



6

**REASONS
PHONE
PROSPECTING
ISN'T WORKING FOR YOU**

**AND HOW TO
CHANGE IT!**

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Audrey's story started over 40 years ago when she made her debut in sales. A junior in a food and drinks company, her passion, verve and talent saw her progress through the ranks swiftly. Over time, Audrey found great satisfaction in supporting individuals into employment, and even enjoyed working as a Job Club Leader and assessor.

30 years ago, Audrey decided it was time to up the ante. Combining her love for helping people with her vast experience she set up her own telephone training company. For decades Audrey has worked with thousands of individuals employed in sales roles across many industries, including non-profit organisations, service industries, construction and finance to name but a few.

When it comes to making sales calls, Audrey knows her stuff. From techniques that get a prospect talking to just what to say in closing that all important deal, her tried and tested strategies have seen career after career noticeably improve due to the support and guidance she provides.

Audrey prides herself on practicing what she preaches, and she can often be found making outgoing calls of her own as well as communicating her knowledge to employees in a range of organisations to great effect.

Time and time again, Audrey has found herself encountering similar problems across industries when it comes to prospecting by telephone, which is why she has formulated this handy report. In shining a light on what doesn't work, Audrey is determined to support as many individuals as she can to flourish within their roles and start getting the results they've been searching for.

Ready to get started?

Let's get stuck in.

Picking up the phone and making a call to a prospective client is daunting. But the reality is that prospecting in this way is unavoidable when you're looking for new business.

Here I've put together 6 reasons why your cold calls aren't hitting the mark – and what you can do about it.

1. FAILING TO SET OBJECTIVES

First impressions count, but it's not the be all and end all.

If you pick up the phone and only celebrate your wins and commiserate your losses, how will you grow in the future?

You need to constantly measure how successful you are.

So, before you even lift the receiver you should have 2 clear objectives set out, and a plan of action to back it up

We all know that getting hold of decision makers can be a long game, sometimes taking weeks (or months!) to get them on a call – so you need to make it count.

When you know the result you're after, you can structure calls such a way that you get what you need with ease and have a back-up plan for when your contact knocks you back.

Examples of Primary Objectives (Be sure to make them relevant to you!)

- a) Arrange a meeting
- b) Introduce a new product or service where the prospect confirms they'd like to receive it/or more information
- c) Gain an order or enquiry
- d) Schedule a demonstration
- e) Confirm webinar attendance
- f) Sign up for training
- g) Establish a need through fact finding

Remember: Sometimes calls won't go entirely the way you envision them, so have a fall back that'll allow you to maximise time spent on the call.

Examples of Secondary Objectives (Maximise the moment!)

- a) Confirmation of a date and time to call back to continue the conversation, get feedback or ask further questions
- b) Get a clearer understanding of business needs for the future
- c) Contact information for more relevant individuals
- d) Information about the best time to call someone back
- e) A strategic question

Setting clear objectives:

- 1) Helps you steer the conversation to where you need it to be for the results, you're after;

AND

- 2) Allows you to 'grade' each call as a measure of your success and provide you with feedback for future calls

One thing to bear in mind when it comes to telephone prospecting is that, sometimes, you might not achieve any of your objectives. And it's not always because of something you did 'wrong.' Every so often you will encounter a prospect that isn't forthcoming and simply shuts down all of your attempts to get the result you need.

But, sometimes being knocked back is no bad thing.

A firm no, with no possibility for future communications, gives you the headspace to move away from that organisation and spend more time on those who are in a position to engage with you.

2. NEGLECTING YOUR CRM

Imagine this:

You speak with a decision maker who confirms that the business currently has no vacancies or requirements. Yet, during the course of the conversation, you discover key information about the organisation including their recruiting trends, who they've used in the past, and that they would be open to talking again in the future.

What do you do?

Many individuals that I have worked with DON'T record that information in their CRM.

Why?

Because the information doesn't serve them RIGHT NOW, so it's pointless, right?

Wrong.

