

Professional Telesales Skills

This course is designed to improve the skills, techniques and confidence of those working in Telesales and Telemarketing. The type of individual who thrives in this type of environment needs to be very customer focused; have the ability to satisfy customer needs; and have the ability to think quickly decisively to handle objections and close the deal. It is written with both the customer and the organisation in mind to maximise on potential sales and build client loyalty.

Course content

Morning 9.30-12.30

Introductions, aims and Objectives

Professional telephone techniques

Projecting a professional image is one of the keys to professional selling. Delegates will understand the techniques of making effective outgoing calls; how to build rapport with clients ; how voice presentation skills can enhance the conversation; and how to create good first impressions on both internal and external calls.

Call planning and Telesales strategy

'Salespeople don't plan to fail they sometimes fail to plan'. Call planning and strategy are essential to understanding what to say to the customer and how to manage both the first call and the call-back.

Understanding why customers buy

Customer transition and the psychology of buying. We all go through a specific process when we decide to buy goods and services. We will show delegates how to match their sale with the customer's buying sequence so that they can actively sell to 'real' needs and wants.

Opening the call and arousing interest

Sensational openings produce successful sales. The effective telephone sales person understands the importance of powerful 'attention-getters' designed specifically to improve the positioning of the product and the organisation with the customer.

Lunch 12.30-1.30

Afternoon 1.30-5.30

Questioning and need finding

Unless the salesperson satisfies customer needs there can be no sale. The ability to use open and closed questions to uncover 'real' customer needs separates the average from the successful telephone sales person. Delegates will learn how to use questions to discover customer needs, challenges and problems and how to use these to create value in the solutions their products provided.

Selling benefits

If you have opened the sale well and gained the "buyer's" interest and attention, uncovered needs and agreed them with the customer the next stage is to present the benefits of your product, idea or service. To do this effectively sales people must be able to add value to their product and present both known and unknown benefits to build customer desire.

Recommendation and Closing skills

To sell you must be able to close. Delegates will learn how to recommend the best package to satisfy their customer's needs and when it is best to close the sale.

Handling objections

The ability to deal with objections is an essential skill in sales. We will focus on how delegates can control the call so that they are able to deal with all objections calmly and confidently. We will cover; understanding the types of objection; dealing with objections effectively and keeping control during a call.

TELEPHONE SELLING: CONTENTS

2. The Power of the Telephone
 5. Lifetime Value of Your Average Customer
 9. Improving the Power of the Voice
 11. Inner Dialogue
 13. Effective Communication
 14. Planning the Call
 20. Telephone Sales Contact Strategy
 22. Understanding Why Customers Buy?
 24. Opening the Call and Arousing Interest
 26. Stages of Effective Introduction
 29. Qualifying the Client
 30. Uncovering the Customer's Needs
 36. The Art of Listening
 38. Selling Benefits
 45. Closing the Customer
 52. Methods of Overcoming Resistance
 58. Worksheet
 59. Making a Quality Appointment
 60. Appointment Making
 62. Analysing the Call Afterwards
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63. Action Plan
 64. Notes
 65. Course Evaluation Form

PROFESSIONAL TELEPHONE TECHNIQUES

Communication is a two way process Information is a one-way process

The phone is probably the most used tool in modern business. 25 million business-to-business calls are made every day in the UK (Source: BT). Not everyone admits to being confident or totally proficient in their use of the phone so it is worth looking at why phone skills are vital for effective business communication. This is largely because it is a (relatively) cheap and efficient way of contacting many customers in a short period of time, giving information quickly and effectively and receiving instant answers and hopefully sales.

The modern telemarketer must remember that the phone communication is different from face-to-face communications and must adapt their communication to maximise on the potential the phone gives us.

As we deal with customers over the telephone, we need to remember that:

1. It is a substitute for face-to-face conversations. Therefore we need to work at finding ways to compensate for what we are missing out on:
 - we cannot see facial expressions, manners, reactions
 - we cannot see what the other person is doing
 - we cannot lip-read what the other person is saying
 - we cannot use illustrations to help them understand

In fact, the only sense we can use is hearing - the one that requires the most concentration! We must speak clearly to ensure our communication is fully understood by the customer. The phone creates a temporary disability because the customer can't see what's happening on the other side; they are therefore more likely to be confused by poor communication and frustrated by calls that may be perceived as 'wasting their time'.

2. Many customers feel uncomfortable using the telephone. They may feel threatened by the speed and conclusiveness of a telephone call - it's over before they've finished collecting their thoughts. A phone call is on average 20% quicker than a face to face conversation because we don't have the visual element to slow down the conversation when, for example the salesperson is looking up some information on the computer. Many sales are lost because the customer felt pressured to make a decision without knowing the full facts.
3. **Four important factors of telephone Customer Service.** Customer service is essential in tele-selling. No one likes to be sold something by someone with the 'gift of the gab'. They may come across as flippant and uncaring. We like to feel that the sales person cares about our needs and is looking to satisfy them with their products. Our customers pay extra attention to the four factors below, to compensate for not being able to see what's going on:
 - **Promptness** - How quickly we can resolve the customer's current problem; managing the customer's expectations by giving deadlines of delivery and ease of service.
 - **Courtesy** - Being polite and making the customer feel valued; giving reasons for all actions/instructions and using courtesy language; please, thank you etc.
 - **Organisation** - Having sufficient product knowledge to deal effectively with the customer's questions, queries or complaints.

