

HOW TO HANDLE THE TELEPHONE – A LIFE SKILL

"Is this the party to whom I am speaking" - Lilly Tomlin

Learning the Art of Cold Calling

1. What are your primary goals?
 - An in-office meeting with this person, unless that person is in a distant city.
 - A phone meeting if that is the only reasonable option.
 - The name of a person who may be appropriate for you to talk with - if this person is simply the wrong contact person.

2. What are your secondary goals?
 - Determine when the person has time to schedule a meeting with you.
 - Try to book something - even if it's a month from now.
 - Get other names.

IMPORTANT POINTS TO REMEMBER

It's a Mental Game:

- We are all afraid of rejection
- You are calling a person because you have powerful skills that they can use!

Do not leave your Phone Number:

- Stay in control - do not leave messages that they can ignore.
- Leave just one message that you called and then keep calling back until you reach them.

You do not want to be Interviewed on the Telephone:

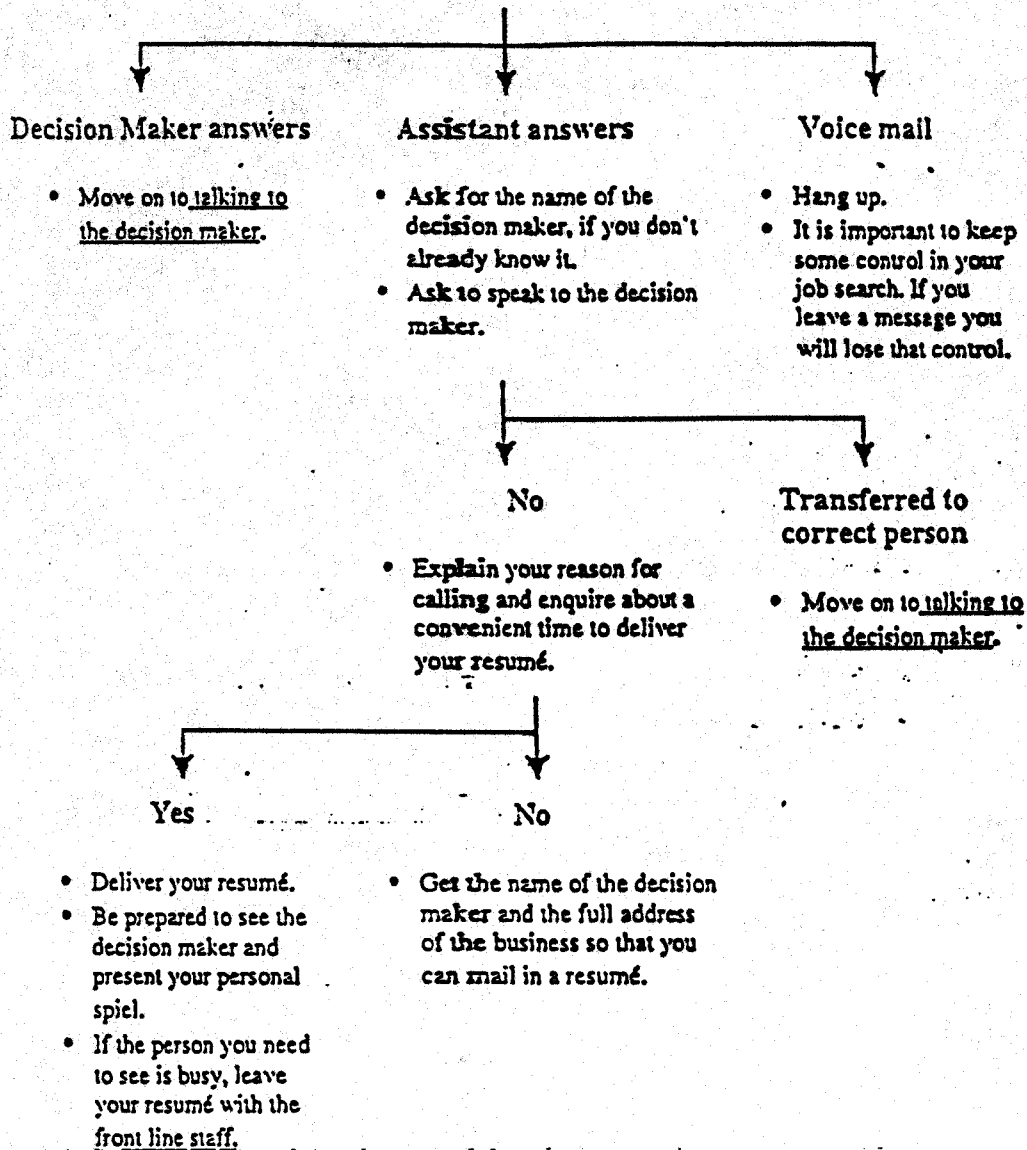
- Unless you live far away there is no substitute for an in person meeting.
- When you meet face-to-face a person is more likely to give you better information, shuffle through his Rolodex