This initial phone call is the start of your relationship with a potential client, and all of those little nuggets of information they've shared with you are a chance to grow that rapport until they're ready to bite.

You see, when you can call a prospective client back in the future and not only remind them of your previous conversation but use key information to back up why you're calling, you go up in their estimation.

Right off the bat they know you're not a 'cold caller'. In fact, you're someone they've spoken to before, someone they've shared pertinent information. You understand the needs of the business and can present a solution to their problems.

Excel Spreadsheets, Word documents, and little pieces of scrap paper just aren't going to cut it. They get lost, corrupted or down right confusing. What you need is a Client Relationship Management system (like Salesforce, Hubspot CRM, buddycrm, ZohoCRM, etc) that's designed to hold all of the relevant information in one place, so you can access it easily in the future.

Without this, building a pipeline of organisations to contact becomes impossible. Instead of growing fruitful relationships, you'll be stuck on a merry-go-round of cold calling with little to no results. And we all know we'd rather make a 'warm' call over a 'cold' one any day!

Benefits of Using A CRM

1. Improved relationships

- a. The more you know (and remember!) the more you show a potential client that you care and can help their business.

2. Increased team work

- a. CRMs allow for information to be shared between teams, greatly reducing cross over that can make your organisation look unprofessional.

3. Increased chances of hitting targets.

- a. Keeping tabs on a prospect means you can plan how to make them an actual client. Knowing and recording all the relevant information puts you in a better position to predict the possibility of them saying YES!

4. Transform 'Cold' calls to 'Warm' calls

- a. When you call your prospect back again you can refer back to what was said previously, boosting your credibility. Without a CRM, how can you capture this effectively?

5. Improved efficiency

- a. Setting up a record for a customer happens ONCE with a CRM. Any other method is unreliable and time consuming.

6. Your own reminder system

- a. Your CRM can automate who you call and when you call them, so you don't have to rely on your memory or flawed systems.

3. NOT STRUCTURING YOUR CALLS

Much like a story, a good call should have a clear beginning, middle and end.

Let me give you an example:

“Good morning Steve, it’s Sarah here from ABC Company, an established recruitment company based in X. I’m calling you because I’m keen to arrange a time to meet to discuss what we do and see if our services could prove beneficial when you are looking to recruit again – are you free next week for a meeting?”

There are lots of things wrong here, but the most vital missing element is that the call has no ‘middle.’

The prospecting caller doesn’t even attempt to engage with the contact before asking for an appointment. They move straight from ‘beginning’ to ‘end’ with nothing in between.

When this happens, 3 results are almost inevitable:

1. Your contact switches off due to not being motivated by what has been said;
2. Your contact rejects the idea outright;
3. Your contact becomes confused and asks you to repeat yourself.

On a successful call, the structure is always the same. And with a bit of planning, you can enjoy those successes time and time again.

The Beginning

Your introduction should answer the 3 W’s.

Who you are. Where you are calling from. What the call is about.

Specifically, when you tell your prospect what the call is about you should include a benefit that is relevant to them. Believe me, everyone in your industry is ‘established’ – it means nothing!

The Middle

This is the part of the call when you have the opportunity to ask questions. Choose these wisely!

75% of this part of the call should be filled with the voice of your prospect talking about themselves. Any talking you do should come AFTER they’ve answered your questions, not before. Don’t put words into their mouth.

The key is to LISTEN.

Your aim here is not to reach your objective so you can hang up and move on to the next one. Your aim is to build a rapport, and that starts with credibility and trust.

Actively listen and, when appropriate, respond to what has been said with a sentence or two that demonstrates your understanding alongside the benefits of what your service has to offer.

The End

It is here, and only here, where you ask for some form of commitment from your prospect.

You do this by mentioning something said earlier on in conversation – that way you can prove your suggestion is the right solution.

For example:

“It’s great to hear that you are looking for some staff and need to do this relatively quickly. I’m confident that we could help you with that, and I’d welcome the opportunity to arrange a meeting to explore how we can do this for you. How’s your diary looking for the week commencing 4th June?”

