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www.queenofcoldcalling.com
“In comparing the number of new business meetings… the results are quite remarkable. Our Junior Brokers achieved an increase of 51% in new business meetings with prospective clients, resulting in a projected increase in total revenue of $1.1 million.”

Peter Hennessy, President
The Staubach Company

“In the four years I have been the CEO of ParishPay, we rarely have had someone impact our organization and improve our results as you have. Last year we had three inside sales staff members and this year we have two. Our results this year were 128 appointments set by phone in 3 months, as opposed to 45 last year. If anyone can do math, they can see the value of your input in a phone-based sales operation.”

Andrew Goldberger, CEO
ParishPay / InTuition

“Our new sales were up 23% this past year, and I am extremely happy with the outcome.”

Kathleen Henry, President
Mitchell Printing & Mailing

“Working with you has helped to develop a culture of selling at Affordable Solar Group that was previously missing. You’ve helped us become excited about selling again. Even more importantly, our Jan. numbers were up 16% over last year and we will likely double our numbers in Feb. compared to last year.”

Nestor Tarango, Sales Manager
Affordable Solar Group, LLC

 “…since your workshop, my team is consistently scheduling more and more new business appointments. By applying your techniques, I, personally, am nailing two to three appointments an hour!”

Chris Whiteside, Business Sales Manager
Sprint
“Before… my numbers looked like this: 150 dials, 30 conversations, and 5 sales. After… my numbers… were: 150 dials, 75 conversations, 25 sales. That’s a 50% conversion for dials to conversations and a 33% conversion of conversations to sales.”

Tessa Bannholzer
Complete Business Systems

“I was able to reduce the amount of objections and increase the appointment closing ratio…. Yesterday I was able to secure three appointments in one hour by practicing your methods.”

Ken Galanaugh
DSI Solutions Inc.

“I recently called six companies and was able to get four solid introductory appointments on my calendar with minimal effort! If I can keep up this pace I can make more money in less time.”

Tracy M. Brodd, Account Executive
American Identity

“Just used one of your techniques and it worked! …I’ve gotten immediate replies with apologies for not following up sooner!”

Jessica Brown
J Brown Enterprise

“…you taught me how to use the telephone to get appointments with prospects. I’m from the "timid" end of the spectrum when it comes to asking for anything from an appointment to an order. [Now]…I’m comfortable that I have an arsenal of techniques that will enable me to do it on the phone.”

Steve Blatman
Inkspot
“Wendy Weiss, The Queen of Cold Calling, has made the process of placing those hated calls a much easier and more understandable process. From explaining what to listen for in your call, to what the person on the other end really means, to how to get to the right person, Wendy explains it all.”

Greg Busch
LTSLeaderBoardStLouis.com

“If it wasn’t for Wendy Weiss I wouldn’t have half the leads I do. I’m definitely seeing results.”

Brett Maslin
Adams & Company Real Estate

“After meeting The Queen of Cold Calling I can now say that I feel like a king with the keys to the kingdom and the ability to get past any gatekeeper. Doors that were fortified have now been opened…”

Carl Salvato
Grubb & Ellis

“I honestly can’t wait to get out there and start making calls.”

Tony Proia
President, Electronic Solutions Associates
Wendy Weiss, known as The Queen of Cold Calling™, is an author, speaker, sales trainer, and sales coach. She is recognized as one of the leading authorities on lead generation, cold calling and new business development and she helps clients speed up their sales cycle, reach more prospects directly and generate more sales revenue. Her clients include Avon Products, ADP, Sprint and thousands of entrepreneurs throughout the country.

Wendy has been featured in the New York Times, BusinessWeek, Entrepreneur Magazine, Selling Power, Forbes, Inc and various other business and sales publications. She is the author of, Cold Calling for Women, 101 Cold Calling Tips for Building New Customers in a Down Economy and the Sales Winner’s Handbook: Essential Scripts and Strategies to Skyrocket Sales Performance.

She specializes in working with companies that want to increase sales revenue by generating new business and/or companies with under-performing sales teams. She has helped clients double and triple the number of new business appointments they can schedule resulting in a matching increase in sales.

Wendy is also a former ballet dancer who believes that everything she knows in life she learned in ballet class. Visit www.queenofcoldcalling.com to learn more about Wendy.
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Introduction

Welcome to *A Practical Guide to Getting Sales Teams to Prospect*. If you’re reading this right now you’re probably a sales executive, business owner, or entrepreneur managing a team of one or more sales professionals… and most likely too many members of your team are not as adept at finding new opportunities as you’d like them to be.

Most sales organizations find that they have anywhere from one to a handful of team members that are “hunters.” These are the people that are good at prospecting. They’re comfortable on the telephone and they know how to set appointments and/or find opportunities. And everyone else struggles.

In an effort to help those who are struggling to build their pipelines, management often will bring in a sales trainer to ‘motivate’ and give the team some ‘tips.’ While there might be a slight increase in prospecting activity after these types of sessions, typically these slight improvements are hard to sustain and things generally return to normal — that is, little prospecting activity — in a matter of weeks if not days. Motivation and tips are simply not enough to drive sustainable change.

This Guide is an introduction to what you must have in place to not only to increase prospecting activity but to ensure its effectiveness. Prospecting has changed. It is no longer enough to tell a struggling sales representative to make ever more dials. Activity is a component of success, but it is not the only component of success.

In addition, many, many sales representatives simply do not like to prospect by telephone. Certainly the concepts of cold calling and/or telephone prospecting have been so demonized that it’s entirely unsurprising that sales representatives are reluctant to pick up the telephone to speak with prospects they do not know.
Let’s Redefine Cold Calling

Why do we need to redefine cold calling? Because it is the basic skill set that one needs for telephone prospecting. No matter where one finds a lead, whether from a referral or networking or social media or a canvassing, at some point the sales representative will need to speak with that prospect on the telephone. If the sales representative does not have the necessary skills to convert that lead into an opportunity, it will not matter where the lead came from.

If you want your sales team to set more appointments and close more sales, the key is to help them get better at prospecting. With a redefinition of cold calling and the activity and process required to succeed, sales representatives are more likely to take the action required to fill their sales funnel.

Once you’ve read through this e-book, if you feel like you still need some additional help with this, I invite you to take advantage of my Cold Calling: Redefined self-study program that contains everything you need to get your team achieving maximum sales results. It’s a 4-part multimedia program designed so that your sales team will be able to put knowledge into action right away to uncover prospects and guide them through your sales cycle.

You can have instant access to this invaluable Insider’s Guide to doing business by phone – that means your team will be able to start using these techniques to generate leads, sales and appointments right away.
Part 1. Making Sales Representatives Successful at Prospecting

Most sales organizations struggle to find, train, and keep good sales people. Many end up in a constant cycle of recruiting new sales representatives, not because their business is growing but because they are losing people as fast as they bring them on board — usually within the first year and always after investing time and resources in hiring and training.

