

IMPACT SALES AND SALES MANAGEMENT

newsletter

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CHAPTER 1: THE REALITIES, MYTHS, ERRORS, AND URBAN LEGENDS BEHIND PROSPECTING (PART 1)

Adapted from [Perfect Phrases For Lead Generation](#) By Bill Brooks

Prospecting: What It Is and What It Isn't

Whether it's labeled simply as "prospecting" or is called "lead generation," "tactical marketing," "new customer acquisition," "cold calling," "trade show selling," "referral marketing," or "business development," gaining successful [access to qualified leads](#) is the single, most critical component of your long-term sales success—and that is true no matter what you sell or to whom you sell it.

Why is that? It's really simple. Most salespeople who fail eventually tend to do so due to an inadequate supply of [qualified leads](#)—period. Even if you do generate a large number of prospective customers, you will ultimately fail if they are not qualified or if you don't know what to say in order to get them.

Qualified leads must have five common traits:

1. An awareness of their need for whatever it is you sell.
2. Both the authority and the ability to pay for it.
3. A legitimate sense of urgency relative to acquiring it.
4. Trust in you and your organization.
5. Willingness to listen to you.

The fewer traits they have, the less qualified they are.

At this point it is important to deal with the most basic question of all about prospecting. What good would it do to present even the most perfect message to a prospective customer who doesn't know that he or she needs your product, doesn't have sufficient funds to pay for it, has no authority to access those funds, has no heartfelt immedi-

acy to purchase it, or doesn't trust you? Yes, you guessed correctly—none. No good at all.

The Urban Legends of Lead Generation

What are the chances of your encountering someone who has all five of the characteristics of a qualified prospective customer by cold calling, either by phone or by knocking on doors? *Extremely slim at best.*

If there is no strong marketing effort, if brand awareness is low, if resources are limited, or if there is no other prospecting strategy available, this may be your only option. At this point there might logically be some question in your mind about whether you should use this low-yield yet deceptively inexpensive method of prospecting for any length of time when so many other options could be available to you.

Inspired by today's technology, lots of salespeople have resorted to making unsolicited presentations through an array of digital tools—CDs, DVDs, emails, faxes, etc. And that may seem to be a really up-to-date strategy. But let's ask another very straightforward question. *Have you ever received an unsolicited DVD, CD, or "spam" email cleverly (sometimes not very cleverly) disguised as being important?* Yes, probably a lot. However, here's the real question. *How often have you personally looked at that DVD or listened to that CD? Have you ever opened an email or read an unsolicited fax only to discover that you have been spammed with a clever but clearly manipulative headline?* Although these tools of technology can be relatively inexpensive to use, they usually don't deliver the results you want—and they are de-

ceptively expensive in terms of your reputation. So here's the moral of the story. **Don't jump on the latest technological prospecting bandwagon. Or at least think about it before you do.**

Selling's Number One Secret

After observing how others sell for more than 30 years, managing salespeople for over 20, and personally selling for even longer than that, Bill Brooks reached one simple but profound truth:

The secret to selling is to be in front of a qualified prospective customer when he or she is ready to buy, not when you need to make a sale.

What does that mean? Simply this: timeliness is by far the single most important skill in prospecting—period.

[Perfect Phrases for Lead Generation](#) is not so much about how to evaluate the myriad strategies you could implement, but about what to say when you are there—by phone, in person, or through another medium, regardless of how you get there.

However, you do need to have an appropriate strategy (or better yet, set of strategies) that clearly defines your pros-

pecting effort. You must maintain the top-of-consciousness position in your prospective customers' minds in such a way that they think about you at the time they decide to pursue the purchase of a product or service that you sell.

What you say and how you say it are necessarily intertwined with what you do in order to get in front of a qualified prospective customer. You must know exactly what to say when you are in front of a qualified prospective customer at the right time. However, those words and phrases are contextualized by the strategy you use. There is no way around it.

With whom should you use these phrases? You certainly will achieve better results if the person with whom you're using them is truly a qualified prospective customer. And one more time, that single word, "qualified," is more critical than many salespeople believe it is. Long term, wasting too much time with too many of the wrong people is a sure way to guarantee sales failure.

A Word of Caution

Be careful not to use [Perfect Phrases for Lead Generation](#) with prospective customers who meet only the least important of the criteria—merely being willing to listen to you!

The Only Real Inventory You Have as a Salesperson is Your Time So Don't Waste It

Even if you are using the exact, right phrases, don't waste them on the wrong people. [Perfect Phrases for Lead Generation](#) will supply you with precise phrases and words that you should use to guarantee the most positive response to your prospecting efforts.

This book will serve as an invaluable source to specific words and phrases linked to a wide array of strategies.

For only \$10 you will have access to proven sales strategies that will steer you in the direction of qualified leads. Click here to get [Perfect Phrases for Lead Generation](#).