



Eight Secrets to Setting High-Value Appointments

THE CENTER FOR
SALES STRATEGY



If you have downloaded this ebook you are probably in either sales or sales management, but in either case you are the person whose job depends on securing more quality appointments.

For salespeople, the benefit is obvious. How much different would your life be if you could double, or even triple, the number of appointments you have each week—appointments where you are uncovering needs or proposing tailored solutions?



For *managers*, there are both obvious and not-so-obvious benefits. For example, sales forces have been reduced in many companies, but you can add sales capacity *without adding salespeople* by getting them in front of more high-value prospects each week. If they make two of these calls each week now, but can double that number (or more) because they are not spending time scratching around trying get someone to see them, you have re-engineered your operation. Think about it.

This ebook is designed to provide you with specific actions you can take to get in front of more high-value prospects very soon. If you commit to these actions and follow the path outlined here, you *will* see results.

You probably already know that getting appointments with qualified prospects has never been tougher, but there IS a way to stand out, to break through in such a way that prospects will be interested in seeing you.



Spend some time here, download the tools, make a plan, and let us know what questions you have along the way.

1. Think Through Your Value Proposition

Begin by articulating an in-depth description of your products and services and what sets you apart from the competition. Resist the temptation to rely too heavily on product features and benefits.



What do you bring to the table beyond delivery of your product or service? Do you have in-depth industry or category knowledge? Do you have research or case studies that can help a prospect make good choices? Are you very good at tailoring solutions to particular problems?

Remember, in the old days the role of the sales organization was to communicate value. Today, the best sales organizations *create* value for their customers that goes well beyond product and price.

2. Determine Who Your Best Prospects Are First

You need this model BEFORE you get started. In today's world you can't simply tune up a phone script and smile and dial.

When we work with companies in our Appointment Lab, we help them identify their ***Ideal Customer Profile*** by analyzing their current customer base, expenditures, market segments, and other factors.



We often help them screen and prioritize prospects through a ***Large-Scale Survey***. You can do this too. In order to set high-value appointments you must first identify and approach prospects *that are likely to be interested in you*.

3. Clean Up Your Prospect Lists

Our experience has indicated that one of the biggest challenges sales organizations have in approaching high-value prospects is outdated or missing contact information.



Often it takes significant detective work, combing through databases and placing live calls, just to identify the right buying influence within a prospect organization, and certainly to gather or correct contact information. But, unless someone does this work, you are essentially DOA.

4. Prepare and Then Prepare Again

You must have relevant market research, scripting that emphasizes your value proposition as a company, tailored *Valid Business Reasons* that

VBR
Valid Business Reason

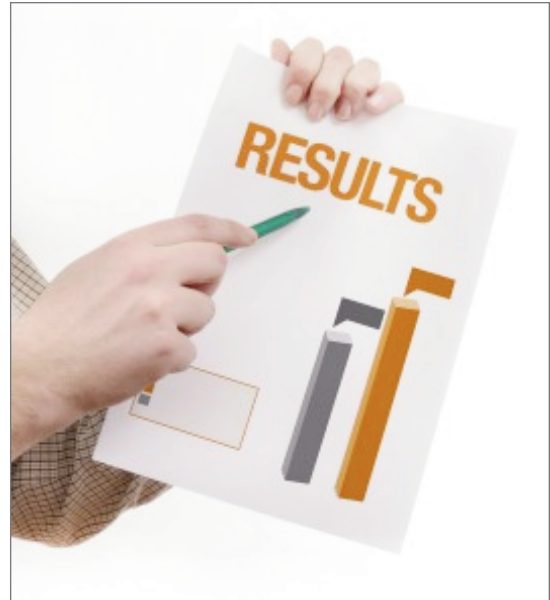
will make the prospect want to see you now, and capability brochures that illustrate how you do business—not just your product line.

Also *Personal Marketing Resumes* for the salesperson that will meet with the prospect can break the ice and establish credibility in advance. Success stories that illustrate how you have solved problems for clients, and even personal letters of introduction or cards, help a prospect feel more comfortable about granting an appointment. Abe Lincoln once said, “If I had an hour to chop down a cherry tree, I’d spend the first 45 minutes sharpening my axe.”

5. Training

Setting appointments is tough and serious work. The people who do this **MUST** be well trained on how to articulate the value a prospect would receive if they agree to invest an hour of their time.

This work cannot be pushed off to inexperienced or poorly trained people. In fact, high-value appointments have such a monetary value for the company you could argue your best, well-trained people should be doing this.



6. Don't Give Up

We mean that quite literally. It's been our experience that it takes about seven interactions with a high-value prospect to get an appointment. Most people give up way before that. If you are going to get the prospect's attention even with seven touches, you need to use a multi-media approach where each interaction is clearly tailored to that particular prospect.



In our Appointment Lab, we utilize a ***Don't Give Up*** approach that combines email, phone calls, research, and even old-fashioned snail mail to break through. Multi-media is an important part of success in appointment setting, but even more crucial is a *tailored* approach to each prospect.

You can download the Don't Give Up process and try it yourself at:

<http://blog.thecenterforsalesstrategy.com/dont-give-up>.

7. You Need Quality Assurance & Reporting

You have to ensure quality practices in every call, email, and business letter and track your progress.



You should also have a *Sales Management System* to keep track of where your prospects are within the seven steps of the *Don't Give Up* process, and document any new decision makers that you discover along the way.

After a while, you will get a feel for which approaches are working best for you and get better at tailoring your messages to each prospect.

8. Consider Adding Inbound Marketing For Lead Generation

We all know it's easier to secure an appointment with someone who already sees you as a thought leader in your industry.

A good Inbound Marketing Strategy can get your business found by potential clients; convert visitors into leads and you'll have a rich flow of highly interested prospects.

Learn more at:

<http://www.thecenterforsalesstrategy.com/services/tactics/inbound-marketing>



Most sales managers and salespeople agree getting face time with high-value prospects is tougher than ever. Prospects have most of the knowledge they need about your products available to them on the internet. They also have plenty of electronic devices available to screen you out. You need a strategy to break through and it can be done. If you would like to learn more about training and consulting in this area, visit:

<http://www.thecenterforsalesstrategy.com/services/training>

Once again, securing appointments with high-value prospects is tough and serious work, but it can be done very well when you have the discipline to follow a process, tailor your approach, and track your progress.

Our Appointment Lab will help you be successful in setting high-quality appointments with 20% - 34% of prospects depending on the industry and the quality of the prospect data. To learn more about how you might outsource this function through our Appointment Lab, visit:

<http://www.thecenterforsalesstrategy.com/services/tactics/appointment-lab>

For a free 30-minute consultation to discuss how the appointment lab could help your organization contact Jeff Roth at:

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