

**Seven steps to more
effective sales calls.**



BRANDSawvy™
YOUR BUSINESS MADE VISIBLE

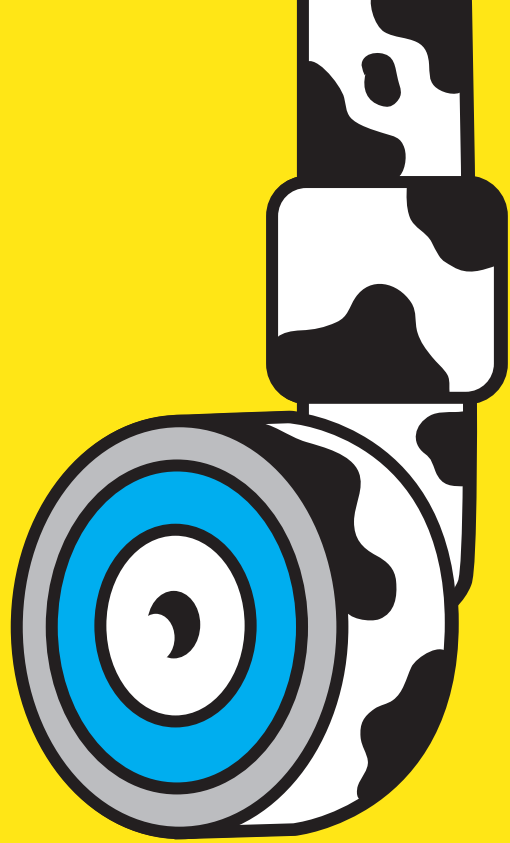


Too many people in business look at the telephone as an anchor – that’s how they feel about lifting it when they have to make outgoing calls to potential clients. In fact sometimes it might seem as though it’s covered in spiders, or it might electrocute you if you touch it.

It’s all about the fear of rejection. But at BRANDSavvy we understand that it’s preferable not to willingly put yourself in a position to be rejected. That’s why we want to help you to deal with sales calls confidently, and find out how the long-term rewards from making successful contact will outweigh the temporary pain of picking up the telephone.

With the right attitude and by paying close attention to what happens, each rejection you deal with will be a learning experience. You’ll learn what not to say and when not to call. And by the same token, very quickly you’ll be able to find the right way to get a positive reaction.

With proper fine-tuning, you’ll soon find your calls being well received and you’ll experience fewer rejections. To save you some time on this learning curve, here are our seven golden steps for the perfect business call.



1. Focus on your goal before making a call.

Beginners tend to think that a sales call is about making the sale. It's not. It's about getting the chance to make the sale. Specifically, the purpose of your call is to set an appointment to make your pitch. Decide on the objective of the sales call – making a sale is not reason enough, and asking for the order too early is as bad as not asking. Just like building a home, the foundation you lay is the most important part of the sales equation.

2. Research your markets and prospects.

You need to target your sales calls to the right audience. Use market research to focus on your target market, and then find out as much as you possibly can about the company or individual you're going to call in advance. This gives you the huge advantage of being able to talk about their business and their needs when you call them.

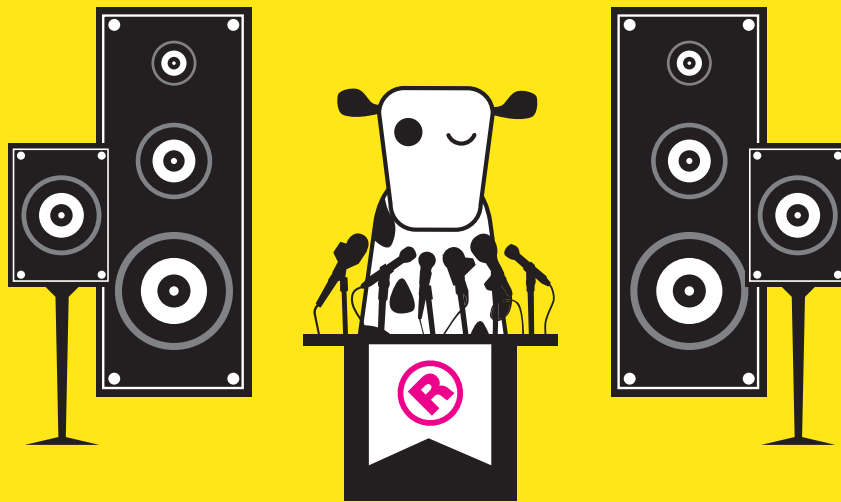
3. Prepare an opening statement for your call.

This lets you organise your thoughts before calling, and helps you avoid common mistakes in the call opening that would give the person you're calling the chance to terminate the conversation. For instance, you should never ask, "Is this a good time to talk?" or "How are you today?" Don't read your opening statement into the phone, but use it as a framework to get the conversation off to a good start.

Opening statements that work well include a greeting and an introduction, a reference point (something about the prospect), the benefits of your product or service, and a transition to a question or dialogue.

So, for example, "Good afternoon, Ms. Marshall. This is Ken Brown with Green Works. I read in the local paper that you recently acquired a new office complex. We specialise in commercial landscape services that allow you to reduce in-house maintenance costs and comply with the city's new environmental regulations. I'd like to ask a few questions to determine whether our services might meet your needs and save you money."

You're not selling your product yet – you're selling what your product or service will do for them – so don't get too specific. Don't mention your product or services. If you do, that allows the other party to say, "Oh, we're happy with what we've got. Thanks anyway," and hang up. By keeping your introduction general, yet mentioning a benefit, you'll peak your prospect's curiosity and keep them on the line longer.



4. Prepare a script for the rest of your call.

Lay out the benefits of your product or service and the reasons your prospect should buy. Write out possible objections and your answer to them.

Without a script, it's too easy to leave something out or meander. Once again, it's not that you'll be reading your script word for word when you call, but that you've prepared the framework of the call in advance.

5. Write out a pre-closing summary.

Then write another one, then a third one. Be ready for every possible conclusion to this meeting.

6. Ask for an appointment at a specific time when calling.

Say, "Would Wednesday at 11am be a good time to meet?" instead of saying, "Can I meet with you to discuss this next week?"

7. Follow up.

If your meeting is more than a few days in the future, send a letter of confirmation immediately. If the meeting is tomorrow, send an email confirmation. Keep it short and upbeat.

Top tips

- Smooth the way for your call by sending prospects a small, unique promotional item. This helps break the ice and makes your business stand out from the crowd.
- Do your calling early in the morning on a Wednesday or Thursday, if possible. That's the best time to reach the decision maker directly, and for most people, the time that they're most likely to be free and most energised.
- Remember that gatekeepers are your allies not your foes. Be pleasant to whoever picks up the phone or is guarding the inner sanctum when calling.
- Assemble a file that includes spec sheets, photos, testimonials, test data, etc. Use it to support your sales story. Make the prospect aware of your desire to help his business.
- Make a list of all possible objections to the sale. Have at least two solutions for each one. Add to the list every time you make a call on a prospect in this same field.

