

## RESOURCES

# Develop a professional, client-focused approach

### HOW TO REACH KEY DECISION-MAKERS TO HELP BUILD YOUR SALES PIPELINE

Teleopen Ltd  
CD-ROM £250.00

This is promoted as an antidote to the 'spray and prey' approach of the typical sales cold call. This is the one where the customer tends to be talked at by someone whose sole objective appears to be to get far enough to complete his or her script, and where the salesperson has no intention of trying to understand your business needs.

This material is aimed at developing a professional, client-focused telesales approach and technique. It also focuses on selling to the top end of the market – to executives and, by definition, to the PAs of executives. It is refreshing to see material targeted in this area.

The text is broken down into the following seven modules: 'Finding your way' – how do you find about target companies; 'Planning the first call' – planning the call in terms of objectives, direction of conversation, what is the valid business reason for the call; 'Making friends with the PA' – about turning the PA from gatekeeper to gate opener; 'Engaging writing' – how to write targeted and interesting e-mails and faxes to follow up the initial telephone contact; 'Befriending executives' – presenting yourself to establish your credibility; 'Reflecting on your meeting' – assessing levels of interest, potential and your approach; and 'Establishing a relationship' – the strategy to build upon the credibility of the initial contact so that business ultimately results. In turn, each of these modules is broken down into: 'Summary'; 'What's your objective?'; 'What do you do now?'; 'How do you feel?'; 'How do you do it?'; 'What have you learned?'; and 'Quick review'.

Although it isn't stated, I reckon each section lasts around 10 minutes. The content is presented



INNOVATION	★★★
CONTENT	★★★
CLARITY	★★★★
RECOMMENDATION	★★★
VALUE FOR MONEY	★★

on two discs: the content of disc one is presented in writing, audio, or both. Disc 2 presents the content in audio format.

There are two sections I consistently found most useful. The first was the section 'How do you feel?', which looks at tips on how to stay positive and maintain a strong focus. In sales, particularly when approaching potential customers, both enthusiasm and belief in what you are doing are so important. The frequently used saying 'it's not what you say,

but how you say it' is never more appropriate than when selling over the telephone.

The section 'How do you do it?' provides a simulated scenario to show how the process could work in practice. As ever, it is one thing to read about something but it is altogether more powerful to hear how it could be done in practice. The material also rightly accepts that when looking to arrange appointments with senior executives, it will be necessary to use e-mail or letters to either introduce your offering, set up a telephone meeting, or to use a referral from the PA to another executive in the business with responsibility for your area of interest. An extremely useful written example of this is provided.

Overall, the content includes many practical tips. The material is aimed at selling high value products or services, but could equally be used for lower value sales.

One thing that is clear is that a professional telesales call needs research and preparation if it is to have impact. People within sales need to recognise that without first identifying a need or a valid business reason (something you have identified as being of interest to the business), a sale is unlikely to result. Perhaps this helps to explain why so many telephone approach calls are regarded as irritating cold calls which never achieve their purpose. **IP**