



A REVIEW OF OPENING STATEMENTS

For attendees of my Telesales Rep Colleges, and customized training programs for clients, I have a standing offer of evaluating their opening statements afterward. Here are a few submitted by the pros at Dobbs Publishing, a group of niched magazines for auto enthusiasts.

Joe Galloway faxed over several openers. The first one:

“Good morning Mr. Grabowski, my name is Joe Galloway. I am with Dobbs Publishing and Super Ford magazine. If I've caught you at a good time I'd like to discuss your mail order program to determine if we might be able to help increase your profitability in this area of your business.”

Not bad, but we can make it better. First, this opener touches on the time issue before mentioning the possible result the prospect will get. Although I like this method of respecting the listener's time, I suggest it appear after the possible benefit.

Although the remainder of it has a better chance of creating interest than resistance, let's spice it up by getting a bit more specific with the possible benefits.

Here's a suggestion.

After introducing himself and the magazine, Joe could say, “I notice that you target Ford enthusiasts with your mail and phone order ads. Our magazine reaches proven direct marketing buyers, and if I've caught you at a good time, I'd like to discuss some potential opportunities to promote to Ford owners who you might not be reaching now.”

Here's another Joe submitted.

“I'm Joe Galloway with Dobbs Publishing. We specialize in reaching mail order customers through seven very targeted automotive magazines. If I've caught you at a good time, I'd like to review the opportunities that these titles might afford you to strengthen your mail order programs, and ultimately maximize your profitability.”

I like the first part, but the second half got a bit wordy and formal. Let's make it more conversational with “If I've caught you at a good time, I'd like to discuss some ways you might be able to get more catalog and mail order customers.”

A Call to an Existing Customer

Matt French submitted one for a call to a regular advertiser, with the call objective being to increase the ad size.

“This is Matt French from Super Ford Magazine. I'm calling this morning in regards to the current ad you are running with us. I've noticed you have quite a few products in your 2/3 page ad, and I was wondering, depending on how much you plan on growing your business this year, if you would have a few minutes to discuss the opportunities that exist in gaining more market share by increasing your ad size?”

First, referring to the customer's existing situation is good, since it lets him know you're actually thinking about him as opposed to just “smilin and dialin.” What I would avoid, though, is any mention in the opening statement about increasing ad size. They're not ready yet; they'll look at that as an expense, not at the potential return.

Here's an alternative.

“I was reviewing the products in the ad you're now running with us, and came up with some ideas. Depending on what your growth and promotional plans are for the next year or so, I might have a few options worth considering to generate more revenue from your ads.”

Notice that instead of talking about increasing ad size, we mention increasing the revenue, which is really all the advertiser is interested in. After getting into the questioning part of the call, then we can make the recommendation on the larger ad size, and he'll be much more receptive to it, since we will have explained how it will increase the revenue.

Overall, nice job guys.

Art Sobczak helps sales pros use the phone to prospect, service and sell more effectively, while eliminating morale-killing “rejection.” He presents public seminars and customizes programs for companies. Art has a number of books, CD's and other learning resources to help sales reps. See free articles and back issues of his weekly emailed sales tips at www.BusinessByPhone.com. Also ask for a free copy of his monthly Telephone Prospecting and Selling Report newsletter and Telesales Success magazine by emailing ArtS@BusinessByPhone.com, or calling (402)895-9399.