This first-year sales force turnover is very common and very costly, and too many sales organizations assume it’s inevitable. It is not. That’s why I’ve created this Practical Guide to Getting Sales Teams to Prospect to focus on proven, tested techniques that you as a manager can use to slow the attrition and maximize the success of the people you retain.

Here are some facts and figures on the cost of the revolving door of sales representatives, courtesy of Ed Navis of Full Spectrum HR. Ed is a nationally recognized speaker, author, and advisor, and the creator of PeopleThink™, a management approach that is based on state-of-the-art enterprise development know-how and proven human behavioral sciences. It helps companies strategically acquire, manage, and retain the best available talent.

The loss of any employee costs the company twice that person’s annual salary. This money is irretrievable. Some reasons that number is so high:

- Sales people who resign tend to take their books with them. For you, that means lost sales plus using resources to rebuild a book of business equivalent in financial value to the one that left with the departing employee.

- Managers and human resource recruiters spend many hours trying to replace someone who has left. Anyone who interviews candidates can commit approximately 40-100 hours of their time towards the search. An interviewer who makes $100,000 a year earns $52 an hour; so $52 x 100 hours = $5,200 to replace one person who has left.
When employees leave and collect unemployment, your unemployment insurance premium rises. In addition, studies show that employees who do not have another job when they leave experience more medical problems brought on by stress. That’s a direct hit to your health insurance premiums if they are using their COBRA benefits.

Add in the lost sales by the person who left.

Add in the cost of at least six months to ramp up a new salesperson.

Add in everything managers and recruiters do to attract new sales people: for instance the costs of advertising, networking, and promotional items.

And let’s not forget a surefire but little known axiom of organizational behavior: once a person resigns or is terminated, two of the four people closest to him will likely resign within the next year.

So many sales representatives leave in that first year because they are unable to quickly generate enough leads to build their sales pipeline. Without an adequate sales pipeline, representatives will never generate enough sales to meet or exceed their quota. Sales representatives who are not generating enough sales cannot pay their mortgage and car payments or put food on the table. It’s as simple as that.

New sales representatives want and need to start making money so they can pay their bills. Bringing in sales also gives new representatives the satisfaction and motivation to keep moving forward, to stick it out and keep selling. Conversely, not making sales puts pressure on both their personal budgets and their motivation, and this can quickly send that new representative spiraling downhill.
The problem starts at the very beginning of the sales process — with prospecting. There are only four ways to generate new potential sales opportunities:

1. **Marketing activities.** Most large sales organizations have marketing departments that function to generate qualified leads, to drive traffic to the company’s web site and/or to the company’s inside sales team. Companies with 100% commission-only sales representatives, however, often make the representative responsible for their own marketing.

2. **Leveraging (Referral selling):** Contacting existing customers and/or people within a representative’s circle of influence and asking for referrals. New representatives, by definition, will not have existing customers.

3. **Networking:** Joining leads and/or networking groups and/or using social networking sites/Web 2.0 resources. Networking can be done by either an experienced veteran or a new hire.

4. **Cold Calling.** Targeting potential customers and introducing oneself by telephone.

While all these activities will generate leads for sales, only one is directly under the control of a sales representative. The first three are essentially passive in that a representative who initiates the activity must then wait for someone else to take action — a prospect to call in or a customer or networking contact to come through with a referral. Because representatives have to wait for the results — that is, for prospects to come to them — these processes can take longer to generate opportunities.

Sales representatives who rely heavily on leads from marketing can struggle. While in some industries marketing produces many qualified opportunities, most sales organizations today are not in that position: the marketing process simply does not bring in enough qualified leads to fill the pipeline for all of their sales representatives.
Successful sales representatives who have been in the business for a long time can certainly leverage referrals, which is an excellent way to develop new business. On the other hand, a new sales representative by definition will not have existing customers to ask for referrals — unless, of course, this is someone you have recruited away from a competitor. While new representatives may sometimes be assigned existing accounts, a sales representative must first work the account before being in a position to ask for referrals. These types of house accounts usually are not enough to generate adequate sales revenue or an adequate payday for a new hire. In addition, most organizations quite naturally want new sales representatives to generate new business.

Networking and can be a great way to develop sales opportunities but usually are very time-consuming and indirect. Networking takes time. Your sales person has to cultivate relationships that can lead to the prospects they want to reach and that can take a long time to develop. A new representative by definition most likely will not have the necessary personal connections and so will have to start at the beginning to create them.

A sales representative who picks up the telephone to contact a prospect, however, goes directly to that prospect and initiates a conversation that can turn into a relationship, which turns into a sale. This is an active, targeted, and effective way to generate new business.

In today’s economy, cold calling is also one of the most efficient and economical ways to generate new business. It does not require expenditures on new equipment, infrastructure, or staff. All any member of your team needs is a qualified list, a solid process, a telephone — and telephone prospecting skills. And, bottom line, no matter where one finds a lead, at some point someone will most likely need to speak with the prospect on the telephone. That’s why the skills issue is so important.

I noted above that your sales representatives want and need to be paid quickly. They need the revenue and they need the satisfaction and motivation of successful sales to keep moving forward and to keep selling. Management also wants and needs a quick payoff. The sooner the new representative starts getting results the better for all concerned, and you will know that you’ve hired someone who will be a sound sales investment.
While your new hires may not get up to speed immediately in every aspect of your sales process, one piece they can learn very quickly is to prospect and schedule new business appointments. If you can help your new hires quickly become effective on the telephone and able to schedule appointments, you or another manager or more experienced representative can go on the appointment to mentor them through the next steps. This enables new representatives to become productive very quickly and then gives them targeted on-the-job training in how to handle the rest of the sales process.

For example, one of my clients instituted a business development team. These were all new hires who would schedule appointments for the more experienced sales representatives. This system got the new representatives to be productive very quickly, identified the ones who wouldn’t make it, and taught the ones that did enough about the company that they could eventually move up to a full sales position.

Two Halves of the Sales Process

Prospecting is often taught as a subset of Sales Skills. This is actually a mistake. The skills that a sales representative needs to meet with a prospect and to close a sale are different from the skills required to get a prospect on the telephone and gain that prospect’s agreement to meet.

This is a chart that outlines the difference between the skills needed for appointment-setting and the necessary skills when that representative goes on that appointment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting the Appointment</th>
<th>The Meeting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interruption</strong></td>
<td><strong>The Beginning</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Suspect</strong></td>
<td><strong>Beginning Repartee</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rapid</strong></td>
<td><strong>Pace of Exchange</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Hidden</strong></td>
<td><strong>Prospect Response</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Repetitive</strong></td>
<td><strong>Preparation</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These are the important points illustrated in the chart on the previous page:

**The Beginning**
- When a sales representative calls a prospect on the telephone to set up a meeting that sales representative is interrupting the prospect.
- When a sales representative goes on a scheduled appointment, the prospect is expecting the sales representative.

