. The first five seconds, that introductory phase, where you're saying, "Hi, my name is—" but always acknowledging that you're interrupting this person's day.

So obviously, an example of this would be like, "Hey Mark, this is Jacob from so-and-so company. I know you're not expecting my call. I promise I'll be brief." This gives you the question and allows them to check the gamble on whether they want to continue the conversation.

Obviously, showing empathy that you're interrupting a very busy person's day can help, because obviously you could be hung up on. That's something that you have to accept. Failure is something that's always going to be on the table when it comes to sales, at an extremely high rate. You have to be willing to overcome these objections, and to continue working through this.

Sales is not a happy, glorified position where you're just gonna make a ton of money and get all the sales. You have to be willing to accept a lot of rejection and a lot of objections, because that's just a part of the process. The next 15 to 20 seconds of the call, you're asking "why" and "how" questions.

These questions are thought-provoking, as you're asking them about the pain points about their day-to-day job and how, depending on whether your product or service can be of use to them, in solving them and making their lives easier.

Assuming you were successful on hitting your pain points, the next one to seven minutes of the conversation, you really need to be asking qualifying questions to further realize if this truly is a qualified lead, and also by creating a two-way conversation.

Always get the other person talking. That's why it's important to ask thought-provoking questions that causes them to start a conversation, where they're truly thinking about what they're saying, and not just yes-or-no answers.

Something that a lot of people don't do on their cold calls, but I found to be very helpful, is taking that initiative to close the conversation. Just like at the beginning of the call when you acknowledged that they were very busy, you also made the promise that you would be brief.

So, assuming that you've accomplished your task, there's no need for you to ramble on, or to expect them to keep talking. Simply do what you promised to do, which was have a brief conversation with this person about their issues, and possibly set up a better time for you to talk to them.

So, an ending example would be simply like, "Well, it's great that we were able to set up another time to chat, but I know I promised you I would be brief, so let's go ahead and end the call right here, and I look forward to hearing from you again. Take care and have a wonderful day."

I chose to use books over, mostly, really articles and websites for my presentation, as well as just the understanding of, people in my organization often just desire to remain anonymous, as I work in the cyber security industry, and not everyone wants to have their name, their full name, placed out there.

I chose to leave the names off there, but I spoke with the CEO, the sales manager, the VP of sales, and the CRO of the company in which I work at. The books, such that I have read, were: "How to Win Friends and Influence People," "Fanatical Prospecting," "How to Talk to Anyone," and "The 48 Laws of Power," as well as "Seduction."

All of these books really focus on understanding, and which ways people are communicating and you, and how to best tailor the conversation, as well as the situation, to get the maximum amount of benefit for yourself.

Over the years, this is something I've really worked to try and understand and better myself at, and I really do believe that anyone who's willing to take the time to learn sales will develop an extremely useful skill that can help them throughout their entire lives.

I wish anyone watching this the best, as well as good luck, as you venture out to learn an extremely powerful soft skill that can change your life for the better.

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