

## The skills to 'set vs run' appointments



Most appointment making techniques have us concentrate the majority of our effort on the opening message and then teach us to handle those first objections we receive with logic. The problem with that approach is that it doesn't work as well as we think it should. There is no logic in the thought process a target goes through when they realize they have been 'cold called:' just a negative reaction.

This 'lack of logic' is also why it is not possible to write an 'opening message' that will result in a YES answer to the first request for an appointment.

That is because of two operative 'ground rules' our targets play by:

1. Practically none of the targets called are in the market for what we are selling when we call them... so they don't think they **need** to talk to us.
2. No matter when we call, we are interrupting the target...so they don't **want** to talk to us.

Until we get a target beyond the initial 'knee jerk' reaction of saying anything (including lying to us) to get us off the phone, logic has no place in **their** thinking. Callers need a technique that acknowledges this reality of human nature and provides a professional way to get the target to stop thinking about how to get us off the phone for a moment and open their mind to a short conversation.

Whether the calls are to warm leads, networking contacts, referrals, or a cold list, improving the skill to handle a NO response will increase Effectiveness; and therefore the flow of prospects into the pipeline.

The most common push backs and questions include:

1. Too busy
2. Not Interested
3. Happy Now
4. Send me some literature

Many callers fail because they try to use skills that are not appropriate. This chart lists areas in the exchange that suggest the need for separate skills to set appointments than needed to run one.

The skills to **set an appointment** are much different from the skills to **run an appointment**, because the environment is very different. Especially in the effort by the target to end the conversation quickly.

Setting an Appointment		Running an Appointment
Adversarial	<i>Beginning Repartee</i>	Collegial
Rapid	<i>Pace of the exchange</i>	Measured
Knee Jerk & Dishonest	<i>Responses from target</i>	Business logic
Memorize the Technique	<i>Preparation to succeed</i>	Can think on feet

This is also why 'role play' to learn the skill is so important. The caller's response to the NO must be automatic, natural and confidently delivered. One cannot wing this and win; and, it is 'too expensive' to learn while playing.

Experienced field sales reps need to learn that their 'selling skills' are counter-productive to setting appointments, why those skills don't work and what they need to do differently.