

For the next two weeks, our newsletters will be written by Debra Feldman, the head of JobWhiz, a career management and transition firm for executives. Sharing her article with our members does not mean that the TENG, Bruner Consulting or I am endorsing her services. These two newsletters will cover a topic that strikes fear into nearly everyone, namely making cold calls. You should find her advice timely and relevant. If you wish to send her feedback or contact her, you will find her Web address and phone number at the end of this article I am grateful for her contribution. Ed Pospesil

TENG Newsletter, Vol. 4 No 10

How to Make Cold Calls – Part One

It's rare to find anyone who is 100% at ease with making cold calls. Rarer still to hear that anyone actually enjoys this task. Combine the usual discomforts of making unsolicited contact with the already relatively high level of anxiety associated with job hunting and together they create a pretty stressful experience.

Wouldn't it be great if cold calling would just go away? But then you'd be abandoning one of the best means to identify unadvertised opportunities. Cold calling is a very effective job search method and one of the few proven techniques for entering the hidden job market. It is a great way for a prospective employee to get their name on the list for the next available opening. Unsolicited cold called inquiries also mean no fees to the employer which in this environment makes that candidate even more attractive from a financial perspective.

So if you can't beat 'em, then join in the cold calling brigade! Do it smartly to minimize nerves and maximize your potential for positive results. Here are a few tips to make your cold calling, not only easier, but also more effective!

1. To maximize your potential for being successful, choose a target company that your due diligence shows would benefit from your skills and knowledge. The closer you fit the profile of an ideal candidate, the easier it will be to sell yourself to this employer. Match your background to the industry, your interests to their apparent strategy and your talents to those areas where you identify a weakness or challenge you are prepared to address. Target the right company.
2. Initiate contact with a company representative who is most appropriate for your level and desired contribution. Usually this means finding someone in a functional or operational role that will be able to quickly assess your capabilities and recognize that you bring value to their organization. Target the right contact.
3. While you may cold call HR to boost your status in response to an advertised position by establishing a personal connection, HR is not the right place to begin your introduction to learn about unadvertised jobs, the so-called hidden job market. In order to become privy to leads known only to insiders, you want to get in touch and begin to cultivate a lasting relationship with a company insider who

- will champion your interest and help you meet other employees. HR is more likely to screen you out than to add headcount. Target the right relationship to give you a competitive advantage over other candidates.
4. Timing is critical. If you sense that the person answering the phone is distracted or not cooperating, it's okay to graciously end the call, politely arranging to call back at another more convenient time or making a note to yourself that you need to try again after you figure out how not to interrupt this person again (e.g., ask their assistant for an appointment.) Target the right circumstances.
 5. Don't be discouraged if the cold call doesn't get results the first time. Think of cold calling activities as a worthwhile investment creating relationships with individuals who have ties to your target employers. Rome wasn't built in a day; it takes patience to find the right person with whom you have something in common both professionally and personally. Target the right attitude.
 6. Don't begin your call by asking if there are any job openings for yourself. The purpose of cold calling is to expand your network to include contacts at your target companies. First get the right person, then get them to like and want to help you, and then begin to talk about your interest in working with them at their company. Target the right timing.
 7. Be prepared to say something relevant or provide some information of value based on your company research. Have some business small talk ready to share as a warm-up rather than charging ahead with your request to solicit job hunting help. Try to make this a two-way, mutually gratifying exchange. Target the right goals.
 8. Cold calling is a very effective way of expanding your business contacts database with an additional benefit of connecting you to people who might have a job lead now or in the future to share with you. This is not all about instant results, scheduling an immediate job interview or getting your resume read; it's about making connections that eventually may help you find a new opportunity. Target the right network.
 9. Remember that you are the one asking for help and should be polite and respectful of the other person. At the same time, approaching cold calling activities as an exchange among equals not as a subordinate is important. You are not asking for a job; you are proposing to provide assistance to their team. Target the right career management strategy.
 10. Everyone is busy and it is often a challenge to reach someone and have a conversation. If you don't get through on the first couple of attempts, call early or late in the day, send an email requesting a callback, get the administrative staff to help or find some other insider to help arrange the call. Find out how to avoid the main switchboard and get to the contact's direct extension. Target a direct contact.

Still hesitant about making cold calls? Stay tuned for Part Two revealing more tips for discovering hot new career opportunities using proven cold calling techniques.

CONTACT: Debra Feldman
Tel. (203)637-3500
www.JobWhiz.com

JobWhiz is the first and still the only career management service for senior executives that provides personal introductions to decision makers at target companies. By connecting directly to employers through a respected personal talent agent, job seekers quickly identify and swiftly land new opportunities. Developing and implementing a focused, extremely efficient campaign project eliminates unproductive cold calling and efforts wasted on ineffective job hunting. To learn how JobWhiz will kickstart your connection to a new, higher paying challenge now and turn your stress into success, contact www.JobWhiz.com.

This and all previous TENG Newsletters may be found online at <http://www.theteng.org> and <http://www.brunerconsulting.com/articles.htm>

Ed Pospesil
Chairman
Technology Executives Network GroupSM

Vice President
Bruner Consulting Associates, Inc.
33 Elizabeth Street, 3rd Floor
Derby, CT 06418
epospesil@brunerconsulting.com
www.brunerconsulting.com
www.theteng.org
Phone: 203-732-7084 / 866-566-2224
Fax: 203-732-9033

This e-mail and any attachment contain information which is private and confidential and is intended for the addressee only. If you are not an addressee, you are not authorized to read, copy or use the e-mail or any attachment. If you have received this e-mail in error, please notify the sender by return e-mail and then destroy it. Thank you.