

SO WHAT IF THEY HANG UP?

Mastering killer cold calls

By BOB GARNER

Monday morning. You walk into your office and there it is. Waiting for you to pick it up. And it sits there, staring at you, asking, "Do you feel lucky today? Well, do you?"

"It" is the phone. Isn't it amazing how we will avoid it and put off making those terrifying cold calls? Instead, we'll catch up on our mail, check out a magazine, or get another cup of coffee...

I make, on the average, about 200 cold calls a week. In fact, most of my business is done over the phone. Being a national speaker and talking with corporations all over the country, I had to learn how to make a cold call, get to the right person and even "close" over the phone. So, I decided to do a bit of research. I've gathered enough information that I now include "Killer Kold Calls" as one of my corporate speaking presentations. Here are some highlights:

I found that most people suffer from "FOP." FEAR OF PHONE. It's the fear of: being a pest, being hung up on, being cut off, etc. Let's look at how we can eliminate "FOP."

Your first step is knowing your product or service inside out. Then think of all the reasons why they should buy what you're offering and all the reasons why they shouldn't. Then have a response ready no matter what they say.

Prepare an opening statement, such as: "I was trying to get a hold of the person who handles your marketing department." Then put together a spiel about what you're offering. Make it brief and simple. Try to close with a question. Example: "That's what my

company offers and I would like to know if you would be interested in a plan like this or if I could send you some information?"

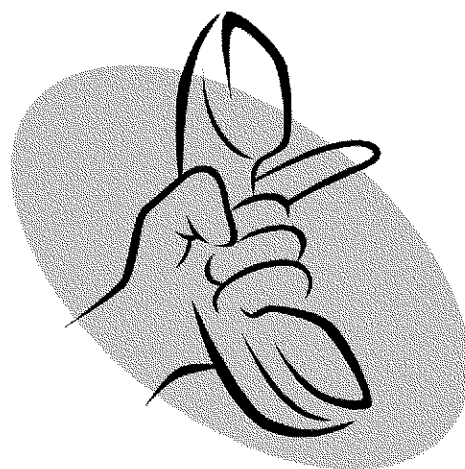
Now pick up the phone and practice. Practice an entire "make believe" conversation. Put in all the questions that could possibly be asked and have an answer for them. You can write things down but don't read from the paper when you're on the phone. That will always make you sound like an amateur.

Speak clearly and with fluctuation in the voice. I assume you have a list of

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clients and a good phone. The phone that I use is a multi-line speaker phone. You have to get through the secretary. The quickest way is to use the speaker phone. Once I know the name of the person I need to speak to, I'll call that person's office and invariably get that person's secretary. I'll already have the call on speaker phone and ask for the person I want to speak to by his or her first name. Because you are on speaker phone and you asked for the boss by his or her first name, rarely will you not be put through.

Soon the key person is on the phone and you give him or her your opening pitch. Whatever he or she says, positive or negative, you have a response. From



working on your "make believe" presentation, you will be able to bring the conversation around to sending out more information, setting up an appointment, etc.

If the person is not interested, forget it. Why waste your time? The time spent trying to talk to this person could have been used confirming a "yes" further down the line.

These are just a few of the many tips that I use and have helped others with. So when you think of fear, think about it this way.

F: Forget it. The most they can do is hang up. Just move on. The more "no's" you hear brings you closer to a "yes".

E: Enthusiastic. If you're not enthusiastic about what your offering, why should the person you're calling be?

A: Action. Do it now. It's the first call of the day that's the hardest. Once you get going, you are always O.K. Try and end your day on a positive call.

R: Ruler. Be the ruler of the phone. It can't hurt you. It can only help you make a success.