Art Sobczak's

SMART CALLING REPORT

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A Unique Tip to Use With Prospecting Warm-Up Emails

What's the most-read, and usually the first-read part of a direct mail letter, or email?

The P.S.

So be sure your prospecting emails have one as well, and that you use it to ask a question.

Don't misunderstand me here; I'm **not** suggesting you send out the mass, untargeted email campaigns that give a long-winded pitch and then ask for an appointment. (These are also characterized by the annoying follow-up emails that say, "I wanted to be sure you got my last message. You did not reply." Right, that's because your email had no value for me. In fact, I would never ever be a prospect for what you sell.)

I am suggesting you can use email to warm up a prospecting call. And do include a question as the PS.

An Example

For example,

Hi Mike, a mutual acquaintance, Doug Stevens at Grande Industrial felt it would be beneficial for us to connect. We helped him to cut his processing times and associated labor costs by 20% on commercial projects and he mentioned you might have interest in those types of numbers.

I'll give you a call Friday morning, or if there is a better time please just hit Reply and give me a couple of choices that work for you. Or if you'd like to speak before then, here's my mobile 555-555-5555.

Looking forward to speaking with you.

Emily Knowlton
National Accounts Manager

P.S. I see on your LinkedIn profile you volunteer for Special Olympics. Will you be at the Torch Run?

The Components

To break down this email, first notice what is NOT in it: a product pitch. If you talk about your product or service, you have just given them enough information to decide they do NOT need to speak with you.

Here are the components in this one you can model:

1. Reason for Contacting and Possible Value.

The reason for reaching out: in this case it was a mutual connection.

The possible value for the prospect: here it is the "social proof," what you have done for the mutual connection. The results you have provided, which likely would be of interest for the prospect as well.

2. The next-action intent and request.

Notice here the rep is stating that she will call. She is **not** asking for an appointment up front, although she does ask him to hit Reply (an easy action to take) and offers a couple of good times to speak. Then she gives another soft option for the prospect to call, if so inclined.

3. The PS.

The PS shifts gears into a lighter, personal area. One that likely is of great interest to the prospect. This shows the sales rep did homework, and cares enough to touch on something the prospect has interest in.

And finally, it asks a question. People are conditioned to answer questions. Particularly if the topic is something the person is passionate about.

I received an email from someone who did not know me, and his format somewhat followed this process. Not bad overall.

Then at the end he said, "I know you're a huge baseball fan and at one time you were on a mission to see every stadium. (That was in one of my books). How many do you have left?"

I replied with a several sentence answer. AND took his call when it came in.

Your options for the PS here are limited only by your creativity. But be sensible. You don't want to come across as the creepy stalker. I'd keep the questions to things you see on their LinkedIn page, not on their personal Facebook profile. Ask about previous jobs, companies, experiences in positions, or about an interest they state in their profile.

Again, email is not a replacement for selling. It is an effective complement, and when used wisely it can help you tremendously.

PS. Don't forget the PS! ☎

Sales Observations

I've so had it with the "cold calling doesn't work" crowd. These are the folks who for the most part are trying to sell their social media or marketing courses. And when meek salespeople opt for the path of least resistance—buying into the promises of not having to talk to people they don't know, and then spend—actually waste—their time on these marketing activities, instead of calling, they burrow themselves further into the hole of no results.

Granted, social media, email, and snail mail are all great complements to a sales strategy and process. I use them all extensively myself. But they are not a replacement for the quickest and most effective way to enter into a sales conversation with someone YOU want to do business with—as opposed to waiting for someone to contact you like a teenager hoping someone will call them for a date.

And even though you can get instant success by making a call right after you read this and get a "yes" from someone, we all know that is not typically the case, any more than a baseball player getting a hit most of the time. There will be more "no's" than achievement of your primary objective, no doubt. It's part of the game. Just like prospectors in the 1800's, we sift through lots of gravel before finding gold. But the gold is what we take to the bank. The more gravel we go through, the greater our chances of hitting the gold.

