
B2B Buyers Bait: Cold Call Scripts That Sell

7 Simple Script Preparation Steps



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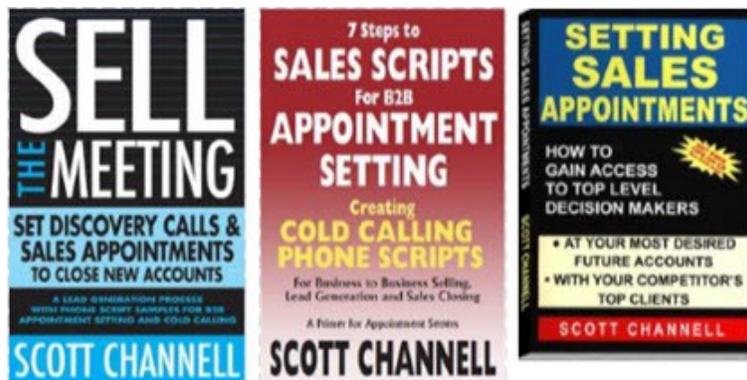
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"Do you have any good scripts?"

Hearing this question enables me to predict with complete accuracy the future sales prospecting failure of the person asking the question.

Every time.

Those that believe there are "magic words" floating about which, if captured and repeated, could turn on a faucet of sales appointments and qualified opportunities, that would result in untold sales commissions and new accounts -- are walking among the clueless.

Why?

Three reasons.

First, sales scripts are important, yes. But good sales scripts are NEVER the only reason sales prospecting is successful. You must work a total process to be consistently successful at sales prospecting. Your sales scripts are at maximum 25% - 30% of that process. Without the rest of the process, your scripts are worth nothing.

"Good scripts" only help you if you are talking to enough of the "right people" at the right time. It is your overall process that consistently delivers up those conversations.

What good is it to have a decent script if you are not talking to anybody?

Second, scripts that sell are specific to you and they emerge from a script creation process that enables you to truly own what you say.

Your company.

Your personal experience.

Your region.

Your competitive environment.

Your business priorities.

Example: I do a lot of work for some major franchise companies. Franchisee to franchisee there can be variations in the scripts that work. Those variations typically emphasize strengths, experiences and business priorities of the individual master franchisee. Not all the winning scripts are exactly the same.

Example: Among companies that have many top producers, the scripts that work are not exactly alike. Again, there is room for variation based upon individual strengths and business objectives.

So, scripts that work are specific to you.

They are also the result of a script creation process that enables the caller, the salesperson, to own the words. You must own the words to deliver them with confidence and conviction.

To own the words you must have either gone through the script creation process outlined in this report, or, you must understand the component parts, the word choices within those component parts and the structure of a winning script, to understand why a winning script works.

You need a few "ah ha" moments.

As to component parts of a script that sells.

As to all your word and phrase choices within each component part.

As to the structure of a good script.

If you try to write a script and don't grasp the above, your script will be weak. If you try to deliver a script and don't grasp the above, you won't own the script. You won't deliver it with confidence and you will constantly try to deviate from it.

Third, scripts evolve.

Even when you follow this process to create a solid initial script. It will change. It is normal and expected for a script to be massaged and modified about six times before you determine you have it right.

That's right. Expect to modify your script six times before it reaches final form.

Now let's get into the actual preparation steps of writing "good scripts."

But first a few caveats...

Difference between a high-level and lower-level sales environment.

When I refer to scripts having some degree of flexibility I am referring much more to a high-level sales environment than I am a lower-level sales environment.

A high-level sales environment is typically higher investment, more risk, multiple steps, multiple decision-makers and a longer sales cycle. A lower-level sales environment is typically more activity oriented. Stack em high, make em fly. Buy now. Next! Usually a smaller investment, less at stake, one decision-maker, shorter cycle type sale.

Lower-level high volume sales environments tend to be more scripted, and they should be. What works tends to be proven over time by tracking and statistics. Plus, the skill sets of callers don't allow for flexibility.

In a lower-level environment. Stick to the script.

Even in high-level environments, you have less flexibility up-front.

It makes sense that in high-level environments, where there are more variables and nuances, that there should be more flexibility in sales scripts.

True, but there is less flexibility in the front of the script path than there is in the middle or toward the end of the script path.

What do I mean?

Lets take a script calculated to set an appointment. That will usually be about a 2 1/2 to 3 minute conversation. The deeper into that conversation you go the more flexibility you have for massaging and variation.