- **Helpfulness** - Showing a willingness to deal with and resolve any issues the customer voices. To quickly produce actions that satisfy not confuse. A pleasant, helpful tone of voice is very important to let the customer know that you wish to help them.

These are not the only factors that create good Customer Service during the sales process. You must also remember that the customer is more likely to put the phone down if they feel dissatisfied by the service they received. The basic fact about telesales is **WHEN THE PHONE IS PUT DOWN - THE SALE IS OVER.**

Other factors affecting your phone effectiveness

- Part of the message may be lost because visual communication is absent. You may be distracted, and then not give your whole attention directly to the customer. You therefore risk losing vital parts of information which make up the whole message.
- The fact that the connection may be poor means that it may be difficult to hear all that is said by yourself or the customer; this can cause distraction and irritation.
- Your environment can greatly affect the quality of your phone communication, especially if it is noisy or there are distractions.
- The subject matter (which may be private or sensitive) may be received in a situation where the recipient does not want to speak openly.
- If a call is taken from a customer when you are in the middle of something that can be continued during the call, e.g. typing, you may give more attention to that than to the customer. The customer may realise that your attention is not fully on them.
- The customer is annoyed at the inconvenience of the timing of the call. This is especially relevant if you are calling them on their mobile phone when they are driving or in a meeting.
- The recipient may feel hostility towards the caller which prevents the message getting through or there may be an unwillingness to accept what is being said.
- There may be unwillingness by the recipient to accept the speed at which he/she is being asked by the caller to make a decision.
- Jargon is used by the salesperson that may alienate potential customers who are not used to it.

People are very receptive to advertising messages but most would claim to be wary of telephone selling or telemarketing. If we were to look at the differences between phone marketing and television advertising we may be able to understand:

- the challenges which people face
- why there is a reluctance to buy over the telephone

COMMERCIALS

The difference of our perception between T.V./radio advertising and direct sales

- We 'invite' adverts into our homes both the programmes and the advertising
- We are in control as we have the on/off switch
- Many ads are mini-programmes and have an appeal and entertainment value
- We appreciate the creativity in many ads
- We need no direct input

**TELEPHONE
SELLING
COURSE INSTRUCTIONS**

SAMPLE

Trainer's Key Points and Glossary

EXERCISE	Exercises for delegates - these may incorporate HOs or Manual references.
Flipchart	Trainer can use this at their discretion. This will allow an additional interactive element to your training.
HO	Handout(s) - these are numbered in sequence, no.1+ We have also included Optional HOs and they are numbered in sequence, a.+ We find HOs are an important element of training, as this allows you to interact with your group, and to add interactive elements to your training.
Manual	Training Manual – the Course Instruction's <i>Directions</i> will make reference to what page is required in the Manual. The manual is a useful reference tool for the trainer but also gives impact to your training as you will be giving your delegates something substantial to take away with them.
Manual Sequence	Content Page = Page no. 1 TIP: When printing your manual, pg. 0 is your title page.
Optional Sessions	If you have a smaller group, or they have specific requirements, use the optional session(s).
Role-Play	Trainer to separate delegates into groups and allow them sufficient time to act out a role-play scenario(s). Depending on your requirements, you can ask one/ all group(s) to relay their role-play to the rest of the group.
Slide	Presentation slide - the Course Instruction's <i>Directions</i> will make reference to what number Slide is required within your training presentation. Slide no.1 is your title Slide.
Slide Sequence	Introduction/ Title Slide = Slide no.1
Special Instructions	Use this for additional information, or for tips that the trainer may find useful.
Timings	The timings are as a guide only, and will depend on the group size and their requirements.

Disclaimer:

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Session 1

	Welcome, introductions, aims and objectives	Action Required
1.1	Introduce yourself; your training credentials and expertise on the particular subject. Explain any housekeeping rules, lunch, breaks and timings etc. Show delegates course objectives and agenda for the day.	Slide 1-6 / Manual pg.55 / Flipchart
1.2	Discuss course objectives and guidelines and emphasising that participation is essential for a good course	
1.3	EXERCISE 1: Delegates to complete questions on ' <i>Delegate Information</i> ', Slide 6 - Allow 5 minutes; Each delegate to share the information. Trainer to note their course objectives on Flipchart.	
1.4	Issue Course Manual - show ' <i>Post-Course Action Plan</i> ', Manual pg.55. Emphasise the importance of completing this throughout the training to highlight to delegates any areas of improvement required.	
<i>Timing 30 minutes</i>		

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR PRE-COURSE BRIEFING

Pre-course Briefing and Questionnaire (Handout 1): We recommend that these are issued at least a week prior to a training course. They allow delegates to think through and discuss with their line managers the reasons why they are attending the course and what they are looking to achieve from the training. Ask delegates to bring them completed to the course; they are useful in discussing the delegate's objectives during the Introduction to the training. Write down all delegate's objectives on a flip chart or whiteboard and refer back to them at the end of the course to see if the objectives were met.