

Title:

How to Cold Call without a Script

Word Count:

717

Summary:

Linear step-by-step sales scripts have done a lot to give selling a bad name. Not because they don't "work", actually some people who use cold calling scripts actually do make some sales.

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>Linear step-by-step sales scripts have done a lot to give selling a bad name. Not because they don't "work", actually some people who use cold calling scripts actually do make some sales. The problem is even if you're a good-hearted businessperson, scripts make it almost impossible for you to avoid sounding like a "salesperson." This is a serious problem because most people respond to a sales agenda with something like, "Uh oh, I'm about to be sold something. How fast can I get this person off the phone?" If we turn away from the artificial beginning of a sales script, and approach cold calling in a different way, then we're likely to get different responses.</p>

<p>The first step to cold calling in this new, natural way is to let go of your script as a crutch.</p>

<p>The idea may sound scary at first because you've been programmed to think you have to have a script to make a successful cold call. Let me share a recent experience.</p>

<p>Last week I was sitting at my desk and the phone rang. I picked it up and said, "Hello, this is Ari." The caller said. "Hi, Ari, my name is Steve, how are you today?" I knew right away that he was using a structured sales script, and that triggered the negative "salesperson" stereotype in my mind. Nevertheless, I didn't want to hurt his feelings so I let him continue with his pitch for a few minutes.</p>

<p>Then I gently said, "Hi, Steve." He was so startled that he completely

stopped speaking.</p>

<p>He had no idea how to react to my simple, normal greeting. Why? It was because he was totally focused on his selling script and not on any real two-way conversation. This is the problem with using a cold calling sales script -- it doesn't leave any room for a conversation to have a life of its own.</p>

<p>When people call me and ask how they can throw out their scripts and cold call the natural way, the first thing I do is ask them whether they're willing to role-play with me using their script. As soon as they start reading their script, a couple of things happen. I hear their voices go up in volume so they sound enthusiastic. They also talk faster, and their voice takes on a canned, robotic quality. All these things trigger the negative "salesperson" stereotype.</p>

<p>After a few moments, I gently stop them and tell them they're sounding like a totally different person from the one who called me and talked with me so naturally about their sales issues. You know what they always say? "Ari, you are so right. When I use a script, I feel as if I can't be myself. I feel like a robot or an actor, and it's very awkward and uncomfortable. Is there any way I can be myself again?"</p>

<p>Yes, there is a way to be yourself and still make successful cold calls. The way to be yourself is...be yourself! It's important to stop trying to be an actor or even a successful salesperson. You'll become more personable and more interested in the conversation itself when you do this.</p>

<p>We begin by focusing on relationship rather than salesmanship. We call with the anticipation of meeting someone new, and looking forward to a pleasant conversation to find out whether we can be of service. This new mindset is subtle but powerfully felt by the other person. </p>

<p>When we're being real people treating others as real people, the difference is amazing. Both people are both more at ease. We anticipate talking with someone who may possibly have an interest in what we have to offer. If they don't, we've enjoyed our time with him or her.</p>

<p>When others feel this relaxed mindset from you, they're much more likely to welcome you into their day. However, if you rigidly follow a cold calling script, then your call is immediately pegged as something initiated primarily for your own gain. That will undoubtedly put you back to square one.</p>