

Outbound Cold Calling Script 2024



Introduction

Cold-calling is both an art and a science. Apollo's accuracy with cell phone numbers in North America provides a huge opportunity to have multiple live conversations per day with prospects. Let's face facts: no-one likes doing cold-calls. In fact, as prospectors we probably dislike cold-calling as much as we dislike receiving them! That said, when performed well, they are the most powerful weapon in a salesperson's armory. A great cold-call needs a little bit of art (charisma, confidence, quick-thinking) and a little bit of science (good preparation, a concise opener, a strong value proposition). This document aims to match the art with the science to give SDRs the best chance of success on the phones.

Part 1: The Pre-Call Checklist

If you fail to prepare, prepare to fail. Due diligence is vital before hitting dial. There are many data points that will help you in your conversations. You must be armed with these. Information about the person you're about to call, the company, the historical interactions between the two companies, the industry, their use case and so on. If we aren't taking a few minutes to run through the following list before every call, we will not reach our potential.

1. **Open the contact Sales Navigator page. What do they do?**
2. **Open the company Sales Navigator page. How do they generate revenue?**
3. **Look for the company in the CRM. Have we had any previous Opps? Click on the Activity tab and see if there's anyone tied to previous conversations that we've had with them.**
4. **How many employees does the company have?**
5. **How do you pronounce the company & prospect name?**
6. **Is your introduction prepared? Have you checked their time zone?**
7. **Are you actually ready to have a conversation with a human being?**

Aim to make fewer, more high-quality calls. Aim not to have more conversations, but to have *better* conversations. We do this by preparing in the right way and making sure that we have all the above points nailed before we pick up the phone. Set yourself up for success.

Part 2: The Introduction

You never get a second chance to make a first impression. You must speak confidently and offer some value in the first 5-10 seconds of the call or you will lose the prospect. Therefore, the best greetings are short, formulaic and to the point. Introductions like: “Hi this is Joe with [Company], how’s it going?” are very weak. You will likely confuse (at first), and then annoy the person on the other end of the phone once they realize this is a cold-call. The aim should be to provide immediate value as soon as they pick up.

The following is an example of a strong opening greeting:

SDR: Hi, this is Joe calling with [Company]. We provide [Service] to [Types of companies] resulting in [Value]. Do you have a couple of minutes to chat?

Let’s look at Win-Win Sales Development. How would we sell the services of Win-Win using the above formula?

SDR: Hi, this is Joe calling with Win-Win Sales Development. We provide experienced, outsourced SDRs to US companies in high salary areas, helping them to drastically cut their cost per new opportunity. Do you have a minute to chat?

Note: Tone is everything. Prospects will match your energy. You may have already made 20 unanswered calls before this one, but you must be ready to speak clearly and enthusiastically if you want the prospect to be interested in what you have to say.

Part 3: The Inevitable First Objection

Once the recipient realizes this is a cold-call, you will almost always encounter the first objection. Most people say they’re in the middle of something, you’ve called at a bad time or that they’re heading into a meeting. These are some of the easiest objections to overcome!

SDR: Ha, you know, I must have the worst luck in the world. You’re the 10th person I’ve called today that’s just heading into a meeting! You know I really just need 20 seconds of your time to tell you why I’m calling and you can tell me if it’s worth me calling you back later today or not.

SDR: Look, I get it, you don’t like receiving cold-calls. Trust me, I don’t exactly love doing them either. I’m convinced what I have will be of value to you, I really just need 20 seconds of your time to explain why I’m calling and you can tell me if it’s relevant to you or not.

Let them talk and if they push back again, use your intuition to gauge the situation. The worst case outcome should be that you agree on a time to call back and you repeat your name and why you are calling to leave them in no doubt.

The best case and most likely outcome is that they agree to let you continue.

