

# The Opening Statement

Nothing is more important to prospecting (other than actually doing it) than the quality of your opening statement. In person or over the phone, windows of attention are typically slammed shut in less than 10 seconds. This means you have to maximize the impact of every word, syllable and pause in your lead off statements. They need to be compelling to the extreme degree.

Remember, it's very likely that the people you'll be trying to reach are also being approached by many others each day (competitors of yours and not). A powerful, compelling, and practiced opening statement can launch many sales opportunities for you where a competitor's lack of preparation can leave them standing still.

**Objective** – create immediate interest for further discussion... engage the prospect

**Method** - work through the following using pen to paper or fingers to keyboard...

## **How do my customers benefit when they buy my product/ service?**

If you sell to consumers, include the potential emotional added benefits of being liked, respected, more attractive, etc. if these benefits exist. If you sell to businesses, be sure to include the emotional benefits to the purchasing customer (the decision maker) in addition to the more specific benefits realized by the company (a good buy or product implementation can be the road to promotion or status within an organization).

Build several opening statements for the different scenarios you might face (e.g., catching a decision maker without a screener, catching a decision maker "on their way out the door", delivering the opening statement to a screener who insists on knowing "what it is in reference to?", for voice mail, etc.)... Address each of the following in whatever order seems most appropriate for your particular sales world (just make sure the benefit to your prospect is mentioned within the first 10 seconds)...

- who you are
- where you're from (i.e. company name)
- what you sell (in very simple terms)
- how your prospect will benefit from your product or service
- a question to gauge interest of the prospect

### **Keep in mind**

- maximize every word, syllable and pause
- the opening statement is not meant to close a prospect
- never leave a misleading or vague voice mail message- hit them with your complete and prepared opening (it should be short enough)
- never use industry jargon or unnecessary thousand dollar words
- avoid vagueness

### **Words to consider using in your opening statement**

- maximize, increase, grow [sales, customer retention, productivity, etc.]
- minimize, reduce, decrease, eliminate [expenses, customer service challenges, diversions, etc.]
- profit from
- specific, specifically
- save, conserve
- accumulate, acquire
- prevent
- fully
- immediate, now

### **phrases to avoid in your opening statement**

These phrases may be used at other times during the sales process, but they have no place in the opening statement because they do not create immediate attention or encourage the prospect to engage with you and therefore can take away from the initial attention allotted by the prospect.

- How are you today?
- I'd like to learn a little more about your business to determine...
- We're the leading provider of...
- We work with several of your competitors...
- I'd like to see if there are some ways we might work together
- Is now a good time to talk?
- Did I catch you at a bad time?

### **sample opening statements**

Hi, [first name]... We provide [product/ service] in order to help people [take advantage of, minimize, maximize, prevent, etc.] [something of importance]... I'm calling to see if this might be helpful to [you/ and of your clients]...

Hi, [first name]... This is [sales name] with [company name]... We provide [product/ service] in order to help companies minimize their [whatever] expenses and maximize monthly sales revenue... I'm calling to see if this might be valuable to you and your team...

Hi, [first name]... [sales name] with [company name]... We help companies fully profit from their existing resources through our [product/ service] that [does/ has/ have whatever differentiating point or feature]... I'm calling to see if you'd be interested in discussing how it might help your [whatever] efforts/ initiatives...

Hi, [first name]... [sales name], [company name]... We deliver [product/ service] which might be able to save you more than [specific percentage] on your [whatever] expenses... Would you be interested in discussing how it might fit into your environment?