**Beginning Repartee**
- On a prospecting call, the prospect often views the caller with suspicion. Because the call is unexpected, prospects are caught off guard. They then want to know who is calling and why. This is a perfectly natural response and representatives must be prepared to handle it.
- When a sales representative meets with a prospect at a scheduled appointment, the tone at the beginning of that meeting is generally very collegial. The prospect has agreed to the meeting and so is open to having a conversation.

**Pace of Exchange**
- Prospecting calls are fast. They can be over before they even start. Prospects can be very quick to say “I’m not interested” and then hang up.
- At a scheduled meeting, on the other hand, the pace is measured. The prospect has carved out time in the calendar for the meeting and is willing to sit down and have an in-depth conversation.

**Prospect Response**
- Prospects are often unwilling on an introductory, prospecting telephone call to go in depth and give the representative information. They are not yet willing to fully engage.
- A prospect who made time to meet with a sales representative is much more likely to share concrete information. They are already engaged.

**Preparation**
- Once a sales representative has done their basic preparation for calling, the calls themselves are very repetitive.
- Each potential customer, however, has their own unique situation and their own unique concerns. These unique concerns can be discussed in depth on the appointment.
As you can see, these two different situations, setting the appointment vs. going on the appointment, are different and require different skill sets. What this means is that training for prospecting must be different from training for meeting with a prospect and closing sales. The Cold Calling: Redefined program can help you teach your team the skills they need to set appointments.

**The Four Elements of Prospecting**

Prospecting is a complex and sometimes counterintuitive process, a combination of Targeting, Skills, Process and Organization.

The challenge starts right at the beginning with the prospects that are targeted. A sales representative who does not fully understand the market they are trying to reach very well could end up making call after call and getting nowhere. In addition, too many get caught up in the “low-hanging fruit” syndrome. This syndrome manifests in two different ways:

1. Calling inappropriate prospects - prospects who are too small or who do not have the budget or no real need of your products or services.

2. Calling too low - calling Coordinators instead of Directors, Managers instead of Vice Presidents.

Sales Managers can best help their teams by clearly articulating the parameters of the “qualified prospect.” In this Guide I have given you exercises that you can use with your team to help them understand what makes a qualified prospect and to help them call only on highly qualified leads. The world’s best prospector calling the wrong people will not be productive so Targeting is a crucial element of success.

The Skill in prospecting is in knowing what to say to prospects to first gain their attention and then their agreement to an in-depth conversation and/or first appointment. New hires often struggle to get their prospect’s attention. They generally do not know how to talk about what they are selling in such a way that the prospect becomes interested and engaged.
In addition, veteran sales professionals who are still struggling with prospecting often do not understand the difference between the two halves of the process and try to use an approach to a new prospect that is actually better suited for conducting the meeting.

Management cannot rely on new representatives to become top performers without appropriate skills training. A young and talented athlete given the right training and coaching can eventually become an elite, top-performing professional athlete. By the same token, a smart and talented new hire given the right training and coaching can become a top-producing sales representative. Without training and coaching, however, that talented young athlete will probably not make the majors. It works the same way with your smart and talented new hires. You can find the help you need to train that new hire in appointment-setting skills with the *Cold Calling: Redefined* program.

By the same token, a successful closer may not have the appropriate skills for prospecting. They also may require training in this arena.

Managers can truly help their sales team by ensuring that they understand the value of whatever it is they are selling and how the product/service impacts customers for the better in some specific way. In this *Guide* I give you exercises you can do with your team to help them better understand the value that they are selling. This will enable your team to better command a prospect’s attention and produce a better outcome of any conversation with a prospect.

Representatives also need to know the best and most effective way to pursue a qualified prospect, or their Process (also, sometimes known as Best Practices). Too many companies leave this up to the individual sales representatives. That will work if your team is entirely made up of experienced veterans who are successful at setting appointments. It will not work with representatives who are new to sales and it will not work with veteran sales representatives who are not successful at appointment-setting.

To help your new and/or struggling team members succeed, and succeed quickly, you must define the process for them. Once your team has experience and is scheduling enough first appointments, then and only then should they define their own process. In this *Guide* I will give you exercises to help your team understand your company’s Standard Prospecting Processes.
Representatives also fail when they do not understand the goal of their conversations. This causes them to handle calls poorly. They try to have an in-depth conversation on the telephone — instead of setting the appointment and then having the in-depth conversation on the appointment. When this happens, they don’t ask the right questions, frequently offer far too much information, and are easily put off because they’re not fully prepared and do not understand what is needed to set the appointment. All of these mistakes can be avoided, and you will find help here to do so.

Bottom line: The goal of an appointment-setting call is to set the appointment. It is not to build a relationship, have an in-depth conversation, or show off how smart you are or how much research you’ve done. The goal of the call is only to schedule the meeting.

Finally, the Organization of sales is in having a system to track prospects and to ensure that no opportunity falls through the cracks. I am constantly surprised by the number of sales organizations that are operating without some type of system to track leads. Critical information about the effectiveness of your sales force and sales process can be lost if you’re not monitoring the workflow. Many options are available, from simple off-the-shelf programs to highly integrated and customized systems. We recommend (and use) the Klpz prospecting software made by Contact Science. This software was specifically created for appointment-setting.

Successful prospecting combines talking to the right people (Targeting) with the right message (Skills) and the most efficient and effective Process and then having the Organization to tie it all together to ensure that no opportunity falls through the cracks.

This Guide will help the sales manager help their new hires (and/or existing but struggling sales representatives) convert more dials into conversations (with decision-makers only!) and convert those conversations into appointments and opportunities.
Part II.  **Watch Out for the Ten Forms of Twisted Thinking**

One of my favorite books to recommend to clients is *The Feeling Good Handbook* by David D. Burns, M.D. This is a book about depression. The subtitle is: “Overcome depression, conquer anxiety, enjoy greater intimacy.”

Why am I recommending a book about depression to my clients? Because the book is really about cognitive behavioral therapy and is a commonsense look at changing the way people think (“cognition” means “thought”), and thus changing their behavior.

In *The Feeling Good Handbook* Dr. Burns lists “Ten Forms of Twisted Thinking” that occur when people are depressed. My years of training and coaching sales professionals have made it clear that people who are not depressed can fall into these twisted ways of thinking, too — and many, many sales professionals, unfortunately, employ “twisted thinking” when it comes to prospecting.

If your team members are caught in any of these twisted forms of thinking (and most of us are in one way or another at least some of the time) it will negatively impact their ability to pick up the phone and successfully pursue prospects. These types of twisted thinking affect a sales representative’s ability to handle rejection, maintain a positive attitude, learn new skills, solve problems and — bottom line — pick up the telephone to call a brand new prospect and successfully set up a first meeting.