Many people fall foul at this stage by asking questions AFTER securing an appointment. Do not do this. I’ve witnessed many individuals LOSING opportunities because they’ve talked their prospect out of it.

Diarise the meeting, close the call... and HANG UP!

4. FAILING TO FOLLOW UP

“Personal branding is sales, it’s not who you know it’s who knows you!”

This quote sums up what follow up is all about.

The more you stay in touch with your contact, the more chance you have of being remembered and chosen when they need what you have to offer.

A no after your first conversation isn’t the end of the world. Honestly,

A no can mean many things. So, instead of closing the door and walking away, use the opportunity to stay in touch.

How?

1. Ask when the best time would be to call back to review their current arrangements;
2. Ask if they are on LinkedIn and if you could connect – doing this keeps them on your radar and tuned in to any relevant changes that might come about;

3. Ask if you could send them information of value (i.e. newsletter, tips, samples) and follow up with them on a specific date.

When your follow up is confirmed...make sure you do it!

Failing to follow up says you don’t care and gives them a poor impression of the customer service within your organisation.

Building relationships takes time and effort on your part. Expecting great outcomes on the first call is unrealistic and demotivating. Invest time and effort into your prospects and they’ll eventually invest in you!

5. BEING INCONSISTENT

“Practice makes progress not perfect”

Time and time again I speak to people just like you who tell me they aren’t getting results when they prospect by phone.

Looking deeper into the why, it becomes apparent that hardly any calls are actually being made.

Many people are too quick to give up the ghost after a couple of ‘failed’ calls, and it’s a BIG mistake.

Being consistent builds your confidence. Being consistent refines your technique. Being consistent gets results.

How to Get Better At Prospecting By Phone

1. Aim for quality over quantity

You might think calling as many people as you can is what gets you results.

It’s not.

Better to make regular calls that result in quality conversations with the right person than making loads of calls and talking to just the receptionist over and over again.

2. Put it in the diary

Find a day and time to sit down and dedicate yourself to making these calls. Aim NOT to reschedule and get distracted with something else.

3. Identify the best times to call

Certain industries have peaks and lulls – be mindful of these and plan your call for the appropriate time.

6. AVOID NEGATIVE THINKING

Persistence is your friend in this game. Convert negative thoughts into positive ones. Instead of 'No one will be available to talk to me,' switch it up and tell yourself 'How will I know unless I pick up the phone and ask!'

SEEK HELP

If you've followed all the steps and still can't understand why you aren't getting the results you're after, ask for help! Fresh eyes and ears on your manner and methodologies provide you with feedback to take forward on the next call. Don't be afraid to reach out for support.

Best Regards

Audrey Bodman

P.S. If you've been bitten by the bug and want to continue your journey in becoming confident on the telephone, I've got just the thing for you. Read on for 3 ways I can help you to achieve just that and more!

1. Join the 'Creating Opportunities by Phone' - closed facebook group.

If you are a welfare to work, work based learning or social skills organisation working on an initiative aimed at getting people into work or training, you'll find this closed group an absolute treasure trove.

REQUEST TO JOIN HERE

2. Connect with me on LinkedIn

Keep up to date with the latest news and events from me through my LinkedIn network. You can expect weekly updates from me, as well as invitations to upcoming webinars and training opportunities you may want to get involve with.

So **CLICK HERE** and give that Connect button some love to start your journey to better telephone engagement. Simply mention this report in a message to gain access to my professional network.

3. Keep an eye on my website for info on up & coming FREE webinars

Over the course of the year I will be offering **FREE** webinars that will support organisations just like yours to refine their telephone skills. Each one is a mini-training session in itself, with key tips and tricks to take away and put into practice the next time you pick up the phone.

Not only that but there will be the opportunity to join me on various training courses throughout the year, and the website will give you the heads up on when these will be available to book. They fill up fast, so check regularly!

HOW TO CONTACT ME

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