

The Two Most Powerful words in Prospecting



Most sales people hate to prospect. I would go so far as to say that anyone who says they like to prospect has either never done it or currently doesn't have to do it. It can be a seemingly thankless effort the results of which often don't seem justified by the time invested.

David Sandler, the founder of Sandler Training had a great quote on prospecting, "You don't have to like it; you just have to do it." The inherent truth in that assertion remains unchanged but HOW we prospect has changed dramatically. The average persons' tolerance for what author Seth Godin terms "Interruption Marketing" has changed dramatically. Laws have been passed regulating phone solicitation, DVR devices allow us to escape commercials while watching television, and anti-spamming laws continue to clamp down on e-mail solicitation. The message is clear; we are sick and tired of relentless "Interruption Marketing" at work as well as at home.

So what is an honest, hardworking sales professional to do? We have a saying at my company that if you want to be treated differently than the typical salesperson you need to stop behaving as a typical salesperson. We still have to prospect so just think of what the typical salesperson does to prospect and **DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT!**

Let's break it down; the typical approach is to send an e-mail or traditional mail piece followed up by the typical "cold call" where "Interruption Marketing" is practiced at its highest form. Sometimes the traditional process still works but the old math around how many times you need to call per appointment has gotten ridiculously out of whack. This is where the "Two Most Powerful Words" can help you turn the tide in your favor and make prospecting slightly less onerous.

The two words are "Help Me" and they will change the entire dynamic of both written and phone prospecting. By nature most people have good intentions and will look favorably upon a request for help from total strangers. There is a reason that people stand on virtually every street corner in a major city with signs asking for help. **IT WORKS!** We feel compelled to help others and often feel guilty when we don't.



I am not advocating standing on a corner near your prospects office with a sign but I am recommending that you start prospecting communications with some version of "can you please help me" or "I was hoping you could help me out". In Neuro-Linguistic Programming this functions as a version of what is known as a "pattern interrupt". It isn't what we expect from a sales contact and it breaks our "typical" pattern of response. Try the "Two Most Powerful" words in your next prospecting session.