Before Making the Call:

- Practice, practice, practice your pitch, and listen to yourself.
- Make more than one call at a time - it causes just as much stress to make one call as it does to make 20!
- Warm up by calling a friend - then hang up and without thinking about it dial your first number.

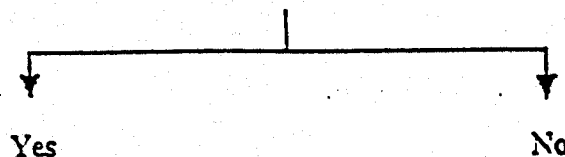
Cold Calling Scenario

You make THE CALL



You're talking to the Decision Maker

- Introduce yourself and deliver your personal spiel.
- Request five minutes of their time so that you can deliver your resumé in person.



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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange a convenient time to meet. • Prepare some questions and remember to keep it short. • Refer to informational interviewing for more details. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enquire about mailing your resumé. • Get the address and any other pertinent information. • Attempt to get some referral names for other companies you may want to contact. |
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YOUR BASIC SCRIPT:

- Try to build a relationship with the person you are calling.
"Hi, this is John Smith. Who am I speaking with? I was trying to reach Mr. Jones. I wanted to make an appointment and speak with him regarding his work in the bio-tech industry, and specifically with XYZ Pharmaceuticals."

If the Secretary Answers:

- Leave a message that you called (first call only)
*"You: Hi. Mr. Jones, please.
Secretary: I'm sorry, he is not in right now. May I take a message and have him call you back?
You: This is John Smith. Who am I speaking with please?
Secretary: My name is Dorothy White.
You: Thanks Ms. White, but I'll be in and out a lot so I'll have to call him back later. When would be a good time for me to call?
Secretary: I don't know. He'll be in and out of meetings also."*
- (Become friendly with her. Don't forget to always use Mr. and Ms. in your first contact.)
"You: I'll call back later. Maybe I'll be lucky and find him in."

Later:

- When you call back later be ready to respond to whatever rejection may get thrown at you.
*"You: Dorothy, this is John Smith. We spoke earlier. Hope your day is going well. Is Mr. Jones available?
Secretary: He's in a meeting right now. May I have him call you?
You: No, he can't call me back, so I'll have to call him later. You must have your hands full managing his schedule, but I know that we will link up soon."
• Always try to understand their situation.
"I understand how busy you are with all that is going on..."*

Eventually:

*"You: Hi Dorothy, this is John again. You're probably starting to recognize my voice. I hope that I am not bothering you. Is Mr. Jones in?
Secretary: This is terrible that he is always so busy. You've tried so often, I insist that he talk to you. He is in a meeting right now, but I'll have him take your call."*

If the Boss Answers:

- First, establish a relationship.
"You: Hello, I am so happy we could talk today..."
- Go through your script or checklist.

Handling Objections (The Secretary)

HE'S VERY BUSY:

"I bet. You must have your hands full with his schedule. When would you suggest is a good time to call?"

I SENT YOUR RESUME TO PERSONNEL:

"Thank you. However, I thought that Mr. Jones would be interested in discussing a project that I have done which relates to what he is doing at XYZ Corp."

WE HAVE NO OPENINGS NOW:

"I didn't expect that you had any openings..."

- See answer under "There are no jobs here now." above.

Getting Voicemail

- First, try the company operator (hit "0") to see if you can get the name and number of Mr. Jones secretary or the name and number of someone who works with him.
- Or, use voicemail as an introduction to leave your message in someone's head.

"Hi. This is John Jones." LET ME SCHEDULE FOR YOU

- You want them to hear your name and that you want to speak with them - Say that you will call them back. MENTION YOUR REFERRAL'S NAME STATE YOUR PHONE NUMBER, AND WHEN YOU'RE AVAILABLE, AND THAT YOU'RE LOOKING FORWARD TO SCHEDULE WITH YOU.

