

# Effective Promotion with the Use of Cold Calls

By Rachel Goldstein

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Cold calls tend to be the least effective form of marketing for consultants. But, if implemented effectively "cold calls" can land you a gig, maybe even your first gig. The trick is to place yourself in the shoes of the prospect on the other end of the line. Anyone can pull it off with a little bit of strategy.

Before you can start dialing numbers, you will need to do a little research. What is your area of expertise? What businesses or individuals would benefit from your service? Try to think of every possible use of your service. Write down all of these possibilities. Once you have figured out who all of your clients could be, now you need to compile a list of:

1. Name
2. Company Name
3. Address
4. Phone Number

You should keep all of this gathered information in a database, Rolodex, or on index cards. (I recommend writing down the information on large index cards. When you find a prospective client, take their card with you and write down personal information on the back of this card. This way, next time you visit the client, you can ask him how his sick aunt is feeling.)

Some good resources for you to use in your search are:

1. Yellow Pages
2. Chamber of Commerce
3. Government - Department of Small Business Development
4. Trade Associations
5. Search Engines
6. Purchased Lists

There are not many people that enjoy cold calling, so I assume that you might be a little worried about this. Believe me, I hate cold calling as much as you. But if you are in need of a gig, I would give it a shot. With use of a script, and a lot of practice, cold calling will seem much less intimidating. Take a look at the following example:

## SCRIPT

A: Hello, this is Joe Schmo from Joe Schmo Consulting Firm. Is this a good time to talk?

B: Yes.

A: With whom may I ask I am speaking?

B: Mike

A: I am an expert in the web design field. You might have seen some of my work: deezin.com, allfreelance.com, and artistdesignerjobs.com. I could design a site for your business at the lowest rate around. If you are interested, I could give you a free 1-hour consultation.

B: Well, we were thinking about putting up a website, just didn't know when. I'll take you up on your offer of a free consultation.

A: Great! Is 3 o'clock next Tuesday okay for you?

B: 4 o'clock is better.

A: I will be there at 4, Thank you...I look forward to meeting you.

Above, please take a look at the example script. Notice that at initial contact, Joe Schmo is polite enough to make sure that it is a good time to talk. Joe Schmo then states a few of his past achievement in order to establish credibility. If you don't have any past gigs to refer to, try using different tactics to elicit positive feedback. You could:

1. Offer your services for free in order to have a client for your portfolio and as a reference
2. Offer one service that you provide for free in return for a purchase of another one of your services
3. Offer to work on spec ...If the client likes what they see, they can hire you on for the gig

Next, Joe Schmo puts his sales pitch. Notice that Joe Schmo says that he has the lowest rate around, he is trying to catch the attention of the potential client. Now Joes listens for a response. It is important to listen to the potential client. If you don't listen and respond accordingly, the potential client will think that you are reading from a script. In addition, by listening you will find out what the prospective client's problems are. While the prospect is speaking, try to think of open-ended questions that might get the prospect to open up and tell you even more. Joe gets a positive response and sets up an appointment time.

You will need to be ready for a negative response and rude replies. Not every call goes as well as Joe's did. Try to figure out ahead of time what kind of objections you might receive. Always respond with a polite business response. Never curse or say rude things back. Negative responses aren't always a bad sign. If the potential client says " I don't need a web designer now, I need brochures not banners." Maybe your expertise includes print design too, go in for the kill and get the gig. Maybe you want to educate the potential client on the need of a web site to promote his or her business. If you think ahead and know your responses beforehand, you will do great. Good Luck!

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