Which also means if you are serious about getting a steady supply of new business, prospecting needs to be a habit. Not something you do when you have downtime, or just do it in spurts. That would be like going to the gym once or twice a month when you can fit it in, and expect to drop weight and build muscle.

It needs to be something you do EVERY day. Non-negotiable. It's an appointment you set with yourself. It's a priority. You can't wait for a convenient time, because that does not happen. People who aren't committed to their prospecting always find something else to do.

And the magical thing about taking action... massive action... is that this mystical, magical, mojo and karma kick in. Good things happen when you are putting yourself out there. Opportunities beget other opportunities. Momentum feeds off of itself. All of a sudden, you get "luckier."

But it's not really luck. Luck is what happens when consistent, education action meets the marketplace.

So, as we know, the "cold" in cold calling is dead, but not the calling. Now go and make that next call, and make things happen!

Quick personal story about cold calling success. My doorbell rang on a Sunday morning. I usually don't even answer my door if I am not expecting someone or I see it's someone I don't know. In this case I saw it was a small, middle-aged, sweet-looking Hispanic woman. I opened the door. She stepped backwards, smiled, and said, "Hi, my name is Leticia, I'm a housekeeper and I do a couple of homes down the block. I have references and do great work and I'm looking for one more home in this area. I was wondering if you needed a housekeeper?"

My first spoken reaction was the same as many people when they are hit with a pitch on a cold call, or by a salesperson in a retail store.

"No, I'm all set."

She smiled, and looked at me and said, "Oh, OK, well if you ever need anyone I do really thorough cleaning and I'm very reliable."

Now, the backstory. My housekeeper had actually quit two weeks prior because she was consolidating clients and staying closer to her part of town. I actually had another housekeeper that was referred to me coming **the next day** for an interview. So I said to Leticia, "What would you charge for a house like this?"

She gave me a range and said she would need to look around and find out what I needed done. So I invited her in.

Fast forward. I had her do a "tryout" cleaning that day. She was awesome, as a cleaner and a person. I checked her references. They were glowing. I cancelled the other interview. Leticia is now my regular housekeeper. From a cold call. A door-to-door cold call, no less.

But cold calling doesn't work,

Make this your best month ever!

Art

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Sell More By Asking "Why?" and "How?"

By Tibor Shanto

Much of the discussion around social selling vs. traditional selling, or even old school selling like cold calling, has distracted many from the central issue: successful selling.

When was the last time someone congratulated you on landing a big account and asked you "BTW, Ann, did you use social or other selling to win this deal?"

It is more likely that someone would ask about the steps and techniques that could be repeated to deliver similar results consistently.

The Proven Method

There is one tried and true approach, that when executed properly can help you and the buyer in a number of ways to come to the right decision in a shorter and less painful time frame and atmosphere. No magic or silver bullet, but a series of questions framed around two simple words and concepts:

· Why

· How

Using these two in a one – two combination helps you resolve a number of potential hurdles but avoid some as well.

One common example is when you have worked a sale in accordance to your process. You have interviewed the buyer(s), qualified them, understood their objectives, and then validated them for good measure. You deliver your proposal, expecting to have some discussion or negotiations, and then ultimately leading to a decision (preferably a buy decision--but at times any decision will do.) Only to be told that they need to take it to someone who has not been part of the process to date (owner, boss…). None of us can pretend this has not happened to us.

However, using the ***Why-How*** early in the cycle can reduce or eliminate this, but only if you leave the product out of it, and focus on the buyer's objectives. And by buyer, I am talking about the individuals and the collective organization.

Start by asking ***Why*** they chose the product or process now in place. No pre-bias or agenda, just an honest question as to **"Why that?"**

If they are unable to clearly articulate why they chose the product/provider--and this should be in detail--that means you need to be ready with a number of follow-through questions in order to fully explore specifics. What were they trying to achieve, why didn't thye like some of the common alternatives? Why automate instead of outsource? Why on premise vs. cloud?

Question Deep

Go deep, don't just skim the surface. Many prospects will be able to provide answers that are really just talking points, but to get real answers, answers that give insight into the situation and the person's role in the situation, you will need to have at least three follow up questions.

