

Excuses



The Lead Guru
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Remember when you were six or seven years old? I bet you were just like me, one of the best *excuse makers* in the neighborhood. I can remember one of my closest friends, he was really quick

coming up with good excuses; especially when his mom asked him to do the dishes or take the dog for a walk. For example, his mom would ask him to make his bed before he went out to play, and he would say, "Mom, I am going to come back in a few minutes and take a nap." Or his mom would say, "Could you take the garbage out?" He would respond, "Okay mom, but there is still some more room left in the bag. I would hate to waste a plastic liner." These might appear to be weak excuses to us now that we are older and wiser, but my point is, we learned early on how to create excuses. And some of us have continued to develop these *excuse skills*, even today.

Life is just a series of personal challenges, where people find excuses to accept or reject those challenges, and perfecting these *excuse skills* is a learned attitude. This is why a good salesperson works at perfecting their *excuse skills*, to do what they need or want to do. For example, a good salesperson will create an excuse to contact someone who has an unlisted phone number. However, an average salesperson, who has a lead without a phone number, might offer excuses as to why an unlisted number makes the lead a *bad lead*.

One of the biggest reasons for salespeople not converting more leads into appointments follows this same thought process. You are given a lead, or leads, by your company or you may have purchased them yourself, and once that lead is in your hand, you must make a choice, an *excuse choice*. Do you take that lead and find an excuse to work it, or do you simply put it aside finding every excuse as to why it is a *bad lead*?

Let's take an actual direct mail lead and walk through the *excuse process*. Remember most leads provide a prospect's name, address and sometimes a telephone number — that is it! The response card lead we are going to work has the following information which was provided by the prospect:

Name: Joe Customer (customer signature provided)

Address: P.O. Box You Will Never Find Me

City: Lost Horizon State: Texas Zip: 11111

Phone: (214)555-8888

Send me information on *Outliving Your Money*.
Please do not send a salesperson!

The Key To Getting In

We will begin with a typical *bad lead excuse* response:

1. The address is too hard to find, or the prospect lives too far away.
2. The customer only wants the information advertised, and is probably just shopping.
3. The customer is probably a client who only prefers to buy by mail.
4. The customer does not like salespeople!

Now, take a look at how a salesperson with lead training would use this lead to create a *good lead excuse*:

1. Every address has a physical location, even a P.O. Box address (most salespeople do not take the extra time to find a P.O. Box address).
2. They must be serious about managing their money because they checked the *send me more information box*.
3. They provided a telephone number, and calling ahead to pre-set an appointment is an excellent way to contact a potential customer.
4. They signed their inquiry card, which may mean they are not just looking for something via mail.

You could use any excuse that this is not a *good lead*, or that the prospect did not really express an interest because they did not provide enough information. The truth is, having more information alone does not make this a *good lead*. Although potential customers expect salespeople to contact them, as every Agent has experienced, customers are often not receptive. However, if a salesperson conveys a sense of confidence, credibility and seems to have a good excuse why the customer should listen, they just might get in the door.

You could stop by a home or business using the excuse *your agency asked you to stop by and find out what the customer had in mind when they sent the reply card in*. You could use the excuse *you felt obligated to arrange your schedule to come out and see the customer personally*. And I almost forgot the best excuse — *you have to definitely contact this prospect in order to get their signature to verify their interest*.

Working leads can be simplified if we accept the idea of creating excuses to contact people. So let's see if some of those childhood *excuse skills* can be applied to helping you get in the door. *Try it — you are probably better than you think!*