But the first 30 seconds. Sorry. Even in high-level sales environments you have virtually no room for adjustments.

Scripts are just preparation.

Frankly, I don't understand people who refuse to use telephone sales scripts at all.

It is incomprehensible to me that people would march into an environment where failure is the norm, where seconds count, where every word matters... and not be prepared.

That is what writing scripts is all about. Preparation.

Identifying repetitive scenarios, anticipating common responses, brainstorming all your possible word choices and selecting the words most likely to achieve your business objective.

Preparation. So that you drastically increase the odds of achieving your business objective.

Few are so smart, or so personable....

Sorry, but those of you who refuse to write down the words most calculated to achieve your business objectives in repetitive situations, because you don't want to sound "scripted." You are letting a lot of money slip through your fingers.

"Sounding scripted" and using scripts are two totally different things. One has nothing to do with the other.

Do you really think that you are so witty, your personality so enchanting, your Hal 9000 intellect so superior that you can process each situation second by second, and magically pull out of the air just the right things to say that accomplish your objective?

Are you out of your mind?

It is much more likely that your naturally inspired verbiage waters down your value proposition and meanders like smoke to the ceiling. You choose words with less impact and squander time.

Sales prospecting on the phone does not have to turn you into a robot.

There is room for flexibility.

Top producers will vary their approach.

Among high producing sales teams there will be variations in scripts.

But... but... but...

The similarities among all of those winning scripts are many.

It is not the differences that make all of them work. It is the similarities.

There are reasons why good scripts tend to work and lousy scripts predict a macaroni and cheese diet.

Whether you are setting an appointment,

Qualifying an opportunity,

Generating a lead,
Closing a sale,
Building attendance to an event.

There are commonalities to scripts that work.

Time limitations.
Structure.
Component parts.
Clarity.
Use of super words.
Focus on buyers only.
Avoiding words and phrases that doom you.

Lets explore the origins of winning sales scripts.

Brainstorm all words and phrases for each component part of your script.

As to each component part of your script you need to write down every possible option you have. The objective in the beginning is to brainstorm. Write down every thought you have. Don't worry about polish or length or even if it makes sense.

Many times you'll punch up your script with more value and impact by polishing a previous half-baked thought or very long concept.

Write down everything you can think of.

When you do this not only will you write better sales scripts for the telephone but will be better prepared for your prospect meetings and end up closing more. Why? Because you are better prepared.

Example: Whenever I do a presentation I always interview a representative sample of salespeople. Among other questions... why do people/ companies buy from you? What benefits do they get?

Top 10 Phone Script Tips to Meet with Decision-Makers

1

Give Them Immediate "Cause for Pause."

Typical intros get you cut off. Say what the knuckleheads say that waste their time and you get lumped in with them. Enable them to grasp immediately what you do, why you are credible and benefits you deliver. Make them choke on "We are all set." ScottChannell.com/A201

2

Use "You" a Lot.

Big problem. Your scripts have 2 dozen "I's" and "We's" in them. News flash. They don't care about you. It is about them. Change your orientation away from yourself and focus on them and others like them. More info: ScottChannell.com/A214

3

Don't Say What Everyone Else Says.

If you could easily imagine your competitors saying what you say — don't say it. "We give superior service with competitive pricing and really care about our clients." I just fell asleep. You won't break through appointment setting barriers if they lump you in with the idiots. More info: ScottChannell.com/A208

4

Use a Powerful Credibility Statement.

Why should people believe you or conclude you are worth their time? Drop names of well-known accounts. Mention a specific result obtained. Example: "More than 500 high net worth individuals in the St. Louis area selected us to...." More info: ScottChannell.com/A210

5

Be "Less Stupid" than Competitors

A lot of stupid things are said on the phone. It's self-sabotage. "How are you?" "Have you got a minute?" "I know you are busy and will be brief." "Giving you a quick call to...." Do you say things like this? If so, be ashamed. Be very ashamed. More info: ScottChannell.com/A204

6

Be Specific. Generalizations Mean Little.

Relating specific results and benefits are very powerful. Use of numbers and percentages of results and benefits get attention and are more credible. Think about specific results obtained. Work them into your pitch. More info: ScottChannell.com/A208

7

Ask For What You Want.

Be crystal clear about what you want. If there is any doubt or confusion in their minds — you lose. "I would like to introduce myself... provide you with some options and strategies that have worked for others... would you have some time in the next week or two?"

