



# The Sales Rep's

**STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE**

to Inbound Sales Prospecting

# Did you know that 59% of sales time is wasted on unproductive prospecting?

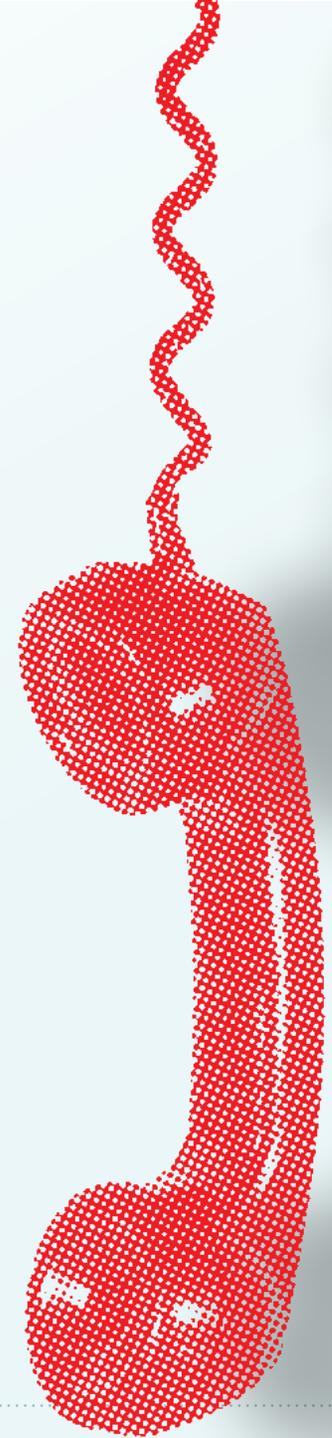
That's because sales people are spending valuable time using old-fashioned prospecting techniques. In his blog article "Cold Calling a Dead Man: My Years of Old-School Selling on Wall Street," Dave Rynn says:

*"Back in 1994, they still handed you a phonebook and you 'smiled-and-dialed' your way to becoming a million-dollar rep...I kept a call sheet and would make hundreds of dials a day in order to set appointments so I could convince the prospect I was the financial advisor they should be working with."*

Inbound sales prospecting turns that archaic thinking on its head. Prospecting today is focused on helping, not on pushing the features and benefits of your product or service.

**The goal of inbound prospecting is to connect with a potential client and build a relationship based on honesty that eventually develops into trust.**

This tip sheet will take you step-by-step through the inbound prospecting process, so you can leave "smiling and dialing" behind forever.



First, we'll take you through the steps of building an effective inbound prospecting campaign. Then, we'll show you an example prospecting sequence you can use as inspiration for creating your own email and phone campaign.

# Building an Inbound Prospecting Campaign

1

## Create a Targeted Prospect List

The first step is to create a list of accounts you want to go after. Come up with targeted criteria based on company profiles to keep the list focused on truly qualified prospects. Putting together this list may take a bit of research. You can use resources such as LinkedIn or the HubSpot Prospects tool to look up companies that meet your ideal profile. These "good-fit" companies should look a lot like your current customers, especially the ones who buy from you again and again.

### Criteria for your list could include:

- ▶ Company Size
- ▶ Location
- ▶ Any other important factors that are specific to your company's product or service
- ▶ Company Revenue
- ▶ Industry or Vertical

Knowing your company's definition of an ideal prospect will help you prioritize your list and determine which businesses require more in-depth research.\*

Throughout all of this research, actively think about how you can help. Does this company need the solution you're offering? Is the decision-maker likely to be dealing with the same pain points as your current customers? The more you know how you can help a business, the easier it will be to connect.

**\*** *Note for HubSpot Users: the software comes with automatic lead scoring based on parameters you program ahead of time, so the process of prioritizing and qualifying your list is automatic, not manual.*



## 2

## Research, Qualify, and Prioritize Your List

Once you've built a list of target accounts to pursue, it's time to start looking for the right contacts within each account.

There's nothing more critical to a sales team's success than understanding who the ideal buyer is. Building this foundation ensures your team is as efficient as possible. When building out and learning about your buyer personas, ask the following questions:

- ▶ What is the job title of my ideal prospect?
- ▶ Who do they report to?
- ▶ Where is this person "hanging out" online?
- ▶ How much experience does this person have?
- ▶ What current challenges does this person face?
- ▶ What are their larger vision goals?

Industries are constantly evolving, and the decision-maker at each company on your target list may not fit into a tightly constructed box. But do your best to gather as much information as you can.

### EMBRACE THE POWER OF LINKEDIN

It can't be stressed enough how valuable LinkedIn is for researching prospects. Using a People search, look for folks at your target companies with job titles that indicate a certain level of seniority, then find their manager or anyone senior to them.

C-level executives will be more difficult to find, but they're also more valuable. You're not necessarily contacting these people through LinkedIn, just discovering more about who they are.

