

# Cold Calling: Is it Really a Waste of Time?

By [Jacques Werth](#) on Jan 19, 2009 | [Creating Demand](#)



A recent article on the subject by Paul McCord, one of the most knowledgeable sales strategists in the business, delineated many of the reasons not to make cold calls. His unique ability to relate to how prospects feel about what we do is a valuable lesson. I agree with his aversion to cold calls. However, as you will learn below, there is a different telephone prospecting process that is efficient, effective and enjoyable.

Whenever I speak to a large group of salespeople, about the success that can result from telephone prospecting, I get several impassioned rebuttals from members of the audience. *Their typical remarks are “Cold calling is a waste of time” and “I hate cold calling.” I then respond, “I agree that cold calling is a huge waste of time.”* That is indicative of the fact that the vast majority of salespeople think that there is only one way to use the telephone for prospecting – namely cold calling. As you know, cold calling is an onerous task. It is unpleasant and loaded with rejection – personal rejection.

It takes too much determination and motivation to call a large number of strangers and try to get an appointment so that you can try to sell them something that they don't want. When you prospect that way, you put a great deal of pressure on yourself and the people you call. As Paul McCord indicates, most prospects are on the defensive when they take your call. If you talk like a salesperson, it's natural for most of them reject you unless you do something different; something they have not experienced before.

The reason that it's referred to as “cold calling,” is that most of the people you call never want to hear from you again. It's a good way to trash your prospecting list. Therefore, almost all of your future calls will be have to be cold calls.

*When I say “Telephone Prospecting,” I am not talking about cold calling.* High Probability Prospecting is an efficient, enjoyable way to contact and make appointments with prospects when they are ready to buy your type of product or service. It is based on the fact that people buy for their own reasons, in their own time. That's true for most of us, when we are the prospect.

*This process requires that you call a precisely targeted list that contains some people who already want your type of product or service now or will want it in the future.* Yes, the first call you make to each one on your list is a cold-call. However, that call is

extremely short – typically thirty-five seconds – and creates no pressure. It is designed to get a quick “Yes” or “No” answer. We don’t want to engage anyone in conversation unless their immediate response is “Yes.” If they don’t know what you’re talking about, either your prospecting offer is too vague or they don’t care. The type of calling we advocate leaves the prospect with a positive feeling about you.

***Your next call will be a warm call.***

After the first call, every call you make to that prospect is a “warm call.” Very few of those calls is likely to result in rejection – if you change the wording of your prospecting offer every time you call. Prospects either say “Yes” or “No” to your offers and you gladly accept whatever answer you get. No pressure, no manipulation, no Rhetorical questions, no conversations, just a quick “Okay, goodbye.”

***What about gatekeepers?***

Don’t try to “get past” them. It’s not worth your time and effort or their ill will. Most executives’ gatekeepers are their Administrative Assistants. They usually know what their boss wants and does not want. Make your offer to the AE and accept the answer you get.

***The Results***

You should be able to contact and make offers to three times as many suspects. You will find and make appointments with the people who are most likely to buy. Rejection and stress will be greatly diminished.

The people that are not ready to buy now, but are likely to buy in the future, will be happy to take your calls because they are short, pleasant, informative, and free of pressure. Because of your frequent, positive contacts, when they think of your type of products and services your name will be favorably at the “front of their minds.”

You will stop wasting your time on low probability prospects. You will make appointments only with people that are ready willing and able to buy. Your selling cycle for each prospect will be much shorter. Your closing rates can dramatically increase.

***Jacques Werth***, the President and founder of High Probability Selling, is a lucky man: He discovered his passion for selling early in life, and has enjoyed success in his chosen profession for over 40 years.