Nailing the Art of Cold Calling
As intimidating as cold calling can be, it’s a powerful sales tool with predictable and measurable results. For sales leaders, cold calling should be a muscle that you build and strengthen in your sales organization. For sales reps, once you master the skill, you can take great pride in knowing how to do something a lot of people are afraid to do.

But, if hang-ups are the rule rather than the exception for you or your team, we’ve got some tips to help you out.

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Is Cold Calling Dead?

Simply put, cold calling is alive and well—and it not only benefits your company, but you as a sales rep, too:

**It’s good for your company**
Around the world, the majority of High-growth organizations believe cold calling is worth implementing into sales strategies. Based on data from a survey of 200 sales and marketing organizations conducted in November 2016 by DiscoverOrg, global, highgrowth companies are more likely to invest in rigorous cold calling initiatives than their lower growth counterparts.

Why? Well, if you just need to drum up some extra business in a new area and have no leads to start from, cold calling is a great, cost-effective start. As important as marketing is for generating leads, you’re paying a lot of expensive, upfront costs that may or may not get business. With cold calling, you’re only paying sales reps commissions on deals that actually close. In turn, the amount of time you spend trying to make a successful cold call will far outweigh those calls that end positively for you.

**It’s good for you**
Unlike email marketing, cold calling gives you a chance to be dynamic and improve your selling. With an email, you have no chance to influence behavior once information is out in the open. However, if you get someone on the phone, you have to be aware of the inflection points that indicate interest. You have a chance to think on your feet, and address any concerns that arise in the moment.

If you can be great at cold calling, you’ll have a realization that you (more or less) don’t need expensive marketing, a warm intro, or a referral. If you can say for yourself, “Give me a phone and phone book, and I’ll be able to generate revenue for a company,” you’ll be employable for the rest of your life.
Win with Preparation

Before you hop on the phone, there’s something that’s even more important to master than your pitch, or what you say in your calls and voicemails.

**Define your objective**
While the first call with a prospect is different for every business, you should neglect the notion to start selling right off the bat. Realistically, you have to build trust before selling on the phone, so this is an opportunity for you to get to know your prospect and identify their pain points.

Determine an appropriate objective so that you can go into the call knowing what you want to achieve. This might be setting time for a demo, registering for a webinar, or getting the prospect to stop by your booth at a trade show. Regardless of your desired CTA, set your expectations that this call is just a step on the ladder for your customer to purchase.

**Build your list**
When grouping contacts together on call lists, you’ll probably have many unique industries, use cases, etc. that can benefit from your product or service. Therefore, concentration is key. An easy way to identify who you will go after first is with the Beachhead Strategy. This focuses your resources on one key area, usually a smaller market segment or product category, and winning that market first. Once you dominate that market, you can then move into larger markets and establish an even bigger presence.

As you begin winning over customers within a segmented market, you can establish your relationships with well-known customers in the industry. These clients act as an asset during your cold calls, as you can namedrop how you’re helping their team achieve X, Y, and Z. This is also helps as you begin generalizing your pitch. You’ll find that similar demographics are often receptive to a pitch that has been crafted specifically around their market.
Mentally prepare
Whether you like it or not, cold calling is hard and there’s no getting around it. Most of the time, people won’t pick up the phone—and even if they do, you’ll frequently have people blow you off, hang up on you, or tell you to never call again.

As you dial the phone, be ready to address whatever lies on the other line. Try to prepare by intentionally cultivating a positive mindset with a song, podcast, or inspirational video that you love, and always have absolute faith in the value prop of your product or service. No matter how the call turns out, you can embrace what happens on a call with academic curiosity, take your learnings, and move on.

Structuring the Call

Once you make the connect on a cold call, there’s only one thing to remember: You have 5 seconds to earn 5 minutes. And then 5 minutes to earn an hour.

Because your time to win the prospect over is extremely limited, you need to say something interesting straight out of the gate. Start with, “Hi this is (first name) from (company name)” and ask a quick question. This question is usually different for everyone, but is designed for engagement, as they’re forced to respond with an answer.

Say you ask “Do you remember signing up for a free trial?” If they respond with “No,” go on to say, “Well, the purpose for this call is because our customers have had (common pain point). We’re working with customers like, (relevant customer names), and we’re helping them solve this with (our solution).”

All in all, it’s critical to remember you’re conveying the problems you solve, not what you do. And you should always end your conversation with that pre-defined CTA (as mentioned above).
Still having doubts? Here’s a quick checklist on what you should and should not cover:

**DO…**
- Begin with a quick intro with an engaging question
- Present what you solve, not what you do
- Reference accounts as proof points
- Have a specific CTA (i.e. schedule a demo, meet at a tradeshow, etc.)

**DO NOT…**
- Ask how the prospect is
- Ask if they have time
- Lead with what you do

**Crafting Tone and Pitch**

The most common debate with cold calling is whether or not to use a script. Because 86% of communication over the phone is focused on tone (words only account for 14%), your prospect is more likely to respond to delivery over what you’re actually saying.