· Why that objective?

· How do they measure that?

· Upside of achieving the objective

· Plus, implications of a miss; etc.

If they can go into detail about these, contrasting the choices they had to deal with and why they landed where they did, then you are more likely dealing with someone who was involved in the decision, vs. someone who can't answer, and therefore was not likely core to the decision. Which is a clear signal you'll need to engage someone else, and now.

Along with the **Why** questions, you need to have **How** questions.

"Great, I understand why you went with that route (product service, provider, etc.), tell me *how* you went about selecting Vendor X?"

The goal here is to get a step-by-step of the ***How***, giving you a window into how they make decisions.

Again, if they can detail How the decision was made, you're in the right place heading in the right direction. If not, and it is clear that they were secondary in the process, then it is clear that you need to engage others. The goal is to do this really early in the discovery phase, where curiosity and interest are rewarded with information, especially as the questions you are asking relate to them, but provide you with multi-level insights.

Conversational

Again, if you are ready with your follow-through questions, then you will also be in a position to learn who was involved in the decision, and is likely necessary to get a decision now. The great thing is that once you make this ***Why-How*** combo part of your routine, you'll discover that it is a very conversational and inclusionary approach, where buyers are allowed to reflect and share info rather than interrogating or pitching.

The ***Why-How*** works on almost any element of the sale, but it does require practice and preparation.

Rather than doing the conventional probing around the decision process, who is involved, what are the steps, are the steps defined or is it ad-hock, etc., ask anyone if they are the ones to make the decision, and they'll likely say yes.

Ask about ***Why*** and ***How*** the current vendor was selected, and you may find a different scenario, with additional and at times more important players that will have to be engaged to get the decision you want. But that's just the start. You can leverage ***Why - How*** in a more granular way to give you further insights about the buyer, their organization, and how to adjust your execution to achieve success.

First is across time. Look to the past, present and future. Looking to the past will tell how they do things. How they bought software last year or the year before, unless there is an entirely new crew,

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A Different Kind of Opening Statement

(NOTE: This is the opening that Art had covered briefly in the July Inner Circle Coaching Call.)

Anyone in sales knows how difficult it is to capture a prospect's fickle and fleeting attention, especially if you sell "like" or "identical" products or services. And if you can't grab their attention you are not going to sell them.

Here is an opening statement that has had some remarkable success and is something you might be able to adapt to your situation.

It's called the McCarthy Opener because I stole it from Ryan McCarthy, a sales rep for Softchoice Corporation, a company that sells computer hardware and software. You can't get a more "like" product than hardware and software. I have taken a few liberties in the example below, but the key components of Ryan's approach are evident:

"Jim? This is Ryan McCarthy calling from Softchoice Corporation. We are a reseller of hardware and software technologies. And Jim, believe me, I know you can get this kind of stuff at a lot of different places. But we really do things differently here at Softchoice to add value for our customers by helping them, among other things, develop strategies to mitigate legal risks associated with software purchasing. If I have caught you at good time, I would like to ask you some questions and, if it makes sense to do so, provide you with a presentation that explains how Softchoice approaches the market. How does that sound?"

Initial Reaction

When I first heard Ryan deliver this opening statement, my jaw hit the desk. It seemed so flippant, so off the cuff that I had difficulty imaging that anyone would give him the time of day. Well, I was dead wrong. Ryan went three for three on getting clients to listen. He also used it as a voice mail message and got a response. He explained that he had tested numerous opening statements and this one had the best hit rate.

After giving it some thought, it occurred to me that this opening statement works because it has the right mix of words that conjure up positive thoughts in the client's mind. When you look at the opening statement you will see there are four distinct parts.

Part 1: Identification

Pretty standard here: Ryan introduces himself and his company. He also includes a very brief description of what Softchoice does. This is helpful for a prospect that may not be familiar with the company.

Part 2: The Hook

This is where the opening statement really excels.

