

CALLING FOR PROSPECTS

1. Important to keep your voice gentle, friendly, straightforward and as “normal” as possible. Any excitement or hype you put into the tone of your voice will be received as “pushiness.”

2. When you first get someone on the phone, get right to the point and be completely open about why you are calling. Then, ALWAYS ask them if they have “a couple of minutes to talk.”

“Hi, _____. My name is Larry Bangs. I’m calling from dr delphinium. You may know us as one of the largest florists in the Dallas area. We’re introducing a new service I’d like to let you know about and I was hoping you would have a couple of minutes to talk right now. Is this a good time to talk?”

3. Assuming you get this far with them, you now have 20 – 30 seconds to get their interest. Be ready with an offer of some kind that is free, provides some potential value to them and is very easy for them to say yes to.

“Thanks. You are probably aware that dr delphinium provides cut floral arrangements for a variety of occasions and venues. We are now also providing live plants and flowers, of all kinds for office and home interiors and, of course, maintain them. Do you already have plants in your offices? (Gotta dance with whatever their response is).”

“As a way for you to get to know us and our new service better, I’m offering to come to your building at no cost to you and spend an hour or so looking over the condition of your current plants and giving you my recommendations as to what might be improved, if anything. Would you be interested in having me come over to do that?”

4. Always be ready with a “back up” offer in the event your initial request is declined.

“I understand. Can I ask then if you would be interested in getting a competitive bid from us when your current contract is up? Yes? Can you tell me when the contract is up so I can get in touch with you a month or so in advance?”

“Just one more thing, would it be useful for you if I sent you a complete brochure of all the services provided by dr delphinium that you can keep on file for your reference?”

5. If they say “Yes” to an appointment, ask to set a time and date and let them know you will only need 5 – 10 minutes of their time at the outset to get you started. You might also ask if you can have their email so you can reconfirm the appointment a day ahead of time.
6. DO NOT prolong the call if you sense they are uncomfortable or impatient.

“Thank you very much for taking this time with me. Have a great day.”

GENERAL PRINCIPLES:

- ?? On every call, the first and foremost priority is to leave a good impression. Even if they shut you down fast and hard, be gracious, cheerful and accepting and let them off the phone quickly. A study done several years ago showed that people will share a negative experience with others 10 – 15 times. They will share a positive experience – maybe once. The point is that every negative impression multiplies.
- ?? Don’t push yourself. You should probably take a good break at least every 1 ½ hours. Any time you feel your energy going down and/or you start to go on “automatic pilot,” it’s time for a break. Take a walk, clean up your office, do something that is re-energizing. Coffee, diet Coke and other artificial stimulants are not encouraged. They’ll bring you up, all right – and then they’ll drop you down or get you addicted. Not good to have a “caffeine buzz” on when you’re calling.
- ?? It’s very difficult to hear “No” over and over. If you have three really negative calls in a row – STOP. Do something else for a while. Get yourself completely separated from the calls. Best to talk to someone if you can. Chances are you are in a bit of a funk and the calls are just reflecting your own mood. If you can talk to someone and pull yourself out of it, the calls will go much better.
- ?? Keep score and celebrate the wins. Keep a pad next to the phone with 3 or 4 categories – “No,” “Call Back,” “Send Info and F.U.,” and “Appointment!” or whatever works for you. Make a “tic” mark in one of those categories for each call. When you hit a really good one – like “Boy am I glad you called. I need plants in here in the worst way. When can you come over?” – stop and let someone know. Also good to set a target for yourself on how many calls you are going to make so you have a definite finish line. It feels good to complete the number you set. Then tally up the different categories, do whatever follow up you need to do (sending out info, etc.) and “put a period” on that session. Have every session have a clear beginning and end. When it’s done, it’s done. Leave the past in the past and move on.
- ?? Cardinal Rule: The person you are about to talk to does not know that the last few calls have been tough. Every call is a new opportunity to build positive PR for the company and possibly find a good, new prospect.