You can judge for yourself. The following list of types of “Twisted Thinking” is from *The Feeling Good Handbook*, with my paraphrases and sales-related illustrations of each.

1.  **All-or-nothing thinking**

   All-or-nothing thinking is black or white. If a situation falls short of perfection, even just a little bit, then it’s a total failure.
An example of all-or-nothing thinking is the dieter who has one forbidden cookie and then proceeds to eat the entire bag since they’ve “already blown” their diet. Another example would be the sales people who, because they do not have the time to make 100 dials in a day, make no calls at all.

The key to changing this behavior is to help the representative set reasonable goals for the number of calls that can be accomplished on a daily basis. If the goal is not manageable, the representative will not make any calls, so take into account the representative’s other responsibilities. It is much better to get that representative to make a handful of productive dials every day than it is to wait until the day the representative has time to make 100 calls.

2. Overgeneralization

Overgeneralization is a matter of seeing a single negative event as a never-ending pattern of defeat. People who overgeneralize use words such as “always” or “never:” “Cold calling never works for me.” “Prospects always reject me.”

The key to helping a representative overcome overgeneralization is to first point it out to them and then challenge them to eliminate the words “always” and “never” from their vocabulary.

If they eliminate those words, the most they will ever be able to say is that a particular call didn’t work or that a particular prospect said “no.” Over time this representative may begin to be able to distinguish between the successful calls and the less-successful calls.

You can also have the representative use a low-tech reminder: Have them place a rubber band on their wrist and snap the rubber band whenever they hear themselves saying “always” or “never.” The rubber band snap doesn’t really hurt, but it will remind the representative to eliminate these words and to do so more quickly.
3. Mental filter

This means picking out a single negative detail and dwelling on it to the exclusion of everything else. An example: A representative says, “The gatekeeper’s job is to screen sales people out.” This mental filter locks the sales representative into a position that keeps them from being effective.

In this situation you want to try to broaden your representative’s thinking and help them find new ways to view existing situations. Ask, “Is it possible that a gatekeeper’s responsibility is also to put important calls through — and that includes your call?”

While they may not grasp this immediately, if you continue to help your team members find different ways of looking at apparent negatives, the more empowered they will be to move past them.

4. Discounting the positive

Discounting the positive is rejecting positive experiences by insisting they “don’t count.”

If a representative is doing well, they may tell themselves that it is a fluke, or really wasn’t good enough or that anyone else could have done as well or better.

This is a tough one — a huge self-esteem issue and the reverse of the “mental filter” problem listed above. In this instance, your goal is to keep the representative focused on what they have accomplished. Make them write it down. Post it on their wall or bulletin board; keep a notebook of achievements — anything to help that representative remember that they are having success.
5. Jumping to conclusions

Jumping to conclusions is about interpreting things negatively when there are no facts to support the negative conclusion. There are two categories here:

Mind reading: Representatives arbitrarily conclude that someone is reacting to them negatively, with no evidence to back that up. An example is the representative who, when told their prospect is in a meeting, interprets this to mean that the prospect does not want to speak with them or that the prospect is not interested.

Fortune telling: Representatives predict that things will turn out badly, claiming (again, without evidence) that prospects “are not interested,” or “I’m bothering them,” or “They’ll probably say ‘no’,” or “They probably already have a vendor.” In the representative’s mind there is no reason to call because they’ve already predicted what will happen.

Mind reading and fortune telling are very, very common in prospecting situations. Sales representatives may tell you in great detail what their prospects (whom they’ve never met or even had a conversation with) are thinking and what their prospects are going to do in the future. Do not let them get away with this. No one can know what a prospect is thinking; one can only know what the prospect says and does (or does not do).

When you have a representative who is prone to jumping to conclusions, do a reality check with them. Ask, “How do you know?” Make the representative explain in detail why they are so certain that the prospect does not want to speak with them. Ask, “Is it possible that your prospect really is in a meeting?”

This type of thinking will not change overnight, but if you consistently help your representative check reality before drawing conclusions, it will go a long way toward helping your representative succeed. The low-tech rubber band method can be a useful reminder here, too.
6. Magnification

Magnification means exaggerating the importance of your problems and shortcomings, and minimizing the importance of the desirable qualities.

In a sales representative, this takes the form of over-estimating the flaws in the company, product, or service, and under-estimating the importance of the desirable qualities of the company, product, or service.

An example of this would be representatives who believe they cannot successfully sell until every issue or challenge with a product or service is totally eliminated.

In these types of situations, knowing what the company is doing to overcome any problems and fully understanding the value that the company represents help sales representatives avoid magnification.

Another tactic for overcoming this kind of thinking is to ask the representative what is the worst that can happen? Play this out to the extreme. Frequently once someone realizes that the worst case is not really so bad, they are able to move forward.

7. Emotional reasoning

This is when someone assumes that their negative emotions necessarily reflect the way things really are. For many sales representatives, the thinking goes like this: “I am uncomfortable making cold calls,” therefore “People do not like cold calls,” therefore “Cold calling does not work.”

With Emotional Reasoning it is imperative to get to the heart of the negative emotions. If a representative is starting at “I am uncomfortable making cold calls,” the only way to change this is to help that representative overcome whatever discomfort stands in the way of them moving forward.

Here, the magic formula is simple: skills training, good processes, organization, and lots of practice.
8. “Should” statements

Representatives tell themselves that things should be the way they hope or want them to be. They’ll say, “I should have made that sale.” “Must”, “ought” and “have to” are similar problems: “I must make that sale,” “I ought to have made that sale,” “I have to make that sale.”

These types of statements that representatives direct against themselves lead to guilt and frustration. Directed against other people, they also can create anger and frustration. An example of this would be a representative thinking, “My prospect should call me back,” or “My prospect must call me back,” or “My prospect ought to call me back,” or “My prospect has to call me back.”

As with overgeneralization, the key to helping a representative overcome “Should” statements is to identify this problematic thinking and then challenge them to eliminate the words “should,” “must,” “ought” and “has to” from their vocabulary. Again, the rubber band is a nifty tool.

9. Labeling

Labeling is an extreme form of all-or-nothing thinking.

It is common for sales representatives to attach a negative label to themselves or to others. Example: a representative makes a mistake, or fails to get past a gatekeeper to a prospect, and then thinks “I’m a loser.”

It’s reasonable to say “I made a mistake,” since you can learn from that. Labeling is irrational, on the other hand, because what you do is not the same as who you are. These labels lead to anger, anxiety, frustration, and low self-esteem.

Representatives may also label others. When a prospect does not respond as they had hoped they may tell themselves, “He’s a jerk.” That makes them feel that the problem is with that prospect’s character instead of with their thinking or behavior – and changing a person’s character is a lot less likely than persuading them to change their mind on a buying decision.
This type of thinking makes the representative feel hostile and leaves little room for constructive communication, giving them nowhere to go. Asking “Why do you say that?” or “How do you know?” is a good way of helping representatives break through this barrier.