Ryan's hook begins when he says *"…believe me, I know you can get this kind of stuff at a lot of different places."* The statement is absolutely refreshing and candid. No one expects a sales rep to be so forthright; so blatantly honest. Consequently, it catches the prospect off guard and because it does, the prospect is drawn further into the opening statement. He listens because he is intrigued. You can almost hear the prospect say, *"Wow, that's a line I haven't heard before."*

Because the prospect is truly listening it makes the second part of the hook more effective. The second part of the hook is the benefit statement. Ryan refers to how Softchoice can help mitigate legal risk associated with the use of software licensing. To an IT director at a business firm, this is a pertinent topic. (Ryan has other benefits that he can insert here as well).

Part 3: Reason for the Call

Ryan's reason for the call is to set up a presentation call. It is NOT to sell, it is not to send a proposal, it is not to provide a quote and it is not even to set up a face-to-face presentation. For the prospect, the reason for the call is relatively harmless. In other words, there is no concern that he will be 'pitched' a product or a service. This helps drop the reserve that many prospect have with unknown vendors.

Ryan positions it effectively too. He uses the phrase *"…if it makes sense."* This is an excellent choice of words. Again, the prospect does not feel he is being "pitched." He understands that he is not being cornered. The implication is that if it doesn't make sense then the call will go no further. The prospect is put at ease and is more receptive.

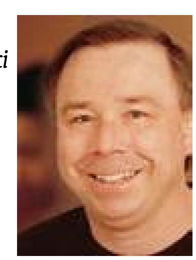
Part 4: Bridge to a Dialog

The last part of the opener is very 'techniquey' but very effective. Using the phrase, *"if I caught you at a good time…"* Ryan shows respect for the prospect's time but he inserts that thought with a request to ask a few questions. He sums it up by asking: *"How does that sound?"* What this statement really does is it stops Ryan from talking further and gets the prospect engaged in the dialog.

If the prospect says yes, the first 'sale' has been made. Ryan has sold the prospect on asking questions. At this stage, Ryan goes on to qualify the account and determines if a follow up presentation makes sense.

Speaking of presentations, Softchoice did their homework. They developed a compelling USP – unique selling proposition- and bundled it into an effective presentation. Obviously, for this opening statement you need to understand and develop your own unique selling proposition. You need to be able to articulate what makes you *"different."* You don't need a Power Point presentation but you should certainly have a clear and concise message.

The McCarthy Opener works well in almost any industry or market. I have "borrowed" the template and tested it with several other clients. It doesn't work 100% of the time but it does get more people to listen further. It works well because it is different and unique. Prospects have become jaded with slick and cheesy openers. This opening statement cuts through the clutter because it is bold and brassy. It tells it like it is and prospects seem to respect it. Give it a try.



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How to Get Out of a Sales Rut

By Jeb Blount

I spent the past week working with one of my client's inside sales teams. My objective was to map the sales process of their very best reps in preparation for writing a custom sales training curriculum designed to accelerate the performance of their entire sales team. To gain the information I needed I listened to the calls of their best reps as well as reps that were not producing at optimum levels.

Several of the underperforming reps I worked with had once been top performers but were no longer at that level. As I listened it struck me that they did not sound enthusiastic, took short-cuts during the call, and were not as likable as the top reps. When I questioned them about it, at first they defended themselves. However, when I pointed out that they had once been performing at a much higher level than now, most of them came clean.

Just Going Through the Motions

They were just going through the motions. The reps were aware that their performance had dropped and admitted that they were burned out, un-happy, and tired. They told me that they liked the company, the people they worked with and that overall it was a great job. Yet, they just couldn't seem to get out of their rut.

In sales it is easy to get stuck in a rut. Burn-out is common. The reasons are simple. First, sales is chock full of rejection. The reps I was with heard no, on average, 40 times a day. That's a lot of rejection for anyone to endure. Over time it adds up and begins to impact attitude, confidence, and overall happiness.

Next, sales can be incredibly repetitive. Same questions, same responses, same objections, same product or service, over and over again.

It is no wonder that so many salespeople find themselves down in the dumps, bored, angry, tired, and sometimes depressed. They whine and complain about the leads, environment, economy, prospects, peers, and boss. Commonly they don't even know why. Instead they plod on and hope for the best. But nothing really changes (and often things just get worse) because they fail to address the real issue – their attitude.