Part 4: Expand On Why Them, Why Now

You've now gained their permission to pitch them on your product. You are no longer annoying them (much). You are equals in the conversation and the rest of the conversation should be treated as so. Now, expand on the value proposition in your introductory greeting and actively listen to what the prospect says. In the case of Win-Win Sales Development, that might look something like the following:

SDR: [Name], the average base salary for an enterprise SDR in New York City is almost \$80,000. When you add commission and benefits, it's upwards of six figures. If that SDR sources three new opportunities per month, each opp costs the company just under \$3,000. Win-Win Sales Development places native English-speaking, remote SDRs with companies in the US looking to cut their opportunity cost in half. Is that something [company] would like to do?

Keep your value proposition to no more than 30 seconds.

Part 5: Think On Your Feet

The next part of the conversation can be a little more free-flowing. You should listen to what the prospect has to say and take notes. The first goal is to book a sales call *if there is a fit*, but the second goal is to extract valuable information from the prospect and commit that to your CRM to make future prospecting easier! Who is the ultimate decision maker? Are they using a solution already? If so, how long is the contract and are they happy with the service?

On the flip-side, depending on how the person on the phone reacts, you may have to answer some questions yourself as the prospect looks to find out more about your company's service. This is a great sign as it means something about your value proposition resonated with them.

If they say they are using a competitor: Ask them questions! How long is the contract? Are they happy with the product? Are they happy with the support? Does their product provide features X or Y? If so, do they work well? Try to uncover some pain. Is there a part of their service that doesn't quite work as well as they'd like it to and could we solve that problem for them?

If they ask technical questions: Use it as a chance to pivot. "Wow you've stumped me there. I'd have to refer to one of our Solutions Engineers to answer technical questions like that as I wouldn't want to give you a half-answer on the spot. You know it might be a good idea for you to talk, how about I connect you both next week?"

If they say they don't have any budget: Empathize, say that's something you've been hearing a lot lately. Show them how existing low-budget customers have started working with you and how it's actually led to incremental revenue and cost saving.

Can you send me an email with more information?: “Yes, of course I can send you an email with more information. Can you give me your top three things you’d like to see in that email?” As they list the things they’d like to see, start to discuss them a little and see if they are responsive to that.

I’m not the Decision Maker on this: “Ah ok, no problem, appreciate your honesty! I was also planning to call [Person A and Person B] about this. Which of those would be the best contact, or is it someone different entirely?”

Part 6: ABC (Always Be Closing)

You’ve made it this far and that is no mean feat! Getting to this point means that you’ve provided a strong introductory greeting, offered clear value, qualified the company and prospect and potentially answered some on-the-spot questions. Well done. Now the next step, if it makes sense, is to schedule a follow up call, usually with an AE/Sales Manager. Pivoting to a follow up call is usually as simple as the following:

SDR: I’m aware that I’ve called you out of the blue here and I want to be respectful of your time. It seems like there could be a good fit and I think it would at least warrant a follow up conversation where we can present [Company] in more detail and answer any questions you have about the work we’re doing in your industry. Is that something you’d be open to?

In most cases the answer to this question will be yes. On rare occasions there could be some additional work required. For example, the prospect might choose this moment to request an email rather than a call. If that’s the case, agree to send an email as per the top of this page, but also suggest putting a placeholder on the calendar so you can talk the content through.

Some important tips/admin points for when booking a follow-up sales call.

1. If inviting an AE/Sales Manager to the follow up call, make sure you have their schedule open in front of you on a separate tab. Ideally you’ll want to have this open before you even start making dials
2. Check where the prospect is located and make sure that you choose a time in their timezone, at a time that your AE/Sales Manager is also free!
3. Even if you are 99% sure you have the correct email address for the prospect, reconfirm this with them and commit any changes to your CRM
4. After the call has finished, promptly send the prospect the invite (this can be done during the call itself if you are a pro!) and also send a follow up email introducing the AE/Sales Manager (cc’d) and making the prospect aware that they’ll be joining the call too.

Following these steps will hugely increase your chances of being successful when making cold-calls over the long-term. The science of cold-calling is simply putting yourself in the best position possible by being as well prepared as you can. By ensuring this, your artistic side (charisma, confidence and quick-thinking) will naturally flourish.