10. Personalization and blame

Representatives may hold themselves personally responsible for an occurrence that isn’t under their control. An appointment with a new prospect is cancelled because that prospect has left the company. The representative thinks, “If only I was better at prospecting, this wouldn’t happen.”

Some people think the opposite. They blame other people or their circumstances for their problems and overlook ways that they might be contributing to their own problem. “The marketing department gives me lousy leads,” for example, or “This prospect has totally unreasonable expectations.” Blame doesn’t usually work very well in making sales.

Reality checking is helpful here, too. This requires understanding why the representative feels they or someone else is to blame and helping them find another way to view the situation. Again the questions are, “Why do you say that?” or “How do you know?”

Any type of twisted thinking will keep your team members from functioning and selling as well as they otherwise might. Your goal as a manager should be to help them reach a neutral state.

Not everyone needs to love every aspect of selling. The idea, however, is to remove the emotion from the process of prospecting. If representatives can reach an emotionally neutral place, especially in the areas where they struggle, they can function and succeed. If you can help them get there, then you will have succeeded, too.

If you need help helping your team with twisted thinking, the Cold Calling: Redefined program helps sales representatives find a new way to think about prospecting. By going through the four modules of the program, representatives will learn to eliminate their own twisted thoughts and to prospect in neutral.
Part III. Assignments

Just as star athletes and performers routinely practice, your team will also need to systematically practice their sales skills. Representatives sometimes forget or get lazy, or maybe they weren’t fully on board the first time around. Sales professionals, like athletes and other performers, need reinforcement. That’s why I’ve included several exercises you can do with your salespeople. To make sure that your team stays in top form, you will probably want to return to these role-playing assignments from time to time.

Use your team meetings to share techniques and strategies. If a team member has discovered a new script, approach, or process that works, encourage them to share with the rest of the team and document that process and/or script so that you will always have it. Don’t forget the value of acknowledgement and rewards for this kind of successful innovation and practice, too.

All of the Assignments in this Manager’s Guide are meant to be repeated over time, so as you proceed, be sure to take the time to ensure that these new habits and skills have taken hold before moving onto the next assignment with your sales representatives.

Then step back and watch your team explode your sales, and watch your revenue skyrocket.

1. Targeting, the List & Qualified Prospects

It is vitally important that sales representatives understand what makes a qualified prospect — and even more importantly, what will disqualify a prospect. Too many sales representatives waste time chasing after inappropriate prospects who will never buy.

Help your team by clearly identifying the profile of your organization’s Ideal Customer and the Qualifying Parameters that your team can use to identify those potential Ideal Customers. If prospects do not meet your parameters, they are not qualified prospects. You don’t want your sales force to waste time trying to reach prospects who will not buy very much — or at all.
Creating your *Ideal Customer Profile* will help focus your team on targeting the best prospects. You may have several markets for the company products/services: in this case, you may need to create several profiles. By describing each profile as specifically as you can, you will increase the ability of your team to target and locate the most viable prospects in these markets.

Your customer profiles may break down by industry, by revenue, by number of employees, by geographic location… there are many possible criteria. The more specific you are about defining the characteristics of these *Ideal Customers*, the easier it will be for your sales team to find similar types of companies to prospect and sell to. Be sure that your customer profile includes the title or titles that will help your team members identify decision-makers. If yours is a complex sale involving conversations with many individuals on many different levels, identify those titles as well.

Your *Ideal Customer Profiles* will help you determine your *Qualifying Parameters*. These are the conditions that must be met for a prospect to be considered “Qualified.” Once you know your Ideal Customer it will be easy to establish these parameters, which should be concrete and crystal clear. It also will be extremely easy to put together a list of pre-qualified prospects. The Qualifying Parameters are what you use as your “Selects” in putting a list together. A lead that does not fit within the Qualifying Parameters is not a potential prospect. Period.

To keep the sales process moving forward, you will want your team to qualify prospects out. If during the course of a conversation with a prospect a representative learns something that would disqualify the prospect, you want to encourage that representative to move on. Most sales representatives are loathe to do this because hope springs eternal that one day these prospects will in fact buy. With skill and the right questions it is possible to fairly quickly ferret out which prospects are real prospects and worthy of continued contact and which will simply waste time.

Leads should be divided into A, B and C categories, with A being the most important, the leads where your team will find the most opportunity and/or that need nurturing because they will close soon. B leads are still good — they’re simply not of the same caliber as the A leads. C leads are small opportunities. These leads should be called only when your team has absolutely nothing better to do, or they can be used as practice.
When you are working with brand new representatives and/or representatives who are trying out new approaches, you will want to give them a list of less important leads to work on. Use C leads. This will be a practice list (be sure your representatives know that!) It will be low risk and low stress — the new person or new approach will not destroy any important leads and the representatives will be far less anxious about making their calls. Once, however, the representative has a handle on what they are doing, they should immediately start working with a more targeted list of A and B leads.

If your representatives are only calling highly targeted prospects and are intent on qualifying prospects out so that they continue to only speak with highly qualified prospects, your sales cycle will shorten and your sales revenue will go up.

**Assignment: Creating your Ideal Customer Profile**

In a team meeting have all the sales representatives collaborate on developing the Ideal Customer Profile. You may have more than one such profile, as I noted above, if there are several markets for your products/services.

Make sure that all elements of each profile are specific and are criteria that can be used to pre-qualify prospects. For example, “Company has a minimum of 100 employees” is a characteristic that can be researched and verified before a call is ever made. “Must be nice,” on the other hand, is not something that can be determined ahead of time.

Once your team has created the Ideal Customer Profile, have them use it to create the Qualifying Parameters. Again, depending on the number of markets your company has, there might be one set of parameters or several. Define the parameters for A, B and C prospects.

Gain your team’s agreement to focus only on prospects that match their Qualifying Parameters.

This process may very well take more than one meeting. Use as much time as you need to develop the Ideal Customer Profile(s), Qualifying Parameters, and your team’s buy-in on the process.
2. Skills & Scripts

Many companies spend a lot of time and money crafting a value proposition for their sale, yet too many sales representatives never actually use that value proposition in prospecting. Sometimes the value proposition is too complicated — the representatives don’t understand it and sometimes prospects don’t understand it, either.

Good value propositions focus on the benefit or value derived by the customer from the seller’s product or service. Frequently these benefits are intangible. For example, benefits like security, recognition, and loyalty might all be a part of a value proposition, yet none of them are particularly concrete. Sales representatives generally don’t like intangibles. They like concrete. That’s why so many of them feature-dump, that is go on and on and on about product or service features.

It is vitally important that team members understand the value they represent. And because so many of them like to start with features, that’s a good place for you to start as well.