Last ditch Way to Get People to Call Back:

- What do you do when it is just impossible to get through? One tactic is to appeal to the target's manners.

"I would really appreciate it if you would call back to tell me when would be a good time to talk."

- He is inconsiderate if he doesn't call you!
- AFTER TWO ATTEMPTS, LEAVE 30-SEC COMMERCIAL

ONSITE MEETING WITH CONTACT / REFERRAL / LEAD

STUDENT: "Hi, I'm _____. Nice to meet you!"

CONTACT: "Yes, it's good to meet you, too. Come on in – have a seat."

STUDENT: "Thanks for agreeing to meet me."

CONTACT: "My pleasure, although I'm not sure if I know enough about your field to help you."

STUDENT: "Well, as I mentioned on the phone, I'm in the planning stages of my job search and I know I can benefit from someone like you who has 'been there', so to speak, and knows more about the working world than I do! I'd like to get your input and advice on several issues I'm dealing with. As you know, I'm interested in getting into Human Resources in the retail industry, and I'm not sure where I fit in. Since you've had some knowledge of human resources generally, I'd like to get your ideas on where I might start."

CONTACT: "Well, recruiting or employment interviewing might be a good place. I've also heard that benefits & compensation is a good place for entry level..." etc. etc.

STUDENT: "That's interesting! I do have recruiting skills since I was responsible for recruiting 19 faculty members for an off-campus instructional program for a volunteer job I was involved in. Also, my interviewing skills are pretty sharp from interviewing over 500 students for leadership positions and assessing their potential. With that experience, where do you see my strengths, and what might be some of my liabilities?"

CONTACT: (Gives feedback at length)

STUDENT: "I've put together a resume. I wonder if you could take just a minute to review it and give me your impression of how I've presented myself. You can keep that copy for yourself, if you'd like."

CONTACT: (Looks it over and gives a couple suggestions.)

STUDENT: "I appreciate your comments and ideas. I think they will help give my resume more polish. I'd like to find out more about the areas you mentioned – recruiting, interviewing, benefits & compensation. Can you think of anyone actually in those positions, or at least knowledgeable about them, that I could talk with to find out more information?"

CONTACT: (Gives a few names)

STUDENT: "What about companies that are growing, who might be expanding their HR department? Can you think of any that would be good for me to approach? I've made out a tentative list (shows the list). Do you know anyone in any capacity at any of them that I could talk with?"

CONTACT: (Gives a few suggestions)

STUDENT: "You've given me some really useful information. I feel like I'm beginning to go in the right direction. Thanks a lot for your time. I'd like to stay in touch with you in case something else occurs to you that would help – something could pop up. Is that OK? Here is my phone number and email address...use whichever is easier for you. May I have your business card? Thanks again!"

Handling Objections (The Boss):

THERE ARE NO JOBS HERE NOW:

"I didn't expect that there would be. I am contacting you because I am very interested in your company and your industry. I have skills in _____ . I thought that it would be good for us to meet."

I'M BUSY:

"I can understand that, with all that is going on. Can we set up an appointment for some time a few weeks from now? I will call to confirm to make sure that that time is good for you."

- If you show consideration of someone's time, they will often suggest that you "come in tomorrow."

I DIDN'T RECEIVE YOUR RESUME:

"I'll fax it to you right now and then I'll give you a call back. What is your fax number?"

WE DON'T NEED PEOPLE WITH YOUR SKILLS RIGHT NOW:

- See "There are no jobs here now" above.

HOW DID YOU GET MY NAME?

*"A few people mentioned that I should contact you."
"Really who?"*

- Name one or two of your friends.
*"Jane Smith and Dotty Jones."
"I don't know them."
"Maybe not, but they know you!"*

**BEYOND THE RECEPTIONIST...
OVERCOMING OBSTACLES FROM POTENTIAL EMPLOYERS**

Obstacles

"I'm sorry, but I'm not hiring."

"I'm really too busy."

"Let me connect you with our Human Resources department."

(If calling about a specific position...)

"The Search Committee is making all the recommendations."

"I'm just not able to see you."

Your Response

"That's fine, but I still think your ideas and advice would be very helpful. I know I'd really benefit if you could share your expertise with me, and I'd only need a few minutes of your time. Besides, there may be openings sometime in the future."

"I completely understand – I won't take more than 15 minutes of your time." *WHEN WOULD BE THE BEST TIME TO CALL YOU. OR CONNECT OVER LUNCH*

"I'll gladly follow up with Human Resources, but I also need some advice from a professional who knows this field. You were suggested as one of the best!"