8

Be Prepared for Common Scenarios.

A key difference between those cashing checks and the wanna-be's? Preparation. When faced with a common phone scenario they have actually thought about the best response, written it down and practiced it. Wanna-be's wing it as "every situation is different." Beliefs like that do not lead to bigger checks. More info: ScottChannell.com/A209



9

Stop Saying Stupid Stuff. Part To.

Stop chasing prospects away by saying things like this. "We help companies just like you." "We want to meet to find out more about your business and determine what we can do for you." "Like to stop by for 10-15 minutes." More info: ScottChannell.com/A269

10

Do It All in 30 Seconds or Less.

No sale is stronger than the foundation it is built upon. To sell a meeting to a top buyer, you must cover all the bases. What you do. Why you are credible. Benefits delivered. What they get at a meeting that is worth their time. Ask for what you want. More info: ScottChannell.com/A246

More tips & strategies at ScottChannell.com

11

Bonus Tip!

Give Them Reasons Not to Go Online.

Buyers won't waste time with providers that seem ordinary and say the same old same old. Why should they? They can make their own choices with a few keystrokes. Enable them to understand that you offer something not easily found. If you don't, you are toast.

Typically an individual salesperson will max out with 5 or 6 benefits. Then it's "Um.. Ahhhh.... I can't think of anything else." Typically every salesperson will mention one or two benefits not mentioned by the others. So if I interview four salespeople I typically get a list of 10-12 benefits. But individually, each salesperson could only think of 5 or 6.

When that same question is asked to the whole team during training, it is not unusual for 30 - 40 benefits to go on the board. I have had instances where teams come up with over 100 reasons why people buy from them.

Yet individually, the typical salesperson is hard pressed to name more than six benefits their accounts get.

Who is likely to sell more?

Who writes better scripts?

Who is more prepared for prospect conversations and meetings?

Who is more likely to select the best words to convey value and credibility?

Who is more likely to move the process to a higher "next step?"

Who closes more business?

The person who is aware of all word choices within each component part of their sales communication... or, the person who wings it?

Lets brainstorm all word choices within each component part of your script.

Sales script preparation: Step 1.

Your name and your company.

People's minds race 10X faster than you can talk. If they don't have clarity right up-front as to who is calling from where and what you might do for them, their minds will wander and not be focusing on what you are saying.

So you might start...

Hi, this is Scott Channell from ...

Hi, this is Scott from ...

Should you use your last name?

Guiding principle: Ruthlessly rip out every unnecessary word. Start here. They will not initially remember or care about your last name. Delete it. Give it to them after you sell the next step.

From what company?

Again, you have strategic choices.

... from Biz-Pro...

... from Biz-Pro computer systems...

... from Biz-Pro business computers...

Sometimes a business name is so well known no clarification is necessary or desired. Sometimes you need a little explanation so they immediately grasp what you do. Sometimes you want to clarify it even further if you service a niche or specialty.

Write down all choices.

Sales script preparation: Step 2.

What do you do?

Again, to have any chance of gaining a foothold into someone's mind over the phone, you must start by communicating who you are, where you are calling from and what you do. Fail here and you are toast before you even begin.

Describing what you do is important not only to orient the suspect, but it is also where you begin the qualification process.

Those who use winning scripts focus on buyers only. Unlike the lost that write their scripts to have more comfortable conversations with those who will never buy... top producers want to immediately signal to potential buyers... here is something that may benefit you.

So top producers describe what they do with absolutely clarity, so that buyers choke on the words "We are all set" or "I'm busy. Gotta bounce."

This is where you start to give buyers "cause for pause."

Again, you write down all the possible choices you have to describe what you do.

We are a business computer company.

We manage and install corporate IT systems.

We keep corporate IT systems running.

We provide business technology solutions.

We bring interactive technology into businesses.

We specialize in integration of technology into corporations such as product X, program Y and brand Z.

You have choices. Write them all down.

Guideline: This statement should be plain, simple and direct. We do X. No fluff words such as best or superior. The trouble with fluff words at this stage is that people don't know enough to agree or disagree with you. It is only your opinion. You are asking them for a judgment. Don't do that. If you do, they will immediately start discounting what you say. Keep to simple statements of fact with no embellishment.

Up to now all you are shooting for is for them to think, "I get it." That's all.

Sales script preparation: Step 3.