Attitude Reset

The key to getting out of a rut is resetting your attitude because until that changes nothing else will. What is important to understand is that you didn't get into a rut overnight and likewise you won't upgrade your attitude overnight. Changing your attitude requires self-awareness, a commitment to change, and time.

The first time I got into a sales rut I was mad at the world. My attitude stunk and my performance, which was usually the best on my team, was going the wrong way. My sales manager told me that I was better than that but his admonishment just put me into a deeper funk. I didn't know what to do but I knew I had to make a change or I'd soon be an angry, depressed sales rep without a job.

My reset beegan with a copy of No Bull Selling by Hank Trisler. I'd decided to read it as a way to motivate myself. Each morning I had to make outbound calls to set appointments with prospects. In my funk I could barely dial the phone. I hated making those calls. So I made a pact with myself. Every time I made 15 dials, I could read 5 minutes of No Bull Selling.

Invest in Yourself

A little bit every day my attitude improved. Even though I hated the dials I looked forward to reading the book and the book inspired me to make the dials. The more I read the better I felt. Three months later I was the sales rep of the quarter. I'd come out of my rut and outgunned the entire sales team.

I learned a valuable lesson from that experience. If I wanted to change my negative attitude I had to feed it positive food. I had to invest in myself. No one else was going to do that for me.

This is the key to getting out of ruts. Fill up with positive energy and a little bit at a time you will emerge from your sales rut.

(Jeb Blount advises many of the world's leading organizations and their executives on the impact of emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills on customer experience, strategic account management, sales, and developing high performing sales teams. He speaks to and delivers training to high-performing sales teams across the globe. 1-888-360- 2249)

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A Prospecting Opening Statement Template

Here's a simple way to brainstorm for some of your Possible Value Propositions. Fill in the blanks:

"We specialize in working with

(title of buyer/type of company, group, organization)

who/that

(describe a situation or problem)

and help them to

(the result you provide)

which means

(further describing the end result).

(Mention specific customer/client results)"

For example,

"We specialize in working with sales teams that have new business quotas, helping them to use a proven prospecting process which means they are able to confidently get through to and sell to new buyers. Our most recent client has already opened up 10 new accounts in a week, more than they did the past three months."

You get the picture. Give it a try. Build a sales meeting around it.

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Don't Suffer from Seasonal CALLergies

Are you one of the 5.4 million sellers* worldwide who suffer from seasonal callergies?

It's that time of year again! Seasonal callergies are in full swing and sellers everywhere are suffering. How do you know if you've been afflicted with this malady—and what can you do to treat it?

The Center for Sales Disease Control* has just issued this statement:

Seasonal callergies frequently arise when the sun is shining and it's a gorgeous day. Sellers typically feel a general lethargy towards prospecting. They may even experience adverse reactions such as an inability to concentrate and a severe itching to get outside.

Left untreated, seasonal callergies can wreak havoc on meeting your sales goals.

The good news is that you don't need to suppress your urge to avoid the phone and get out of the office. Instead, use it to your advantage. You can enjoy this beautiful weather if you do the following:

1. Get Off to a Faster Start

Each day, block time on your calendar to identify who you need to call. Have your list ready to go when you come in each morning — and then get to work. Research shows that you'll move even faster if you do ALL pre-call preparation before you initiate contact via email or phone.

2. Play "Beat the Clock" Games

Rather than dilly-dallying around or complaining about prospecting, challenge yourself to get it done within a certain time frame. Seriously, playing games is highly motivational, especially if there's a nice reward at the end. Maybe you could take the afternoon off — or even a full day.

3. Set a Quitting Time

Believe it or not, leaving your office (even if it's in your home) at a certain time is the best guarantee that your work will get done. Think about how much you accomplish in the day before you leave on vacation. Work does not have to drag on and on,especially when the sun is shining.

Seasonal callergies are nothing to sneeze at!

But, they don't have to ruin your summer's sales numbers. Use them to get more work done in less time.