Assignment: Features & Benefits

In a team meeting have your team list every feature of your product or service. Once the list is constructed, take each feature one by one and brainstorm answers to these questions:

- How does any individual feature serve the customer?
- What is the value or benefit of any individual feature to the customer?
- What are the good outcomes from particular features?
- What problems are eliminated by particular features?

Make sure that your team writes down the answers to these questions in simple language that anyone could understand. The rule is: If an 8-year-old wouldn’t understand, neither will your prospects.
I am not saying here that your prospects are dumb. What I am saying is that all prospects are incredibly busy, doing more with less, totally stressed out... you get the idea. The sales representative must be crystal clear. A prospect who does not understand what the representative is saying will not ask for an explanation. They will say “Not interested” and hang up.

**Assignment: What Are the Problems?**

Another way to think about this is: “What are the problems that prospects have that your product or service can help them with?” Brainstorm with your team and write down all of the answers or outcomes to problems. You’ll usually come up with somewhere between two to four answers. These answers, the solutions to challenges that customers have or the outcomes you are able to achieve for customers, can be used for introductions in prospecting calls and for voice mails or emails to get prospects to respond. (See the next Assignment.)

**Assignment: The Value-Based Introduction**

In a Team Meeting, role-play with your team so that when they are introducing themselves to a new prospect they will always lead with the benefit or value or outcome. 

Create a series of value-based introductions that representatives can use and make sure to add these to your standard Script Book. If you work in different markets, have your team identify introductions for each market. Generic, one-size-fits-all scripts do not work. What the sales representative says must be relevant to the person that they say it to. If you have differing markets, then you most likely need differing scripts.

**Assignment: Crafting the Introductory, Appointment-Setting Script**

Craft the key language that your new sales representatives will use to get in the door and to schedule that first appointment. Start with your Introductory/Appointment-Setting Script. Over time as representatives gain knowledge and skill they may tweak and/or change these scripts; as long as they are producing, that will be fine.
New representatives, however, if left to their own devices will almost always come up with language that is weak and unclear. While your team does not need to read scripts word for word, you want to provide them with the **keywords** and **phrases** that can grab and hold a prospect’s attention and allow them to ask for whatever comes next in the sales process.

For example, representatives who are making calls to schedule new business appointments are not closing in that call. This is a difficult concept for many new sales representatives to grasp. Left to their own devices, mostly because they don’t know any better, new representatives will use language that prospects may interpret as closing language. This will cause prospects to push back and refuse to schedule an appointment. Therefore, it is important that your representatives have a script that focuses on the goal of *setting the appointment*.

If your Process includes leaving Voice Mail messages, then create a formula for these as well. If you are able to create effective scripts and voice mail messages, your new hires will be productive far sooner than if left to figure out their own approach.

**Assignment: Create Your Script Book**

Create a Script Book for your team. Add the scripts that you have developed for new hires. You want to have all of the basic messaging in place so that new hires know exactly what to say and how to proceed. One way to start this process is to go to all your veterans, the ones that are successful at appointment-setting, and collect their scripts (this may take some wheedling). Work with your top producers as long as it takes to document their introductory appointment-setting scripts, voice mail scripts and emails along with their answers to objections and/or questions that prospects ask. You will end up with a series of scripts that you know have been tested and more importantly, that work.

Continue to add to your Team Script Book as you identify new approaches that work well — perhaps a new answer to a common objection, or a new way of highlighting a valuable feature of your product/service. You will find this Script Book will become an amazing resource for you and for your team.
Your Script Book is a living document that will grow over time and be an invaluable resource. You will use your Script Book to train new hires, to bring existing weak producers along, and to accelerate the productivity of your best people. Eventually you’ll wonder how you ever got along without it.

3. Process, Best Practices and Managing with Metrics

It’s always exciting to hire a new sales representative. However, many sales representatives are brought on board, given quite a lot of training on the actual product or service that they are selling, and then they are instructed to “go sell.” Quite often things go downhill from there.

To maximize the results for your team it is best to have a process in place that new representatives can follow. This process will include calling scripts; steps for prospecting, following up, leaving voice mails, and sending emails; and guidelines on how frequently to pursue a prospect and when to stop pursuing a prospect. All of these elements are your Standard Processes (also known as Best Practices).

Most sales organizations leave this in the hands of the representatives and/or individual managers. Depending on the representative or manager’s expertise, a standard process may develop — or representatives could end up winging it all the way.

If your team largely is made up of very experienced and successful sales professionals this may not be an issue. If your organization is hiring new sales people, however, especially those who are just beginning in sales, it is imperative to have a process that they can simply plug into.

There are two ways to develop your Standard Processes. One way is to look at all the metrics. Surprisingly, however, many companies do not look at metrics or even have a way to gather them (more on this later).
If this describes your organization, a stopgap way to develop **Standard Processes** is to look at your two or three top-performing sales representatives. Document what they are doing.

- How do they pursue prospects?
- How frequently do they pursue prospects?
- If they leave messages, what do they say in those messages?
- How frequently do they leave messages?
- If they send emails, what do they say in those emails?
- How frequently do they speak with prospects?
- How often do they follow-up with prospects?
- Overall, what are their sales activities?

You are trying to identify what your best producers do and then have your new sales people replicate that process. As Anthony Robbins said in the book Unlimited Power, the best way to be successful at something is to find someone who is successful at it and then do exactly what they do.

If you are in a position to be able to look at metrics, start with the prospecting metrics. These are comprised of **Dials**, **Conversations** (with the decision-maker only) and **Appointments**.

By tracking these numbers, you will know on average how many **Dials** a representative must make to have one **Conversation** with a decision-maker. It will also tell you how many decision-makers a representative must speak with in order for one of them to agree to an appointment.

Knowing these numbers will enable you to predict how many **Dials** any one representative must make in order to schedule a predetermined number of **Appointments**. It will also enable you to know where the representative needs help.

If they are making the **Dials** yet not having the **Conversations**, your representatives may need help with getting past gatekeepers or with what they are saying in voice mails and/or emails. If your representatives are having **Conversations** with decision-makers, but not scheduling **Appointments**, they may need more help with appointment-setting skills.
Metrics will also enable you to know how many times a representative should call a particular lead without connecting before letting that lead go (at least for a while). Knowing this number will allow your representatives to move on to pursuing new leads. Many sales representatives spend a disproportionate amount of time calling the same unreachable prospects over and over again. Their time would be better spent calling new prospects they might be able to reach.

We recommend (and use) Klpz prospecting software by Contact Science. This software counts Dials, Conversations and Appointments and is far more efficient for prospecting than any other system we have seen. Klpz also synchs with most of the popular CRM systems, so that it is quite easy to move data back and forth as needed.

Click here to download the complimentary, white paper Why Your CRM Process is Destroying Your Team’s Prospecting and How to Fix It by Bob Howard, President of Contact Science.