Your credibility statement.

If there is one missing link in losing scripts, one mistake I see commonly that absolutely cripples your ability to sell over the phone, it is this.

The lack of an effective credibility statement. In fact, the lack of any credibility statement at all.

How are people supposed to know that you are not some schmuck working out of their parent's basement?

How do they know you are more worthwhile than the other 20 people who call them every week and waste their time?

How do people know you are more unique and valuable from others they might find with a google search?

They don't.

They don't unless you tell them.

Why should they invest even a few moments on the phone with a stranger of unknown qualifications and experience, when the identity of qualified vendors and experts are just a few keystrokes away?

They won't. Unless you give them reason to do so.

Example: Once received a call from a very accomplished sales leader in a niche industry. Was now consulting, and she could not understand why people were hesitant to meet with her and why so many appointments scheduled were cancelled.

People who blow you off obviously don't "get" your value.

In this case I knew a lot about the results that this salesperson had achieved for organizations. She had a stellar record of achievement helping companies solve common and costly problems. Prior to her consulting career she had been in the field and had consistently ranked within the top three of a 15,000+ sales organization.

Did the person she scheduled the phone appointments with know anything about the RESULTS she had achieved for other organizations?

No.

Did the person she scheduled the phone appointments with know anything about her extraordinary record of personal achievement in the industry before she started consulting?

No.

Should we really be surprised that decision-maker's blew her off or no-showed her appointments?

No.

Take a look at the credibility statements in the front half of the script that changed her life.

"Hi this is Liz from Mega Industries. We help companies to _____ and those that have worked with us have achieved major benefit A, monster result B and significant achievement C. Before I started consulting I was a top performer in this industry achieving stellar result A, Super result B and unbelievable result C. ... continuing.

BOOM! She rolled out the big guns.

Conveying credibility makes a huge difference and if you do not do so right up-front, you are toast.

So take a look at some credibility statement options to get you thinking.

work with 3,000 businesses...

500 Kalamazoo area businesses...

18,000 customers...

98.5% of customers purchase again...

Companies like Mega Industries, I.B. Sorry and Bob's Burgers selected us...

We are a preferred X org vendor...

63% of Massachusetts ABC industry companies use us...

22,000 installations in 10 states...

#1 in the tri-state area...

do more business than our next 5 competitors combined...

We typically achieve specific result X...

One account achieved a 22% increase in _____....

Three projects in the last 6 months resulted in a \$50,000 or more cost savings...

What do you notice about the above options?

No generalities. Full of specifics.

There are no... we are great, we are swell, we are full-service, superior, we *really* care for our customers...meaningless generality non-specific garbage.

More on this later.

Write down all possible credibility statements.

Sales script preparation: Step 4.

Your benefit statements.

This is the holy grail of writing sales scripts that work.

You must communicate value.

If you communicate value, you can mess-up a lot of things and still win.

Value breaks down doors.

True confession: When I earning my cold call appointment setting PhD smiling and dialing my way to setting more than 2,000 C-level sales appointments in diverse industries... I used to pretend that the phone line was 3D and I could reach through it and club my decision-maker with a 2 x 4. Not kidding.

The 2 x 4 used was the value and benefit statements. That is the type of impact you must convey to have any chance of establishing a foothold to make a major sale.

Do not confuse being direct and having impact with ...

... being rude, unprofessional, pushy, too salesy (don't get me going) or the famous "sounding like a telemarketer."

You will never write telephone sales scripts that work by focusing on what you won't do.

Laser focus on what you must do to craft and deliver sales scripts that work. Think only of those things.

Here are some template benefit statements to get you thinking...

Decrease cost of X by Y%

Reduce cycle time by 31%

Increase revenue by X%

Increase revenue by X% within 6 months

Decrease prep time by 1/3

Competitive advantage

Eliminate expense

Eliminate _____

Reduce X usage by 45%

Customized solution

The list could go on and on. To have 30 or more benefit statements in your "pile of words" is not uncommon.

Two words you should include.

Options.

Strategies.

My experience is people want to hear about "options" and "strategies."

Use those words.

You might have noticed that there is one typical highly touted benefit that is not on the list.

Cost.

Lowest cost.

Inexpensive.

Cheap.

Save money.

Never ever use those words as part of a sales script benefit. It devalues you. It lumps you in with all the other worthless knuckleheads who say "I can save you money."