Source: *The above statistic is entirely fictitious and was used in the spirit of fun. And, there is no Center for Sales Disease Control. I made that up too.*

(Jill Konrath, author of SNAP Selling, Selling to Big Companies, and her newest book, Agile Selling, helps sellers land bigger clients and speed up their sales cycle. To get her free Prospecting Tool Kit, visit www.jillkonrath.com/sales-resources.)

Create Your Own Hypothetical Questions

Politicians are often asked contrived questions in order to get their opinions about something supposedly based upon facts. You can ask hypotheticals to get prospects and customers to consider what they would do in certain situations:

"Jane, how would you handle it if your supplier was not able to deliver because they were backordered on something you needed overnight?"

Create your own hypotheticals designed to get them to react to very real problems they might encounter ...ones you can solve.

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Handling "We're Happy With the Vendor We Are Using Now"

Scott Hodges sells material handling products to manufacturers. His are the highest priced in the market, so he naturally faces resistance like, "We're happy with who we're using, and have no problems whatsoever." Scott's best response is to simply ask, **"When you replace the exisiting product, why is it replaced?"**

What a great question! Notice the psychology here: the question doesn't address the reflex resistance response "we're happy."

That's smart, since a lot of rational thought hasn't been devoted to that response. Questioning the response would only frustrate them, and perhaps help them come up with good reasons why they are using their present vendor.

Instead, this question focuses on what Scott is really doing: solving problems. In doing so, he's positioning the real value of his product. Because when the prospect answers by explaining that he replaces his palette jacks when the cost of repairs become higher than the cost of a new unit, he can layer questions deeper to get the prospect thinking about those costs. Ideally the prospects begins realizing how even though the equipment had a cheaper price tag initially, the real costs piled up in terms of replacement parts, labor, out-of-service time, and ultimately a shorter life span. Then the prospect is in a very receptive frame of mind to hear about Scott's products . . . most importantly, how his problems could be solved.

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(Continued from page 2)

in which case exploring their past will still provide visibility to how they do things. Assuming the players have not changed, exploring the past will give you a clear picture as to their propensity to change.

If they have continuously lagged the market in adopting new technologies, if they are still sitting back waiting for cloud computing to be validated, you need to adjust your sales approach accordingly, at times even to the point of moving on and revisiting the opportunity in the future. At the other end are innovators and early adopters. Where they are will dictate how you execute and win them as a client.

Exploring the future, especially when that exploration is through the prism of their business will also dictate execution.

If they have clear objectives, aligned around elements of their business and how they look to grow it, it will make your sale easier, more like straight forward.

Assuming their plans make sense, you can focus on helping them achieve them. If they have clear objectives but have chosen a less than optimal means of achieving them, then you need to first get them to consider alternatives. ***Why -How*** will help you to get them to change course. Preaching at them would be ineffective, but a series of **"*Why* that?"**, and "***How* will that look?"** questions will help you to get them to look at things differently, and from there to look at different things.

Individual AND Organzation

The other way that ***Why-How*** will help is by exploring both the individual you are speaking to, and the ***Why's - How's*** of their organization. This is especially important when there are multiple stakeholders or decision makers. This helps in aligning personal agendas with corporate objectives. It can help you create alignment among the players by focusing on common elements, of each of the individuals, and those of the company. Minimize differences, especially when not critical to the project, and build on overlap and common elements that you can enhance by virtue of your experience and past success.

I know there are some sales pundits out there who are afraid of the word ***Why***, and would rather have you wait for a random event to trigger your success. I say take control of your success by asking ***Why > How***, early and often

(Tibor Shanto is a Sales Execution Specialist, focused on helping sales teams and individuals secure more revenue through improved prospecting, selling and overall execution of their process. You can reach Tibor at (416) 822-7781, or visit www.SellBetter.ca)

Success Tip from a Smart Caller

Here's an email I received from Charles Knighton, a Smart Calling Prospecting course owner, sharing his success and a few tips. (Charles sells commercial real estate investment opportunities).

