

Title:

7 Pitfalls of Using Email to Sell

Word Count:

831

Summary:

Fear of rejection. Getting blocked by gatekeepers and voicemail. I'll just e-mail instead." We all know how much everyone hates e-mail spam, but even so, many salespeople are still sending introductory e-mails to decisionmakers.

Keywords:

cold call, cold calling, sales training, phone selling, phone prospecting, sales prospecting, sales scripts, telesales, telemarketing, mortgage selling, mortgage cold calling, insurance sales

Article Body:

<p>* Fear of rejection. The sheer negative force of anticipating rejection makes people turn to e-mail to generate new prospect relationships because it hurts less to not get a reply than to hear that verbal "no."</p>

<p>* Getting blocked by gatekeepers and voicemail. When salespeople don't know how to break through the barriers of gatekeepers and voicemail, they start thinking, "Forget it -- it's not worth the aggravation, and it takes too much energy. I'll just e-mail instead."</p>

<p>However, when you try to use e-mail to offer your product or service to someone who doesn't know you, you can't possibly establish the natural dialogue between two people that allows the trust level to reach the level necessary for a healthy, long-term relationship.</p>

<p>We all know how much everyone hates e-mail spam, but even so, many salespeople are still sending introductory e-mails to decisionmakers. They feel that, because they're from a credible organization, they won't be associated with the negative image of a spam solicitor.</p>

<p>However, these introductory e-mails typically contain the traditional three-part sales pitch -- the introduction, a mini-presentation about the products and services being offered, and a call to action -- and this traditional selling approach instantly tells the recipient of the e-mail that your only goal is to sell your product or service so you can attain your goals, and not theirs.</p>

<p>If you're still using email to sell, watch out for these 7 pitfalls:</p>

<p>1. Avoid sales pitches. If you feel you must use e-mail to start a new relationship, make your message about issues and problems that you believe your prospects are having, but don't say anything to indicate that you're assuming that both of you are a match.</p>

<p>2. Stop thinking that e-mail is the best way to get to decisionmakers. Traditional selling has become so ineffective that salespeople have run out of options for creating conversation, both over the phone and in person. However, it's best to view e-mail as a backup option only, not as a way to create new relationships. Try to use it primarily for sending information and documents after you've developed a relationship with a prospect.</p>

<p>3. Remove your company name from the subject line. Whenever you put your company and solution first, you create the impression that you can't wait to give a presentation about your

<p>product and services. Your subject line should be a humble reference to issues that you may be able to help prospects solve.</p>

<p>4. Stop conditioning your prospects to hide behind e-mail. When you e-mail prospects, it's easy for them to avoid you by not responding. Also, they get used to never picking up the phone and having a conversation with you -- and they may want to avoid you because they're afraid that, if they show interest in what you have to offer, you'll try to close them. This creates sales pressure -- the root of all selling woes. This avoidance becomes a vicious circle. If you learn to create pressure-free conversations, you'll find that you'll start getting phone calls from prospects who aren't afraid to call you.</p>

<p>5. Avoid using e-mail as a crutch for handling sticky sales situations. Are prospects not calling you back? Many salespeople who call me for coaching ask how they can get themselves out of sticky situations with prospects -- but the e-mails they've sent have already triggered those prospects to retreat. It's tricky to come up with the correct softening language in an e-mail that will reopen a conversation with a prospect who has decided to close off communication -- direct, person-to-person phone calls or meetings are much easier and more human.</p>

<p>6. Avoid using "I" and "we." When you start an introductory e-mail with "I" or "we," you immediately give the impression that you care only about selling your solution, rather than being open to a conversation that may or may not lead

to a mutually beneficial match between what you have to offer and the issues your prospect may be trying to solve. If you can change your sales language to a natural conversation, your prospect will be less likely to stereotype your message as a spam solicitation.</p>

<p>Finally...</p>

<p>7. If you can, stop using e-mail selling altogether. There is a way to renew your confidence and eliminate your reluctance to picking up the phone and have pleasant conversations with potential prospects. Learn a completely new way of working with gatekeepers that will get you past voicemail and to your decisionmakers without the rejection and frustration that are inevitable with traditional selling approaches. </p>

<p>For all these reasons, you should think of e-mail as your last resort. If you can learn to pick up the phone without fear, start a trusting conversation with a gatekeeper, learn how to go beyond voice mail and find your decisionmakers, you'll join the many who have made their own personal selling breakthrough.</p>