Never lead with saving money. It is not what will get you in the door. It is kind of obligatory for you to make reference to costs, but my suggestion is that of the three benefits you mention in your script, that reference to price or cost be third.

Something like...

"... Companies like A, B, C and 1,500 others selected us as they get benefit A, benefit B and competitive pricing..."

At most I recommend you reference "competitive pricing," and mention it last. Contrary to popular belief, pushing low pricing this early in the game will cost you opportunities.

Within the next few weeks there will be another special report on the topic of "Selling Value, Not Price: How to Close Deals Against Lower Priced Competitors." Watch for it.

If people push you on pricing...

Tip: If people push you on costs or pricing here are three concepts you can use to reply and get the focus off price.

#1. Wear it with pride. "I'll tell you right now, if you are looking for the lowest price and that's it. We are not it."

#2. I would have to be an idiot. "What an incompetent fool I would be, if before I met you, before I was informed about your business objectives and what has worked and failed in the past for you, if I tried to guess at pricing. Only the desperate or incompetent would do that." (I loved saying that.)

#3. All I can tell you is. "All I can tell you is that companies like International Amalgamated, Cheapskate Industries and Mega Corp., who check out every possible option on things like this, looked at all their choices and selected us... them and about 2,500 others. And most of our business is repeat business. There are good reasons for that." Then pause and let that sink in.

Then you continue on to close on your objective.

There are a few reasons why you want your list of potential benefits to be as extensive as possible.

You sharpen them.

You get to pick the most powerful.

You are more prepared for "first meetings" and more conscious of all the reasons why someone might buy. So you engage in more effective interactions and close more.

All because you are more prepared.

Sales script preparation: Step 5.

Create a list of "ear candy."

When creating these "piles of words" from which a great script will arise, inevitably you will come across or think of words and phrases that don't fit neatly into any of the above categories.

I would encourage you to think beyond your phone script and also be thinking about the rest of the sales cycle. You will need ammunition. So when doing your research and brainstorming write down anything that might be used in a script or deeper in the sales process.

It might be words, phrases, descriptions, statistics, quotes, facts, reference statements, regulatory or governmental regulations, anything that jumps out at you or is particularly intriguing. Write them all down.

Ear candy.

When I do this for a project I typically have at least two pages single-spaced with ear candy stuff. It is the reservoir you draw from. Make it as deep as possible.

Sales script preparation: Step 6.

Write out all objections and repetitive scenarios you anticipate hearing.

Once you write your core scripts, you will turn your attention to writing re-

sponses to resistance and common scenarios.

Remember this is about preparation, not turning you into a robot. But guess what? When you hear certain questions, objections and statements over and over again, it is reasonable for you to anticipate them and have thought about the best thing to say.

You hear something for the umpteenth time. Click. Whirr. Boom. You respond completely, confidently and with the words most calculated to attain your business result. You are prepared.

When I give trainings it is pretty easy to pick out the top producing successful salespeople from the wanna-be's who never will be, and those working way to hard for too little results.

When asked what they say when they hear "X" from a prospect, the top producers give a complete confident response. You think, "Hey, they have actually thought about this."

But the wanna-be's?

Ask them the same question as to an objection or question they have heard 100 times and you get..."Ummmm, Ahhhhhh, Well, no two situations are exactly alike, you never know, it depends. Um. Ah." Inexcusable and pathetic.

The reason many people are working hard at sales and not earning to their capabilities is simply that they don't approach sales as a craft. They let numerous opportunities go by to get better and improve their skills.

The economy, that people are busy and no one picks up their phone, are not the reason you are not selling more.

You are the reason you are not selling more.

Sales script preparation: Step 7.

Where do you get all this stuff?

Easy.

- Interview callers and salespeople from your company or industry.
- Scour your company website.

- Review the websites of your competitors.
- Note those that sell what you offer online. Their verbiage has to be very sharp and impactful. Take notes.
- Pretend that you are a buyer. Surf online. Go to the places buyers might go and take notes on verbiage.
- Review marketing materials of your company and competitors.
- Look at RFP's.
- Find and read relevant articles.

Creating your “pile of words” just takes some time, patience and some thinking.

Skip this step at your certain peril. If you are thinking that you don't have time to adequate prepare, then you are doomed. Just face that fact right now.

You have your piles of words. Now what?

Write your scripts.

There are a number of resources that can help.

Check out the free downloads and resources at
ScottChannell.com

Best wishes for Great Selling,

Scott Channell

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