Art:

I hope you're doing well. My call plan has greatly improved and now I've stepped up my game.

I'm also targeting large franchise owners and commercial investors and am reaching the gatekeepers. I recently called Disney and got past the gatekeeper — I was calling the wrong person, but it was still pretty cool.

I'd like to get as much information from the gatekeeper as possible. I've been asking the following questions:

"Are there any topics I should avoid when speaking with him?"

"Why/why not?"

"How does he/she like to get their messages?"

Reacting to a Brush Off

When Smart Calling, you likely have, or will hear right after your opening, "I don't have time to talk right now."

This could be a Resistant Reflex Response, which is simply an attempt to get you off the phone.

Or you might indeed have reached them in the middle of something. (Which begs the question, why did they answer the phone? Ok, maybe they were expecting a call from someone else.)

In any event, we want to reply in a non-threatening way that acknowledges what they just said, but doesn't accept it totally, and makes an attempt to either speak briefly now, or set up another call.

Here's how. Respond with,

"Not a problem," or, "I understand."

Then follow with,

"Actually, first I just wanted to ask a couple of questions to see if it would be worth our while for a conversation. Can you take two-three minutes now, or should we set up a time?"

You'll find that if it is just a RRR and they were trying to get you off the phone, they truly aren't too busy to talk and now you can ask your initial questions, and if things are going well, you can continue.

If they opt to schedule a time, at least you now have salvaged the opportunity and gotten a commitment.

Increase Your Chance of Reaching Them

Having a difficult time reaching that coveted prospect? Don't call them at the same time every day. They might have a routine... perhaps a daily meeting at the same time. Mix it up. Look at the times you call and try other times. Of course the old stand bys are before or after regular business hours. Some sales reps have gotten their biggest deals by calling on Saturday morning.

YOU are Not of Interest to Them

I hear lots of calls that begin with, "And I'd like to introduce myself as the Account Manager for your territory and tell you what we do."

The needle on their Care Meter immediately pegs to zero. Here' s an important point: until they know you and trust you, YOU are not a reason that they are going to be interested in you. You need to be prepared with the possible results and value that you have delivered for others, and might be able to for them, in order for them to be even remotely interested in speaking further.

Objection-Handling Technique from a Politial Pundit

I heard this while listening to two opposing-view political pundits debating on a cable news show. One was screeching and yelling her points while the other would calmly listen and then reply. She started one of her responses with, "**Well, that's one way of looking at it. Actually, the facts show...**"

What a great way to respond to an objection!

For example, after hearing an objection that actually isn't based in reality—but certainly their feelings and emotions—you could first acknowledge it with the same technique: **"Well, yes, that is one way of looking at it."**

Then, you could continue in a similar way: **"In actuality, here is the return on investment that others are now getting..."**

A Unique Addition to Your Opening

If you are in an uber-competitive space and your prospects get tons of calls daily, not only from your competition but from reps selling virtually anything, here's a technique lots of my clients have been using. It begins by separating yourself from the masses since it's unique, it empathizes with them, helps them let down their guard, gets them to laugh depending on what you say, and gets them talking, which is your goal.

The technique is this:

"Hi Mary, Tom Davis with Logistic Partners. First, let me ask you how many calls you got today from sales reps who told you they could save you time and money? (pause) Well, I'm not going to tell you that, yet. We're a bit different. We specialize in ..."

Then you give your opening, which does still hint at a result, and then you get into your questions.

I'll probably do a longer discussion of this in a future issue, but for now, give it a try!

"And Does He/She Know What This is About?"

David Copple works for a firm that provides staff and management for the emergency rooms of hospitals. A difficult situation he said he runs into is when screeners say,

"And does he/she know why you're calling?"

Usually, the prospect does not and admitting so is a negative, indicating to the screener that you're prospecting. He likes to immediately respond by justifying the reason for the call:

"The reason I'm calling Dr. Smith is that I have a cou ple of ideas I'd like to run by him that he might find interesting from both a financial and managerial perspective regarding the operation of your emergency room. I'll need to ask him a few questions to see if these would make sense in his situation."