



## *“Just for Openers”*

### **You never get a second chance to make a good first impression...powerful call openers!**

Cold calling is hard work. It is what we have to do to be successful, but it is hard work. Here are some tips to help you get the maximum return on your investment of time and effort. Obviously, your goal is to convert as many cold call prospects into customers as possible. A strong opening statement is the key that unlocks the magic door and makes the customer decide to talk to you.

Are you using this for an opener?

“Hello, I need to make some commission to pay my rent and my boss is on me, so could I possibly have some of your money?”

You’re probably not using these exact words but if you are using *“I’d like to talk to you about advertising”* this is what the customer is hearing. This statement offers no benefit to the customer. Your customer’s time is valuable and like anything of value, they are not going to give it to a stranger without receiving something of value in return. You have to offer something to the customer before they will give you their precious time. It is important to “engage” the customer, to get them involved or you will never get the time of day from them, much less an ad.

Before formulating an opening statement you need to know what you want to accomplish. An opening statement should do the following:

- Tell who you are
- Where you’re from (Company)
- What we sell (We sell customers not advertising)
- How they will benefit by speaking with us

The opener should be short, direct, and focused on the customer. Keep it brief, edit your opener until every word serves a purpose. Eliminate any words that might confuse the customer. Use strong words “maximize, increase, save, profit from, improve etc.” If prospect isn’t convinced that they have something to gain, the call is over. Once you have accomplished the above, bridge directly into asking your SPIN question and proceed with the call.



Here is an example:

“Mr. Customer (1), my name is Chris Salesrep (2), I am your (*Publication name*) representative (3), I have helped a lot of local businesses (4), here in Yourtown (5), bring more customers into their stores (6). I’d like to ask you a few questions to see how we can do the same for you (7).

This opening statement takes just about 15 seconds to deliver. Here’s what it accomplishes in that time:

- It starts off with the customer’s name. This is a simple way to get the customer to listen. We are conditioned to pay attention when our name is mentioned.
- The rep identifies him/herself.
- Identifies the company. By using “I am your” the rep stays focused on the customer and assumes a professional relationship with the prospect.
- Establishes the rep’s credentials and shows that our focus is on helping businesses.
- Using the local community name further establishes the rep’s credentials (we’ve helped locally) and makes the prospect want to know more. Business people always want to know what is going on in their community.
- Customer focused benefit-“bring more customers”. This is a strong benefit to the customer. The possibility of getting “more customers” justifies giving you an audience.
- Quick bridge into questions. Once you have the customer’s interest, asking questions will further engage them and lead to discovering their needs.



Using an effective call opener is one of the most important things you can do to ensure your own success. Think about how the prospect hears what you are saying:

<b>You say</b>	<b>They think</b>
I was just in the area and thought I'd stop by	So you're wandering around aimlessly and thought you'd waste my time
Did I catch you at a bad time	It's always a bad time to talk to a clueless sales rep.
I have this special program and it's very inexpensive	I don't care how much it costs, what does it do for me
I'd like to tell you a little bit about our company and our products	I don't really care about your company I'm worried about my company
Did you see that game last night	You may have time to chat but I've got important work to do here
If it's not too much trouble, could you maybe, possibly spare a few minutes to talk to me	WIMP! Loser with a capital "L"

Given the impact of your opening statement on your sales results, you should work on developing the best openers possible. Try these ideas:

- Ask the successful cold callers in your office what they use for call openers.
- Write down some call openers of your own. Obviously you aren't going to walk into a business and read a prepared statement. Writing your opener can help you to develop a powerful & concise statement.
- Develop openers for several scenarios, i.e. When you know the owner's name, when you don't, for gatekeepers, for different types of businesses.
- Rehearse and role-play your openers until they sound smooth and confident.
- Experiment, try different techniques and observe the prospect's reactions. Use this information to refine your openers.
- Always keep your opener fresh. Make sure you are delivering it with as much energy at 3 PM on Friday as you do at 9 AM on Monday.



- Before you walk into a business, do a “2 minute think” asking yourself “If I owned this business why would I want to advertise with us?” Use the answer to this question as your opening benefit.
- Remember, your words are only a part of what you communicate to the customer. Deliver your opener with confidence and energy. Make good eye contact and smile. We have no reason to apologize to the customer for being there, we are there to help them.

Successful salespeople know that sales are often won and lost in the first thirty seconds of a sales call. Developing a powerful opener for your calls will bring great returns in increased sales revenue and account growth.