BUT I KNOW I WOULD ALSO BENEFIT FROM YOUR ADVICE

"I'd like to get your perspective on the kind of skills and qualities you look for in candidates, to see if I might fit in well with your company."

"Well, thanks anyway. Could you refer me to someone else who might be able to give me some assistance? Do you know anyone at Company B that I could contact?"

SECRETARY / RECEPTIONIST ROADBLOCKS

day's job searcher will no doubt run into some form of automated voicemail when trying to reach a potential employer. But at some point, you are also likely to encounter a live person, before reaching the actual employer/decision maker. The switchboard operator usually does not screen calls and can be a good source of information about names, titles, and phone numbers for people you want to reach in the organization. Getting by the secretary/receptionist can be more difficult, as it is their job to protect the employer from unwanted calls. Your voice must be friendly but firm, and project confidence and an attitude that you will get through!!

GENERAL COMMENT

If secretary by name, if possible. Give your name, and first and last names of the person with whom you want to speak.

By the way, everyone has to be from somewhere. You are from UCSD, or you give your current or latest employer.

They may probe for more information, trying to screen you out. Be confident, be firm and to the point, and honest.

Keep the ball in your court. He may not call back if he doesn't recognize your name.

TIP: Try calling before 8:00 or after 5:00 when the secretary/receptionist is gone for the day.

YOUR PRESENTATION

"Good Morning Ms. Jacobs. This is Justin Leonard calling for Dan Steele."
(if a referral, add: "I'm calling at the suggestion of Phil Johnson")

"I'm from (current employer)" OR "I'm from UCSD."

I'M REPRESENTING MYSELF

Possible Alternatives:

A. "It concerns a marketing project."
(True—you are marketing yourself!)

B. "It concerns 'financial controls'" or "operations research methods" or whatever specialty you are pursuing.

C. "It's of a confidential nature."
A SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT PROJECT WE ARE WORKING ON.

"I'll be in and out all day and will have to call him back. Can you suggest the best time to reach him?"

SECRETARY'S POSSIBLE REPLY

"May I have the name of your company?"

"Will he know what this is in reference to?"

"He's in a meeting. May I take your name and number and have him call you?"

PHONING CONTACTS, REFERRALS/LEADS OR COLD CALLS

Personal Contacts
(May or may not be employer)

1. Identify yourself and, if appropriate, where you found person's name.

"Hello Mr. Sampson! This is _____.
You may remember my family used to live next door to you on Bayside Dr."

Referral / Lead
(May or may not be employer)

"Hello Ms. Rodriguez! This is _____.
Phil Johnson at Union Bank suggested that I contact you."

Cold Call
(Actual employer)

"Hello Mr. Yankovich! This is _____.
I found your name through the S.D. Chamber of Commerce Directory"

2. Explain goals and purpose of your call.

"I'm just beginning my job search in the area of credit analysis, and I recalled you were head of the Small Business Loans division of California Federal Bank. I'd like to get together with you briefly just to discuss some ways to best approach banks in San Diego county, and get any other advice or names of referrals."

"I'm just beginning my job search in the area of credit analysis, and Mr. Johnson mentioned that you were head of the Small Business Loans division of Cal-Fed Bank. I'd like to get together with you briefly just to discuss some ways to best approach banks in San Diego county and get any other advice or names of possible leads."

"I'm just beginning my job search in the area of credit analysis, and thought that since you are the Director of the Small Business Loans division of Cal-Fed Bank, you would be an excellent resource. I'd like to get together with you briefly to discuss the best way to approach this aspect of banking in San Diego county and any opportunities you may be aware of in the area."

"OH YES,...WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?"

"WELL, I DON'T KNOW IF I CAN BE MUCH HELP..."

3. Rebutals to any hesitancy (also see "Overcoming Obstacles" script)

* (More appropriate for Personal Contacts or Referrals/Leads calls)

"Specifically, I would like to get your feedback on a resume I've put together, and brainstorm some ideas on where to begin my search. Also, I'd like to get your advice on how I can best present my strengths in an interview."

4. Setting up the meeting (creating the "illusion of choice".)

"I'm free later in the afternoon after work hours, on Wednesday or Thursday this week. Which would be better for you?"

"I COULD SEE YOU THURSDAY AROUND 4:30. HOW'S THAT?"