Knowing the metrics will enable you to predict with a fair degree of accuracy what your team needs to be doing to generate enough first appointments or opportunities to fill their pipeline. In addition, knowing the metrics will enable you to know what actually works. If for example, one representative is using a voice mail script that consistently gets prospects to return phone calls, that is important information. If you do not know how many voice mails messages were left and how many prospects returned phone calls then you cannot tell if a particular message converts better than any other message. If you are tracking your results and looking at the numbers, over time it becomes very clear what works and what your representatives should be saying and doing.

Depending on what you are selling, your company’s new business development process may be very straightforward, or very complex with multiple prospects to reach and speak with. You want to ensure that your new representatives totally understand that process, and the goal for each step along the way, before they get on the telephone.

If you are able to clearly define the sales process and the goals for each step in the process and can craft some basic language (scripts) to help your team execute the process, they will be up and running and productive far sooner than if they are left to find their own way.
Assignment: Document the Process

Document the process you’d like new representatives to follow when pursuing a new target. Again, you may find it helpful to begin by looking at your two or three top-performing sales representatives and by using their processes to outline your prospecting process. The process questions you want to answer include:

- How many times should a representative call any single target?
- How often should a representative call any single target?
- If the representative doesn’t reach the target, should s/he leave a voice mail message?
- If yes, what should the message be?
- How many voice mail messages should the representative leave?
- How often should the representative leave messages?
- If the representative doesn’t reach the target, should s/he send an email?
- If yes, what should it say?
- How many emails should the representative send?
- How often should the representative send an email?
- How should a representative follow up with the target after an initial conversation?
- When should a representative follow up with the target after an initial conversation?
- How often should a representative follow up with the target after an initial conversation?
- What should the sales representative do with that name if they are never able to connect with the target?
- Should the target be called again?
- If so, when? How often?

These are all process questions. And when you say to a new sales representative,”“Go make some prospecting calls,” you are actually asking them to make all of the above decisions. Unfortunately, most new hires are not equipped to make these decisions and so they struggle. By making all of these decisions ahead of time you will be able to provide a newly hired sales representative with the map they need to be successful.
4. Training your Team

The easiest way to train a sales team is to start right when they are hired. At that time, your new representatives are the most open and willing they will ever be. That is the time to start them on the right track, so you want to have your processes and scripts already in place.

When it comes to experienced representatives, however, it can be a different story.

Sales trainers often say that the biggest enemy of sales is the status quo. We are usually referring to prospects: the idea is that most people find it to be very difficult to let go of what they are familiar with (even if it’s not working for them), and so it is frequently difficult to persuade a prospect to make a change.

What is interesting is that the same is also true of anyone in sales. The biggest enemy to achieving your team’s sales goals is the status quo — your team’s status quo, which is made up of each individual sales representative’s familiar ways of doing things. That is why it is frequently so difficult to get experienced representatives to do anything other than what they are used to doing.

Using metrics will go a long way toward encouraging representatives to change their habits. If you can show an experienced representative that the numbers prove a certain process or certain script works better than another process or script, this may encourage that experienced representative to try something new.

Successful people usually are open to improvements — as long as they can be convinced that the change will make them more successful. Social proof is also a way to instigate change. Getting one or more of your top producers on board with the change frequently will serve to bring others along.
Introducing a process that will save representatives time and/or aggravation and stress can go a long way toward getting buy-in for change. For example, the Klpz software by Contact Science mentioned earlier is an extremely efficient system that can significantly shorten the amount of time that representatives spend prospecting. They can make approximately double the number of calls as they would using a standard CRM, or get the same number of calls done in half the time. Once representatives understand this, most will jump at the opportunity to make their prospecting — and their lives — easier.

Changes in process or approaches for experienced people need to be made incrementally. You will experience enormous push-back if you try to change everything at once, so go step by step until the changes you want to implement are all accomplished.

The way to get sales people, whether new or experienced, to change what they are saying on the telephone is to do role-playing with them. While many representatives dislike role-playing, it is the only way to get new scripts engrained into your sales team so that they use these scripts automatically.

Elite athletes go to practice and work with a coach. They practice the elements of their sport over and over in order to create “muscle memory.” Muscle memory is practicing something over and over and over again until it simply becomes a part of you and the behavior becomes automatic. A star pitcher, for example, does not have to think about how to hold the ball correctly. That pitcher has practiced holding and pitching the ball so many times that it is simply automatic.

This is exactly how it works in sales role playing. When your team members are on the phone with a prospect they will not have the time to think back to the new script or look it up and then say the right things. Conversations simply happen too fast for that. Instead, your team should have the “muscle memory” of the scripts that they have practiced over and over again. This will allow them to answer appropriately with the correct script without any worry or hesitation.

In many of our training sessions we conduct “Rapid Role Play.” We take all of the most commonly asked questions and most commonly heard objections and role-play them. We do this in a group setting and everyone participates.
The team leader picks someone in the group and gives them a question or objection. That participant must answer exactly as they would if they heard that question or objection from a prospect.

The team leader then moves on and asks another participant another question or objection, and so on. This is a very effective way of drilling responses so that they become ‘muscle memory.’

**Assignment: Creating Telephone Theater.**

In a Team Meeting ask your representatives to go through the *Introductory/ Appointment-Setting Script* sentence by sentence. Ask them to:

- Identify the point made in the sentence and what they are trying to accomplish with that sentence. (If no one can come up with a good reason to have a particular sentence in the script, it probably shouldn’t be there.)

- Ask them to identify the most important word or words in the sentence they are reviewing.

- Then ask them individually to say the line from the script, giving those important words the inflection that conveys the meaning they want it to have when speaking with a prospect.

- Go on to the next sentence and repeat.

- While you are doing this exercise, if you can, record the participants and play the audio back for them so that they can hear how they sound. This is an invaluable tool for creating change and a powerful telephone presence.

This Assignment is designed to help the representative stay conversational and at the same time be able to engage their prospect and make the points they need to make in a strong and expressive manner. Once they have gone through the script line by line have them go through the entire script with the same type of delivery they have been practicing. Have one of the other participants role play as the prospect.
Assignment: Voice Mail

If your Process includes voice mail scripts, repeat the previous assignment with all of the voice mail messages. This will enable your team to sound strong, confident, and engaging even on voice mail. This will encourage prospects to return calls.

Assignment: Gatekeeper Scripts

If you have your own scripts to bypass gatekeepers, by all means use them for this exercise. Otherwise, use the Gatekeeper scripts exactly as written in the self-study program, *Cold Calling: Redefined* program. In a team meeting, role-play the various possible permutations of the Gatekeeper scripts.

In order to bypass gatekeepers, the representative’s delivery must be strong and confident. Any hesitation either in the words or delivery may well cause the representative to miss the opportunity to speak with the prospect on that call. If possible, record these sessions as well.

Assignment: Handling Objections

The best way that we have found to role-play handling objections is to use “Rapid Role Play.” Take all of the most commonly asked questions and most commonly heard objections and list them along with the responses. Use this as a starting point.

