

Overcoming Call Reluctance

“I've been absolutely terrified every moment of my life - and I've never let it keep me from doing a single thing I wanted to do.” Georgia O’Keeffe, 20th-century American Artist and Painter

You may not feel what Georgia O’Keeffe is describing here, but if you are like many salespeople, you probably experience varying degrees of call reluctance. Call reluctance is the fear, unwillingness, or hesitancy salespeople experience when they think about reaching out to customers whether they are cold calls or repeat calls. This can range from mild to severe. It includes prospecting by phone, in-person canvassing, networking, or asking for referrals. Industries like insurance and financial services that depend on calling activity have invested heavily in studying this phenomenon. I see evidence of call reluctance weekly in our seminars.

Call reluctance is either a problem of will or skill. If it is a problem of will, it includes the fear of rejection, the belief that cold calling takes too much effort, or the attitude that it is not a viable way to build your business. If it is a problem of skill, it means that you have never been taught an effective way of cold calling. Simply, you lack the necessary skills to make this a viable business-building strategy. If it is a problem of will, consider the possibility that you can build your business by reaching out to prospects. Rejection is highly overrated. How can anyone reject you personally when they really don’t know you? All they are rejecting is your messaging. Do some serious soul-searching, and ask yourself why you do not like reaching out to prospects.

If it is a problem of skill, you can learn how to canvass by phone or in-person. Reaching out to prospects is still a viable way to build your business. Our 2014 study of calling habits found that 80% of salespeople still cold call as a way to fill their pipelines. A successful cold-calling campaign requires planning, practice, and persistence. Attend one of our 2015 seminars, and we will teach you how to reach out to your prospects.

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