

Producing More Effective Telephone Scripts

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A Perspective 101 Series



Producing More Effective Telephone Scripts



Mention the word script and many people who sell on the phone recoil in horror.

Why is this?

Usually because they have had a bad experience when a manager or supervisor has presented them with a script and said *“Just say this”*.

As customers, we have all experienced being sold to by someone who is obviously using a script. We can tell they are not using their own words by their tone of voice and the rigid way they expect to control the conversation.

Here are some of my thoughts on why I think scripts can be great and some tips for making your telephone scripts more effective.

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Why scripts are okay

A well written telephone script can be a real asset to anyone in sales because:

- **It can give you confidence**
- **It helps you focus on the structure of the call**
- **It helps to prevent you drying up, or saying the wrong thing**
- **It can sound so much more professional**

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Some key points when writing your script

- Use your own words. Use spoken language rather than written language. The script should sound like you having a relaxed and normal conversation.
- Introduce yourself, but don't rush. We say our names more quickly than other words or phrases.

For incoming calls I introduce myself by saying: *“Hello this is Frank, Frank Atkinson from the Sales training Consultancy. How can I help you?”*

- I came across this when ringing up my bank. The Agent gave their first name, then their full name. Think about it. If you come across a good idea use it yourself. I'm sure my bank spent a fortune paying someone to train their staff so why shouldn't I copy their best ideas.

The general principle is that if you want to be successful, find somebody who already is successful and copy what they do.

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- Don't be afraid to give them your name.

Let them know you are a real person. Some people persist in saying things like: *"Hello. Accounts"* People want to know your name.

They want to speak with a real person, not a department.

- Always try to follow a statement with a question.

This keeps you in control and helps put the customer at their ease. Here is an example of what I say when cold calling to book an appointment:

"Hello, this is J.W., J.W. Owens from XYZ. Have you heard of us before?"

Customer answers yes, or no. It doesn't matter which. *"Well as you are aware/you may not be aware but, we specialize in bring more business to be more successful and achieve better results. Can I confirm, are you the person responsible for Marketing and Advertising in your company?"*

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Customer answers

“The reason I am calling is that we have recently developed a program for businesses to help them become more successful.” And so on. It is not possible to script an entire conversation, but once you get into the habit of following a statement with a question you will be in much more control of the conversation

- Think about what your company does and write this down as a single sentence. In the above example I said “...we specialize in helping businesses become more successful and achieve better results.”
- The reason we do this is to answer one of the basic questions most customers are asking themselves when they call us, or we call them:
 - Who am I talking to? • What are they offering me?
 - Is it relevant to me and my needs?
 - What is going to happen during the call?
 - Will I be put under pressure to buy something?

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- Ask questions to identify their needs and wants.

Qualify that they are the right person you should be talking to. What authority do they have? Are they in a position where they might be potential new customers? Have they bought in the past and might they buy in the future?

- **Remember.** Asking questions is 3 times more persuasive than presenting information. Asking questions and listening are the 2 most important skills in sales.
- **When you sell your company and its' products, or services sell benefits, not features.** Convert features into benefits by saying “..this means that..” For example: “Our programs are tailored to meet your specific needs.

This means that you can be confident the team will be able to apply the learning to real life situations that they come across every day”

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- **Keep focusing on your objective for the call.** What is it? If it is to book an appointment then get the appointment rather than selling on the phone. If your objective is to make a sale, go for that.
- **Pace yourself.** Don't speak too quickly, or too slowly. Try to make your tone of voice sound positive and friendly
- **Keep using 'trial closes'.** This means asking from time to time *“How does that sound?”*, *“Is that the sort of thing you might be interested in?”*, *“Would you like that?”*.

The purpose of trial closing is to gather feedback. We are not getting the order, but getting positive feedback that is moving us closer to the time when we ask for commitment.

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- **Summarize what has been discussed.** Summaries are good for reminding the customer what has been discussed and agreed.
- **Ask for commitment.** Don't be afraid to ask for some sort of commitment. 70% of salespeople fail to ask for commitment because they fear rejection.
- **Remember to structure your call.**

Most sales conversations can be structured the following way:

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Remember to structure your call. Most sales conversations can be structured the following way:

- Open the call and introduce yourself
- Set an agenda for the call. “The reason I’m calling is...”
- Ask questions
- Identify needs and opportunities
- Sell your solution
- Close, or gain commitment
- Upsell, or cross sell if appropriate
- Summarize what has been agreed
- Close in a positive, friendly way

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- **Practice your scripts with colleagues.** The more you practise the less you will need to rely on the actual script itself.
- **Keep refining your script and keep practicing.** Soon you will find you don't need it any more. However, go back periodically and practice using your script. We all fall into bad habits and need to consistently update and reassess our skills.

Also, feel free to pass this on to anyone you feel might benefit from improving their communication skills.

Good luck with your selling.

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This is a series of Training for your
Management, Sales & Office TEAM

Good Selling !



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