

Excuses Are Your Way in the Door

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Remember back when you were 6 or 7 years old? I'll bet you were, just like me, one of the best "excuse makers" in your neighborhood. We learned early on how to create excuses to do, or not to do something.

Well let's see if some of these childhood skills apply to aiding a salesperson to get into homes or businesses. Let me preface my comments by mentioning that some of us continued to develop our "excuse skills", and some of us have forgotten how. A good salesperson works at perfecting excuses to do what he or she needs to do or wants to do. For example, a good salesperson will create some reason to contact someone who has an unlisted phone number. But an average salesperson that has a lead without a phone number will offer excuses why an unlisted number is a "bad lead" or is not worth working.

It's a learned attitude: People are expecting salespeople to contact them, and they aren't supposed to be receptive. However, if the salesperson conveys a sense of confidence, credibility, and seems to have a good excuse, they might get in the door.

Life is really a series of personal challenges, and people find excuses to accept or to back off from new challenges. How many of you have ever gone on a diet and said out loud that this time you were going to stick with it? You might even start out and stick to your diet plan for a week or two. Then one day or night, someone creates a better excuse to talk you into missing your workout to grab a beer and pizza. You have the power to say no or make-up an excuse why you couldn't, but you choose the later option instead.

One of the biggest reasons that salespeople do not convert more leads into appointments follows the same thought process I just outlined. You are given a lead or leads by your company or you may have purchased some leads. Now you have to make an "excuse choice" whether you work each lead or not.

You can convince yourself that you need more information or a more qualified lead before it's worth your time. Remember that most leads (direct mail or telemarketing) provide a prospect's name, address and sometimes a telephone number – that's it!

Let's take an actual direct mail lead and walk through the excuses to or not to contact. The lead we are going to work has the following information provided by the prospect on a response card.

Don Prospect
P.O. Box 9090
Lost Horizon, Texas 11111
214-555-8888

Send me some information on
"Outliving Your Money"
Signed, Don Prospect
PS. Don't send a salesperson!

Now there's a HOT LEAD!!!

Let's compare how a salesperson who makes excuses and a salesperson with lead training would view this lead:

The Excuse Maker

1. Hard address to find
2. Just wants the information advertised
3. Probably someone who only buys by mail
4. Don't like salespeople (PS Note)
5. Lives too far away
6. Probably just shopping

Note to self: Maybe if I'm close to the area and have some free time, I'll try to contact this lead.

The Well-Trained Professional

1. Good. Most salespeople won't take the extra time to find a P.O. Box address.
2. Good. They requested information, so they must be serious about controlling their money. They are obviously concerned with preventing devastating losses.
3. Good. I have a telephone number so I can make sure they are home before I come by. Or I can pre-set the appointment possibly. I respect anyone who wants to be called first before dropping by
4. Good. They signed their inquiry card – they are not just looking for something in the mail

You see, working leads or prospecting can be simplified if we accept the idea of needing to create excuses to contact people. Try it – you are probably better than you think you are!