

BookReview

Door to door ... no more?

Pounding the pavement. Smiling and dialing. Cold calling is a numbers game. The more prospects greeted the better one's chances. To meet quotas, hungry salespeople will knock on door after door until they get a yes. And then they will start again the next day. The thought of cold calling leaves many who are new to the sales profession with ... cold feet.

Frank J. Rumbauskas Jr. is one veteran salesperson so opposed to the practice that he has written two books about it: The first is *Cold Calling Is a Waste of Time: Sales Success in the Information Age* (2003, FJR Advisors LLC). His latest is *Never Cold Call Again! Achieve Sales Greatness Without Cold Calling*.



Rumbauskas believes cold calling is an antiquated approach to selling; in the New Economy and the Information Age, it simply doesn't work anymore.

True, most salespeople hate cold calling, but the author provides a list of reasons *why* it doesn't work. A few of them: Cold calling destroys your status as a business equal. It makes timing work against you. It fails to help you find the right prospects.

He challenges many of the traditional selling methods and advice, such as "be persistent," "use funnels and forecasts" and even "dress like your prospects."

A new voice

Most authors of popular sales books come across as mighty masters of the trade, even demigods. They share their tricks, motivate others and preach how to do things better. Rumbauskas brings a unique voice to the page through openness and empathy.

He's not afraid to divulge specific examples of what he learned in the school of hard knocks. He conveys that he truly knows what it's like to be a struggling salesperson. And his advice seems more valid because of it.

In his first few years of sales, continuing to follow his managers' guidance to do more cold calling and increase

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Never Cold Call Again! Achieve Sales Greatness Without Cold Calling

By Frank J. Rumbauskas Jr.
2006, DN Advisors LLC
John Wiley & Sons Inc., Hoboken, N.J.
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Paperback, 178 pages

activity, he faced "an endless pattern of warning, final warning, fired, new job, warning, final warning, fired, and on and on." He admits that having doors slammed in his face and being hung up on affected his confidence, which in turn hindered his sales:

Instead of becoming immune to rejection, like I was told I naturally would, I became increasingly sensitive to it, and the condition known as call reluctance began to set in. I dreaded facing prospects. ... The longer this went on, the more my fear was communicated to prospects in subtle ways and the more I was rejected.

Learning from mistakes

Through much trial and error he realized there had to be a better way. Why not get people to call on him instead? In *Never Cold Call Again!* Rumbauskas proposes what he calls a self-marketing system, a new way to generate leads that has worked for him.

This "out with the old, in with the new" involves making a number of changes to business as usual.

Changes include improving your salesperson self-image, creating the right message for prospects and adding it to a one-page marketing piece, and serving as a consultant rather than a salesperson.

He also instructs on effective ways

to reach prospects using e-mail, Web sites and blogs, direct mail, newsletters, seminars, public relations, and networking.

For when you do get the appointment (and he says you will) there's a section on qualifying leads, developing and presenting your proposal and, of course, closing the sale.

When all is said and done, Rumbauskas' method may not be for everyone.

Some sales professionals have a unique way with people, and cold calling will continue to work for them. But all the others, especially those just starting their careers, will be relieved to know there's an alternative.

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