Instead of writing a script, you’re better off spending time cultivating how you’re going to present yourself, getting in the right headspace to do that, and then thinking on your feet during the call.

**So, how should you sound?**

Under most circumstances, people hate the aggressive, demanding salesperson. You can bulldoze people into meetings, but chances are, they’ll never show up or take your calls.

At this stage in the game, rapid engagement is key—purposely use an un-salesy tone. Sales experts suggest acting like you’re calling a bookstore to see if they have a book in stock. Stay curious while you’re on the line, and be personally interested in everything your prospect says—it even helps to geek out on their business.
Along with maintaining curiosity, you should always be assertive instead of aggressive. Ask, “Are you experiencing these problems? Well, we should talk—I’m thinking these are the best times to connect.”

**Fun Tip:** Put a mirror on your desk to mimic face-to-face interactions. You can then observe your behavior and even ask yourself, “Would I want to talk to me?” You’ll also be aware of your posture—if you’re not sitting up straight and smiling, you’re probably not in the right mindset to make a call.

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**Clearing Roadblocks**

At the end of the day, only 5-10% of cold calls end successfully. So, what do you do the rest of the time?

**With the calls that don’t go to plan...**

Take the radical candor approach and be transparent with what you’re doing in the situation. If the prospect decides to end the call with “Send me some info” they probably won’t read whatever you send them.

Instead, say, “You know, I can absolutely do that. But, the thing is, when I follow up in two or three days and find out you haven’t read anything, I’ll know that it was just a polite way of you saying no.” Go on to explain, “If that’s the case, it’s totally fine—just let me know now. But if you’re actually experiencing (X, Y, and Z problems), we should really talk about them for 15 minutes and figure out a solution.”

**Responding to “I can’t talk right now”**

If your prospect picks up the phone but then responds to your introduction with “I can’t talk right now” or “I’m in a meeting,” they’re probably disinterested. Think about it—there aren’t a lot of people that answer the phone in meetings—especially from numbers they don’t know.

You can turn things around with an honest response. “Well, that’s what I say too when I accidentally answer a salesperson’s call. But I promise, this will only going to take 90 seconds,” or “You know, I’m also busy, but...” and then dive into your cold calling plan.

One last tip—never say OK and ask “When’s a better time?” Your chances of reconnecting from there are slim to none.
Leaving voicemails
Like with cold calling scripts, many sales experts debate vigorously about whether you should leave a voicemail or not. Numerous voicemails may come across as pestering, but everyone has caller ID. Your prospect is going to be just as irritated by seeing your number pop up over and over again without any context. Voicemails also get your company name in the conversation—for instance, if your prospect is seeing your ads everywhere, this is another reference point in the number of touches.

In terms of content, less is more with voicemails. The optimal length is 8–14 seconds, and this should guide how much information you provide. Even though that’s a short amount of time, try to be creative. Have fun, be self-referential, and don’t be afraid to self-deprecate. Some examples include:

“Hi (first name). I have no reasonable expectation that you’ll return this call, but if you see us at (event) or on an (ad) and think of us, please reach out — (XXX) XXX-XXXX.”

“Hi (first name). I know 95% of voicemails are not returned, but 5% are — looking forward to seeing which one you’ll be. Give me a call — (XXX) XXX-XXXX.”

Regardless of what you say, you should always leave a voicemail. If you don’t think it’s appropriate, you probably shouldn’t be calling that client in the first place.

All in all, there are three important things to remember when implementing a cold calling strategy. First? Once you decide to do it, you have to commit. Volume is required in order to see results that move the needle. Second? Remember the Beachhead Strategy.

The right target is just as important as the right pitch. Third? Have fun and don’t let cold calling get the best of you. While it can be brutal, having the chance to change someone’s mind and turn a “no” into a “yes” is very rewarding.
Copper: A CRM that teams actually love to use

We talk to lots of teams who are typically in one of two camps. Either you have a CRM that you thought was going to fit your needs and be adopted and loved by employees, but it’s not working out. Or, you’ve decided to hold off on implementing a CRM because you’re not prepared for a complicated setup and disruption to your workflow and you’re skeptical that it will actually get used at your business. In either case, we recommend you try Copper — we’re pretty sure you’ll love it.

Copper was built with three basic principles in mind: Keep it simple. Show what matters. Make it actionable. We’re doing that by seamlessly integrating with G Suite, eliminating painful data entry, and automating time-consuming tasks. We help teams improve how they manage their team and workflows so they can make better business decisions and accelerate sales.

Copper is the CRM that works for you. Copper is the leading CRM for G Suite and recommended by Google. It works instantly through a seamless integration with G Suite, has a beautiful user experience, and is designed to help teams and business build long-lasting relationships. Copper services more than 15,000 paid businesses in more than 110 countries. Headquartered in San Francisco with over 200 employees, the company has raised $87M in venture capital financing to date. For more information or to sign up for a free trial, visit www.copper.com.