

Cold Calling Tips – 4 Common Mistakes to Avoid!

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Just getting started in practice and fancy jumping on the phones and generating some business yourself from cold calling? Or feeling the pinch from the recession and need to generate new clients to keep the practice afloat? Whatever the reason for embarking on cold calling, here are some essential tips on what not to do.

Four common mistakes to avoid when cold calling:

1. Being pushy

Having one goal in site when making a cold call, can make you push your service unnecessarily, and generate negative feeling. The most important part of a successful cold call is listening to what the prospect wants and offering a solution in a none-pressured environment. If you talk at them in a pushy manner, how are you ever going to find out what their problems are with their current accountant, so you can offer a solution to satisfy them?

2. Asking closed questions

You will get the most out of a cold call if you generate a two-way conversation. The best way to do this is by limiting the amount of closed questions asked. *'Are you happy with your current accountants?'* Is a closed yes/no question which will not necessarily lead into a conversation. However, *'What would you like to see us offer you over and above what your current accountants offer?'* leads to an explanation of problems they might be facing, and allows you to offer your practice as the solution. Asking open questions invites the prospect into the conversation willingly and will yield a much greater response.

3. Using a rigid script

How many times have you been called by someone trying to sell the latest in this... or the best of that... without actually asking whether you need it? Scripts, by their nature, make you sound robotic and can put people off listening. They generally mean you are talking *at* a prospect and selling *to* them, before knowing what their problems are and how what you are offering can help. It is best to allow the conversation to flow naturally. By all means have an opening line with a open question to kick start the conversation, but then it is a matter of reacting to the conversation in a natural manner.

4. Waffling

There is a limited amount of time you can engage a prospect on the phone. The first 5-10 seconds are the most important. Make sure your opening sentence is engaging and provokes a response to allow you to enter into a conversation. Once you have that all important conversation started, don't fall into the trap of telling them every service you offer, try and ascertain the types of services the prospect requires and tailor your conversation to their needs. Keep the topics relevant and allow the prospect time to talk, don't be scared of pauses, it means the prospect is thinking about what you've told them!

If you keep in mind these 4 mistakes and make sure you don't fall foul of them, you can make cold calling a success for you. However, you still need to overcome the main reasons many accountants don't tend to undertake telemarketing themselves, time and inclination. Cold calling is a skill in itself, as is completing a set of accounts, you need to be focussed and dedicated to achieve real results. If all this seem a little too daunting for you, then I recommend using a telemarketing firm that knows how to avoid the pitfalls and can generate real results. For more information on cold calling email growmypractice@thejastpartnership.co.uk or visit our website on www.thejastpartnership.co.uk