

Reasons I Won't Buy From You

By Kae Groshong Wagner

Want to ring up sales from cold calls? In a recent article, author Stan Rosenzweig offered his irreverent take on sales mistakes. "Here are my top reasons why I might not want to talk to you if you make your next cold call to my phone number (just like everybody else you are trying to get your foot in the door with). If you study these reasons, you can overcome my objections. Then you can sell me and all of the other KDMs (key decision-makers) who have ignored you, hung up on you or otherwise shut you up." Here goes:

1.) I am often too darned busy to actually listen to what you are saying.

The mail is backed up and I need to spend time with three of my own salespeople who need sales training advice, concessions, alternatives, solutions and other creative thinking so they can close deals.

Given the choice of spending my time to help you sell to me, or using that time to help my own salespeople sell our stuff to others, what should I do, talk to you? Don't fret. Just call back when I have more time.

2.) Your pitch is too boring.

Think about it. You finally have the good fortune to get through to me, or to anybody, at a time when I am not three phone calls and two meetings behind schedule. So what do you say to turn me on? NOTHING.

The truth is, I do give most telemarketers more time than most people do, and I even prompt the incompetent ones which sometimes makes our staff fall down laughing. One morning, our receptionist was downright hysterical listening to me coach an insurance salesman who had called but had nothing to say.

Salesman: *"Mr. Rosenzweig, I'd like to come by and introduce myself."*

Me: *"Why?"*

Salesman: *"I represent XXXXXX Financial Services and I would just like to come by and introduce myself."*

Me: *"We own a financial services company (It's true. My wife Ronna, in the very next office, manages around \$75 million). I may not be your best prospect."*

Salesman: *"Well, I'd like to come by and introduce myself anyway."*

Me: *"Why? What can you do for me?"*

Salesman: *"I don't know, but I'll be in the neighborhood."*

Me: *"You'll be in the neighborhood? I appreciate your persistence. I really do. But not to put a fine point on it, I don't have a lot of time and you really need to tell me what's in it for me to take the time to meet you." (At this time, Lori, who has been sitting at the conference table in my office, is about to split a seam from laughter).*

Salesman: *"I can't say what's in it for you, but I'd like to come by and introduce myself."*

...And on it went, until I had to get on with the day. Face it. I gave him every opportunity to give me a reason to get that appointment, but he didn't. He blew it.

3.) You don't tell me anything that is new and informative.

New York City has three all news radio stations which keep us tuned in even on days when there is no news to listen to.

We have this great compulsion to be informed. Men suffer from this more than women, but women will listen also, if they feel that they are learning something that isn't generally available. If you want to be really interesting to prospects, read the Wall Street Journal before each session on the phone.

4.) You're no fun when you're working.

No fun is depressing, and depressing phone calls are destined to fail. People who have fun on the job sound happy, creative and fun to be with. How can you hang up on a fun person?

In the spring of 1978, my company got a phone call one Wednesday at about 5:30 PM and there was nobody left to answer it but me. The caller worked for a hard-driving CEO who wanted her to get lots of bids to move their phone system from Manhattan to Stamford, CT.

"I hate bids" I told her, ten minutes into a very irreverent conversation. "How can I rip you off if you compare me to twenty other guys?"

"Aren't you ever serious?" she laughed.

"Never after five," I said. So we met at her office the next day (at 5:30 PM, incidentally).

We signed the deal and I got to move their very large phone system. Thus is the power of fun.

And finally, the number one reason why I may not want to talk to you when you make your next cold call to my phone number:

5.) You don't sell anything that is useful to our company.

There is nothing as dumb in business as trying to get an appointment with someone without first qualifying them as a prospect for what you sell.

Think of the salesman in item nine above. He neither knew, nor tried to learn, if I could buy anything from him. If I had agreed to meet him, he might have simply wasted his time and mine. Now isn't that silly? Now go and spend your time in front of somebody who really needs you.

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