

## Weekend Sales Tips Ten Tips for Telephone Prospecting

As an agent, the telephone is an important part of developing and taking care of your business. If you currently use the telephone to prospect or are considering adding telephone prospecting to your toolbox, here are ten strategies to increase your effectiveness.

1. When you do telephone prospecting, you must put aside personal business for the duration of your regularly scheduled prospecting time.
2. Use the person's name, if at all possible. You can obtain good names and phone numbers from a number of list services. These services charge for each phone number (usually about 15 cents a name and they guarantee the numbers).
3. Don't worry about rejection. A few of the people you call will want your services. Most will be indifferent, but polite. A few will be obnoxious—keep searching for those who want your services. Each call is an opportunity and may very well be the best customer you will talk to today. Do everything possible to make the prospect feel comfortable with you.
4. Use language that feels comfortable to you and speak in a manner normal for you. If you are using a script, practice it until you can use it sounding completely relaxed and totally natural. Avoid sounding as if you are reading.
5. Create a positive first impression by putting a smile on your face and in your voice. Remember that the first 30 seconds on the telephone can never be made up. (Some agents actually keep a mirror by their phone so they will remember to smile.)

6. Listen carefully. Allow the prospect to voice their concerns or vent if necessary. Remember, a phone call is always an interruption. The person you are calling may be in the middle of something of more importance to him or her. Be sensitive to what you hear and exit gracefully (or call back) if necessary.
7. Analyze your voice so you can determine where you need to improve. (Use a tape recorder or have someone else in the office listen to how you handle the phone.) You should evaluate your pitch, loudness, and rate of speech.
8. Pitch: It is important to vary the pitch of your voice to avoid sounding monotonous, which will quickly bore the caller. The pitch should never be too shrill or too low.
9. Loudness: Avoid talking too softly or too loudly because you may send the wrong image to the prospect. A voice that is too soft comes across as being ineffective, while a voice that is too loud makes people feel uncomfortable.
10. Rate of Speech: No one likes to be called by a fast-talking sales person. On the other hand, too slow a delivery invites impatience and interruption. Be articulate, but maintain a conversational speed. Ideally, try to speak at the same rate that the prospect uses.

Before beginning any phone campaign, please check your state laws regarding "no call lists" as well as days and times where prospecting activities may be prohibited.

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