Document all of the questions and/or objections that your team members are likely to hear along with your responses to those questions and objections. Make copies of all of the questions, answers, objections, and responses and give a copy to each team member.

In your team meeting, pick someone in the group and give them a question or objection. That participant must answer exactly as they would if they heard that question or objection from a prospect.

Monitor this, because your team members will want to say, “I would say something about…” or “I would say something like…” That won’t do. They must respond exactly as they would when speaking with a real prospect.
If they are correct, move on. If they do not know the response and/or their answer is weak, give them the appropriate answer and then move on to ask another participant another question or objection. Repeat as time permits until each participant has had at least one chance to role play.

5. Keeping your Team Accountable

Sales people, by nature, tend to be fairly independent. They like to do their own thing. And they generally don’t like to follow rules. They frequently want to make up their own rules as they go along. They may think your rules are unnecessary and unreasonable. Sometimes working with sales people is like herding cats.

It is important, however, to keep your team accountable. Managing with metrics will help. Tracking what your team is doing will go a long way towards helping your team meet and exceed their sales goals.

The basic unit of any telephone accountability system is the Dial. Prospecting software like the Contact Science Klpz software recommended earlier counts Dials, Conversations and Appointments. It is automatic and does not rely on the individual sales representative to track this information.

Relying on your team to manually keep track of their dials and conversations with prospects is a mistake. Typically, they simply will not do it; it takes time and sales representatives want to move on to the next dial. They will often skip recording a dial or a conversation and simply fill in a “guesstimate” later. If you ask them about their dials, they will always overestimate the number of dials and conversations. This is simply because prospecting is hard work and it feels like they’ve done more than they’ve actually accomplished. The only way to keep your team accountable for dials is to have an automatic system that will track for them.
Another way of helping to keep your team accountable is to meet with the individual representatives on a regular basis, at least once per month. Help them set goals — not just for sales closed but especially a weekly goal for dials. (If your team member is making their dials but not having enough conversations you will need to work with that team member on gatekeeper skills and/or voice mail and email. If your team member is having conversations but not setting enough appointments, then you must work with that team member on their conversation/appointment-setting skills.) Make those goals both short term and long term. Have them agree to and sign off on every goal that is set.

Check the status of those short-term goals at every meeting and either renew those particular goals if they were not accomplished and/or if the representative needs more time, or add new goals as appropriate. Check the long-term goals at least quarterly. This way nothing will fall through the cracks and you will have a record of what the representative is doing and has committed to doing.

In your individual meetings with your team members work with them on the areas where they most need help. Representatives are sometimes hesitant to speak out about their struggles in team meetings. They frequently do not want to look weak or foolish in front of their peers so this is an opportunity to ensure your representatives get all of the help they need.

**Assignment: Team Notebooks**

Have each of your team members maintain a notebook as they make calls. They should use the notebook to write down questions that come up as they are working. People always have questions that come up, especially when they are new. The questions could be about the product/service or they could be about the best way to handle a particular prospecting scenario.

Tell your team members to write down every question. The representatives can then either bring up the questions during team meetings or in their individual meeting with you. By writing things down as they occur the representative will be sure to get all of their questions answered quickly.
Assignment: FAQ’s

If you see the same question coming up time after time with new hires create FAQ’s – Frequently Asked Questions, documentation that you can give to your new team members. Expect, however, that you may find yourself repeating what is already on the FAQ. Some people need to hear things more than once.

Assignment: Where They Get Stuck

Have your team members record in their notebooks any prospect interactions where they got stuck. As soon as they hang up, they should note down as clearly as possible what happened and what they think went wrong. This is something that can be worked on either in a team meeting or individually. Have all of your representatives do this: this way no one will feel singled out. Over time, of course, your representatives will face fewer sales situations that stump them.

I know that you may be saying to yourself, “Won’t keeping a notebook and writing everything down get in the way of the sales process? Won’t this slow my team down?”

The answer is, of course it will slow things down — at first. At the beginning there are always more questions than action. Over time, however, as a representative’s skills and experience grow they will have fewer questions and fewer occasions when they are stuck. The effect of recording these things will be to focus their efforts to improve. The notebook is a great training tool that will help get representatives up to speed quickly, and help them remain effective over time.
All of the Assignments in this Manager’s Guide are meant to be repeated over time as it takes time for new habits to form. Your team may tell you that they already know some of these things. That may be true. There is a huge difference, however, between knowing something and implementing it. As an example, how many people “know” that they should lose weight, or stop smoking, or go to the gym… and yet do not do so? “Knowing” is never enough.

Another example of this is in sports. When a team is continually losing, at the end of the season the owners will fire the coach. They’ll hire a new coach, with much fanfare and hoopla, and then the new coach will start to work with the team. What is the first thing that new coach will do? Go back to basics.

Just as star athletes and performers routinely practice so your team will also need to routinely practice their telephone prospecting skills. From time to time, you likely will need to return to many of these assignments to make sure that your team stays in top form.

Make sure to use your team meetings to share techniques and strategies. If a team member has discovered a new script, approach or process that works ask them to share with the rest of the team. Document that process and/or script in your Script Book so that you will always have it.

Then step back and watch your team explode your sales and watch your sales revenue sky rocket.
A final note from Wendy

Turn Your Team into a Prospecting Dream Team

Most organizations have a handful of reps who are “hunters” – people who are good at prospecting. They’re comfortable on the phone and they know how to set appointments and find opportunities. Everyone else struggles.

If you want to get every member of your team setting more appointments and closing more sales, the key is to get them better at prospecting. To do that, you need to take advantage of all the new techniques. That’s why I’ve redefined cold calling to make it work for today’s sales teams. In this online training course, I show your team how to build their pipeline:

- Breeze past gatekeepers, voice mail, and email barriers
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Free White Paper:

Why Your CRM Process is Destroying Your Team’s Prospecting and How to Fix It

If your company is like most, you are probably using your CRM system to power your sales team’s prospecting and appointment setting.

A study by Contact Science indicates that to prospect 10 leads using a popular CRM system such as Salesforce, Goldmine or Act! takes over 45 minutes and requires the rep to make over 260 clicks on more than 126 screens!

Is it any wonder that your team isn’t hitting their prospecting goals?

The white paper Why Your CRM Process is Destroying Your Team’s Prospecting and How to Fix It explores what it takes to create a sustainable prospecting program, including how to ensure adoption by your team, how to easily and accurately measure the program, and how you can use those metrics to analyze and improve your team’s performance.

Download your free copy of this white paper and learn:

- Why you should never use CRM to drive your team’s appointment-setting
- Where manager-rep interaction is most critical in the sales cycle
- Key performance indicators for telephone prospecting
- The Blind Spot in appointment-setting
- Where and when to course correct

Click here to download your copy now