5. Closure

"Fine, I look forward to it. I'm sure that our meeting will be beneficial, and I really appreciate your willingness to meet me. Let me just quickly confirm your location..."

NETWORKING BASICS

CONTACT CALL

(SOMEONE YOU KNOW)

- * EXPLAIN PURPOSE OF CALL
- * ASK FOR ADVICE
- * GIVE YOUR 30+ SECOND SUMMARY
- * PROBE FOR REFERRALS
- * ASK PERMISSION TO USE NAME

REFERRAL CALL

(NAMES OBTAINED FROM CONTACTS)

- * INTRODUCE YOURSELF & WHO REFERRED YOU
- * GIVE YOUR 30 + SECOND SUMMARY
- * ASK FOR ADVICE/ REFERRAL
- * GET OK TO FOLLOW-UP LATER

IF CONTACT OR REFERRAL BECOMES A LEAD

- * SHIFT TO AN INTERVIEW MODE
- * INQUIRE ABOUT OPENINGS
- * ASK FOR FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEW

NETWORKING SUGGESTIONS

The following is a list of suggestions that can give you an idea of the potential network that you have.

- Contacts at my current employer – my co-workers. Also what search firms do your personnel people use to find people like you, Get a name and referral if you can.
- Contacts at organizations where you've worked before. Go through your old department lists or "alumni" lists. If people have left your former organization - where did they go?
- Customers and clients. A fantastic source of leads.
- Contacts at social organizations. Your golf club membership. Your church membership. Your health club membership. Your PTA membership. Your cooking class membership. Your zoning board group. Your condo association.
- Professional and Trade contacts. These lists are very important – they often provide the basis of a search firm's research. If you do not belong – join. They cost is tax deductible.
- Service people, vendors and suppliers. Your Rolodex is great here. Or borrow friends Rolodex for the day.
- People you know or are or were looking for jobs. Who helped them? They will share information – they've been there!
- Friends and family. Don't be reticent. Your neighbors all work – where? Your family wants to help – let them.
- College alumni. Contact your alumni association and obtain a list of current members. Where do they work?
- College professors. They may not remember you (thank goodness) but they may have leads.
- Your real estate broker. If you're relocating to a new area to conduct a search, this source is invaluable.
- Your banker. Especially for possible entrepreneurs.
- Your Christmas or Holiday Card list!
- Others – be creative.

CONTACTING REFERRALS

When your friends refer you to their friends, you are no longer viewed as a stranger and the barriers go down. When contacting referrals, your goals are to:

1. Make a good impression.
2. Determine whether the company may have a job opening, either now or in the future.
3. Obtain information about other companies that may have positions.

No set formula exists for calling referrals. However, the following guidelines may help:

- * **Introduce yourself and tell them who gave you their name.**
- * **Give a brief summary of your background, education, skills and work experience.**
- * **Find out if they need a person with your skills, or if they know of someone else who might.**
- * **Live up to your commitment to be brief.**
- * **Take notes for future reference.**
- * **Send a thank-you letter and a copy of your resume.**

You will discover that most people are happy to help but can do so only if you ask the right questions.

NETWORKING CALLS

Networking is contacting friends and associates to find out about the hidden job market -- the jobs not advertised. It is an organized process that works much like a chain letter. As you contact your friends, and they refer you to their friends, your circle of contacts expands. Your purpose in calling friends is to find out where employment activity is taking place, not to ask for a job.

Some people resist networking during a job search. They are afraid of putting their friends on the spot. However, very few contacts will ever react negatively to your networking efforts: People are happy to help when you are brief and to the point.

CONTACTING FRIENDS

When you stop to think about it, you probably have a number of friends and acquaintances who may know about job opportunities. Visit friends who live in your immediate area in person. During these meetings, ask questions that yield the specific information you need. Do not rely on your friends to do the creative thinking for you.

Use the telephone to contact friends and acquaintances outside of your area. You need not be formal, but do keep calls brief and ask specific questions. Do not take up their time by soliciting help in an unstructured way. Be positive and express confidence that something will turn up. Follow these guidelines when calling your friends.

- * Explain that you are graduating soon and are exploring career options.
- * Say that you would appreciate their advice.
- * Briefly review your goals, education, special skills and work experience.
- * Ask for names of people or organizations that may have openings.
- * Ask if you can use their name as you contact others.
- * Thank them for their time. Mention you will send a resume.

Do not ask friends to initiate contacts for you. Use the information they provide and do the contacting yourself.

