



SHOULD YOU USE SALES LETTERS BEFORE YOU COLD CALL

Remember the numbers game? Well, that is the same thought behind sending out sales letters. The hope is that with every hundred or so letters, a few sales will result.

If you don't know how to make a call from scratch and build trust, it seems to make sense to rely on a letter, brochure, or e-mail to do the job. But once you learn how to cold call the right way - with the new mindset - you'll realize that sales letters really aren't any help at all.

Here are four reasons to consider making cold calls without referring to a sales letter:

1. You get pegged as a traditional salesperson right away

When you start your cold call by referring to a sales letter, you're following a traditional sale and marketing technique. This indicates to potential clients that you're a traditional salesperson.

Do you really want to be associated with something that brings up painful memories of sales pressure? Better to break out of that negative salesperson stereotype entirely, and offer something new.

2. People just don't read sales letters all that much

The hope is that potential clients have seen your sales letter before you call. From among all the other letters that arrived on their desk that day, you hope they've read yours (which is unlikely), and remembered it (even more unlikely).

The idea is that when you call, they already know what the call is about.

However almost no one reads sales letters. If they do, they remember them only vaguely.

3. Cold calling conversations are harder to initiate

Most people take it for granted that it makes sense to send out a letter before cold calling. They think this gives them something to start speaking about. They can say, "I sent you a letter, did you get that?"

Nevertheless, when you call, these are the reactions you typically get:

- What letter / e-mail?
- What was it about?
- Sorry - I don't remember seeing it. What are you selling?

You may as well not have sent out the letter at all. Saying, "Hi, I'm just calling to see if you got my letter?" does nothing to move the conversation forward or to generate two-way dialogue. You're still at square one.

4. A sales letter makes you talk about yourself first

When you start your cold call by explaining what a sales letter was about, you're talking about yourself, your product, and your company.

This is exactly what we're trying to avoid in the new cold calling mindset. We want to talk about how to solve their problems first, not about what we're selling.

Isn't it true that sales letters, brochures, and e-mails focus entirely on your company and your product or service, rather than on solving a particular client's specific, individual problems? It's essentially just an advertisement that you're referring to. Moreover, you've lost the opportunity to be seen by your potential client now as a problem solver.

You're just another salesperson who's only interested in making a sale.

So what do we do?

Suppose your marketing manager sent out several letters or e-mails and you need to follow up. How would you open that conversation? By simply making your cold call without mentioning the letter. Just because your company sent out the letters or e-mails doesn't mean you have to refer to them. In most cases, the letters are only going to hurt you, not help you.

Basically, if you have to follow up on a sales letter, then treat the cold call as usual and don't refer to the letter at all. You'll find that you won't be tagged with the "telemarketer" stigma, and you avoid being pulled into the numbers game. At the end of the day, you'll feel much more satisfied with your cold calling approach. You'll be able to continue moving forward, firmly anchored in the new cold calling mindset.