

Top Ten Biggest Mistakes Cold Callers Make on the Phone And How to Avoid Them

By Barry D. Caponi

We at the Caponi Performance Group eat, sleep and drink the topic of appointment making. As a matter of fact, our approach, *The Appointment Making Formula™* (or *The Formula*, for short) has become one of the most successful methodologies in the industry because it takes a holistic view of the entire process.

Over the years we've seen lots of different approaches and talked to lots of people who make their living setting appointments over the phone or by canvassing. Therefore we've been able to craft a methodology with techniques that truly work. We've also seen many techniques that don't. This article covers the top mistakes that we see being made while attempting to set appointments. These mistakes are doubly painful as they not only drain away those precious few hours we've got to make appointment making calls, but crush the spirit as well.

Top Ten Mistakes Cold Callers Make

1. Believing the first (negative) response we hear is true and attempt to counter it with logic – suspects play by two ground rules that we must acknowledge or perish:
 - a. The rule of the 'Status Quo' – our research indicates that less than five percent of our universe of suspects is **currently in the market for what we sell when we call them...** so they don't think they *need* to talk to us
 - b. The rule of 'Workus Interruptus' – no matter when we call, we are interrupting that person from doing something...so they don't *want* to talk to us

Ergo, until we get them beyond the initial 'conditioned knee jerk' reaction of saying anything (*including lying*) to get us off the phone, logic doesn't work as well as we think it should.

2. Tell the suspect all about what we can do for them – remember, they don't think they need what we're selling, so why do we think this approach will work? Instead we should tell them about the results someone else got from using what we sell. (All of us – ok, maybe just most of us - think that there are others who know some little secret we don't.)



3. Assuming we can help them do what they're doing better than they're currently doing it – "I can save you money over what you're paying today." "I can make you more productive." How do we know what they're paying or how well they're doing? For that matter, how do we even know they use what we're selling in many cases?
4. Not 'owning' or internalizing our message so instead of sounding conversational, we sound like the proverbial telemarketer reading a script or delivering it in a monotone voice – only 7% of effective communications is derived through the words we use. The biggest percentage of effective communications on a phone call comes from tonality (38%). Therefore we must not only 'own' our message, but we must deliver it with passion. You do believe in what you sell, don't you?
5. Winging it on each call so that our message is different each time – if we deliver a different message each time, we can't predict and control the responses we'll get, making the task of handling those negative responses even more difficult.
6. Asking leading questions – "You would like to save money wouldn't you?" If they don't think they need us and don't want to talk to us, this kind of question is offensive and does nothing but tick them off even more at the interruption.
7. Not leaving voicemails, or leaving long winded ones – the advertising industry says that it takes seven touches for someone to even remember our name, so why waste the effort involved in making the call and not leave a message? Leave well thought out, concise voicemails.
8. When leaving voicemails, not saying our phone number s-l-o-w-l-y and repeating it.
9. Not letting the suspect know when we're calling for the last time (in this cycle) – users of **The Formula** get more returned phone calls from a 'Move On' message than any other. But in order to do that, we have to have a plan as to how many times we'll call, how often we'll call, **and** leave messages when we call.
10. Calling the same day and/or time of day over and over again, or calling the same person over and over again the same day – it just might be that we're calling at a time when they're never there! And with the advent of caller ID, do you really think they don't see that the same person has called multiple times today?

If you make any of these mistakes and would like information on **The Formula** and how to make calls more effectively and efficiently, give us a call or log on to www.coldcalling101.com to see how we correct these mistakes – and use the code name Caponi Performance if you decide to register for a workshop (you'll get a discount!).

Next month we'll talk about the Top Ten mistakes cold callers make before they ever get on the phone.

