

11 Creative Ways to Make Better B2B Sales Calls

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How many times have you heard that sales is a numbers game? And if you want to boost your B2B sales results, you need to commit to making more calls?

But what happens when you've reached your maximum call volume and your results are still below quota?

Consider this: According to Salesforce research, 92% of customer interaction occurs by phone, but as many as 85% of customers say they are unhappy with their phone experience.

The answer is not quantity but quality. To meet your sales quotas, you need some creative tactics that will help you improve your calling technique. Here are 11 creative ways to make better B2B sales calls.

1) Be Positive and Enthusiastic

When you're positive, your attitude rubs off on the people around you. Your enthusiasm and passion for what you're selling can energize your B2B sales calls. Here's how to create some energy:

- Know your stuff. When you're knowledgeable about what you're selling, your excitement rings true.
- Stand up or, if you can, walk around. You'll feel more energetic and make better B2B sales calls.

2) Avoid Hyperbole and Over-Emphasis

Yes, you can take your enthusiasm too far. So be careful you don't go "over the top." First, hyperbole never rings true, and you risk losing customer confidence. Second, when your every word is bold and emphatic, your key message is lost. Identify the one key message you want customers to remember—the takeaway—and focus your emphasis on that.

3) Know Your Prospect

Between social media, third-party data services, and digital marketing and business intelligence tools, you never need to make another cold call. Before you pick up the phone, do your homework as follows:

- Research every prospect and identify the pain points common in their industry.
- Visit a prospect's website and make sure you have accurate contact information.
- For even greater insight, use data vendors that specialize in collecting and curating competitive (publicly available) intelligence—such as a company's tech stack.
- Initiate a relationship through social media, such as LinkedIn, before you make a sales pitch. Review any articles or posts that may provide insight into products and services the company may need.

4) Lead with a Bang

Because there are no second chances, you need to ensure that a prospect's first impression of you and your product/service is memorable:

- Be bold but approachable.
- Be confident without seeming arrogant. For example, don't start by apologizing for interrupting their day with your call.
- Set a prospect's expectations for exciting news by starting on a positive and uplifting note.

5) Focus on Building Enduring Relationships

Buyers are often wary of salespeople. Even when they are looking to buy, they don't want to feel that they are being sold. Happy, empowered customers spend more money over a longer period. And customer retention translates into higher customer lifetime value and increased ROI.

You need to think beyond the short-term sale. Instead of making a strong-arm pitch that leaves buyers feeling coerced, focus on building long-term relationships. To do so:

- Take the time to understand prospects' wants and needs so that you can help them make informed buying decisions.
- Don't sell. Solve problems.
- Support your position with customer stories and case studies.

6) Play to Human Emotion

The emotional sale isn't limited to consumer purchases. Although the triggers may be different, B2B buyers also tend to buy on emotion. You can tap into business buyers' emotions by making them see your company as the safe choice that protects their job, the smart decision that leads to promotion or the natural option that requires little or no defense. Of course, once you make an emotional connection, you also need to provide the logic. So be sure to arm buyers with the facts and figures that they will need to share with the boss.

7) Compliment Your Customers and Prospects

You can use compliments to drive your customers' and prospects' behavior. Everyone appreciates a kind word, but more importantly, when you bestow accolades on people, they subconsciously strive to be worthy of the praise. Try referring to your customers in glowing terms; be careful to keep your compliments honest and realistic. For example:

- "You are one of the leading power users of our system."
- "Thank you for being such a proactive decision-maker."
- "We always enjoy working with you because you help keep us on top of our game."

8) Keep Your Message Simple

While you may have a lot of useful information that you want to share, be careful that you don't overwhelm buyers. Providing too many options and considerations at one time can impede the buying decision. You need to:

- Organize your message and break down the points, then deliver them throughout several conversations. Additional information is always a good excuse for a follow-up call.
- Reserve some of your points for emails and voicemails.
- Anticipate commonly asked questions; then, build some of your sales points into your answers.

9) Encourage Customers and Prospects to Talk

Some of your best B2B sales calls take place when you stop talking and let the buyer speak. It helps engage your prospects in the conversation and allows you to listen and learn. When listening:

- You may discover the best way to position your product or service.
- Pay attention to how a prospect speaks, including word choice. You can build rapport when you match their tone and even use some of the same words in your responses.

10) Set Your Agenda and Share It with the Customer

When making a presentation, it's best to tell your audience first what you plan to say, then say it and close by reminding them what you just said. An excellent B2B

sales call is much the same so:

- Set a plan for what you want to discuss during the call.
- Share your agenda with the prospective customer.

Not only are you reinforcing your message and main points, but you're also inviting prospect buy-in, which sets a positive tone at the start of your call.

11) Don't Trash Your Competition

While you may be tempted to criticize a competitor or its products, you risk setting a negative tone. What's more, customers often make a subconscious link between you, your company and products and all that negativity. Instead:

- Explain why you are the best option.
- Build your company up and help your prospects make the right buying decisions.

You can do this. You can make better B2B sales calls. And best of all, creative sales call techniques don't require revolutionary innovation or out-of-the-box thinking. Just focus on delivering a better customer experience that's positive, open and honest. Build rapport and encourage two-way communication.

Above all, be the solution provider that wants a long-term relationship with its customers. That's the only numbers game that counts.

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