To search for an exact phrase on LinkedIn, such as an exact-match job title, wrap the phrase in quotation marks.



### 3

## Find Your Reason for Outreach

You probably already know that cold calling is one sales technique that is becoming seriously outdated. In fact, only 2% of cold calls result in an appointment. A better approach is a warm call.

Warm calling is connecting with a company that you've proactively identified as a good fit, but hasn't demonstrated an interest in your product or service yet. Based on your knowledge and experience, they align with the profile of your successful customers.

It's okay to reach out to good fit prospects who haven't converted on your website yet. You just have to do it correctly. The key is to be efficient and add value to the conversation.

Your reason for outreach should be customized to the specific business and prospect you're targeting.

### **HERE IS AN EXAMPLE:**

A mechanical seal manufacturer is researching good-fit companies and sees a news post on one of their target companies' websites. The prospect is in the chemical processing industry and has recently decided to expand operations. Now, when the sales rep for the manufacturing company reaches out with a warm call, he can use this piece of information as an opening to begin introducing his solutions.

## 4

### Make the Call

Especially when calling an executive, your opening must be perfect. You only have 15 seconds to snag their interest and substantiate your value. Timing is everything.

- ▶ Avoid calling during peak business hours. Early calls (between 7:30 a.m. and 8:20 a.m.) garner more pick-ups.
- ▶ Sound powerful and in control, but also pleasant and respectful. Executives respond better to confidence.
- ▶ Be human. Your tone of voice and sense of humor are your greatest tools. Compassion and understanding for the demands of their position helps, too.



#### WHY DOES INBOUND SALES PROSPECTING WORK?

What makes inbound sales prospecting different than cold calling? Why is the success rate so much higher with this approach?

- ▶ **It is targeted.** Reps go after only a carefully curated list of decision-makers at best-fit companies.
- ▶ **It is customized.** The messaging is relevant to the specific prospect account you are targeting.
- ▶ It is based on having a reason for outreach.
- ▶ It adds value to the conversation.
- ▶ It allows you to focus your best efforts on your most engaged prospects.
- ▶ **It is human.** From language in an email to tone of voice when calling, there's no slimy sales lingo or confusing tricks.

## 5

### Add Value to the Conversation

Warm calling is not intended as just another platform for pitching. Besides having a reason to contact your prospect, you need to add value within your attempt. This is one of the keys to success with inbound prospecting.

#### Examples of adding value could include:

- ▶ Sharing a piece of highly relevant content
- ▶ Sharing a tip based on an observation of their business or website
- ▶ Alerting the prospect to industry trends or news they might not be aware of

## 6

### Make a Second Connection

A warm call is one of many touchpoints you'll hopefully have with a prospect. To keep momentum going, send a follow up email thanking your prospect for their time. If the call was a success and you touched on their biggest business pain point, this an excellent opportunity to provide them with specific, detailed information to help solve their problem. You can also connect with them on social medias like LinkedIn or Twitter to continue learning more about who they are, what they need and how you can help.

# 7

## Monitor and Track Your Efforts

An inbound prospecting campaign has many moving parts, and it's important to keep track of each and every one for the process to be as effective as possible.

Why? You should be spending the majority of your time on the most engaged prospects. That means you'll need to be able to track who is opening your emails and responding to your calls.

Our recommended tracking tool is the HubSpot CRM. With the HubSpot CRM, you can send and track emails, place calls, and schedule meetings all in one place. You can also track a deal through every stage from prospect to customer and see any sale's direct impact on the business's bottom line.

### Important metrics all sales people should know about themselves:



Call to connect ratio



Connect to meetings booked ratio



Opportunity conversion rates over time

Remember to always be optimizing your process. Every prospect is different, so don't stick to the same stale routine if it simply isn't working anymore. Constantly test and refine your email copy and outreach strategies by running tests to see which ones deliver you the best results.

### HOW TO FIND CONTACT INFO

Sometimes, decision-makers will not be as easy to reach as you might like. Here are some tips for discovering a prospect's contact information.

- ▶ Start by checking your company's CRM to be sure no one else has already found the right email address.
- ▶ As a basic beginning step, try Googling your prospect's name plus "email." If they've put their email address in a PDF or other web publication, it will show up in the results.
- ▶ Try to find someone else's email at the company, then use an educated guess to find the prospect's email address using the other person's as a model for structure.
- ▶ Use an email verification service to validate or invalidate different potential versions of the prospect's email address.



# The Inbound Prospecting Sequence

The average salesperson only makes 2 attempts to reach a prospect, but 80% of sales require at least 5 follow-ups. Use this sample inbound sales prospecting sequence to build your own inbound prospecting campaign. The goal is to make a meaningful connection with a prospect so that you can build and nurture a relationship based on trust and helpfulness.

We'll use the mechanical seal manufacturer as an example.

1

Call and attempt to connect. If no connection, leave a voicemail.

**EXAMPLE:**

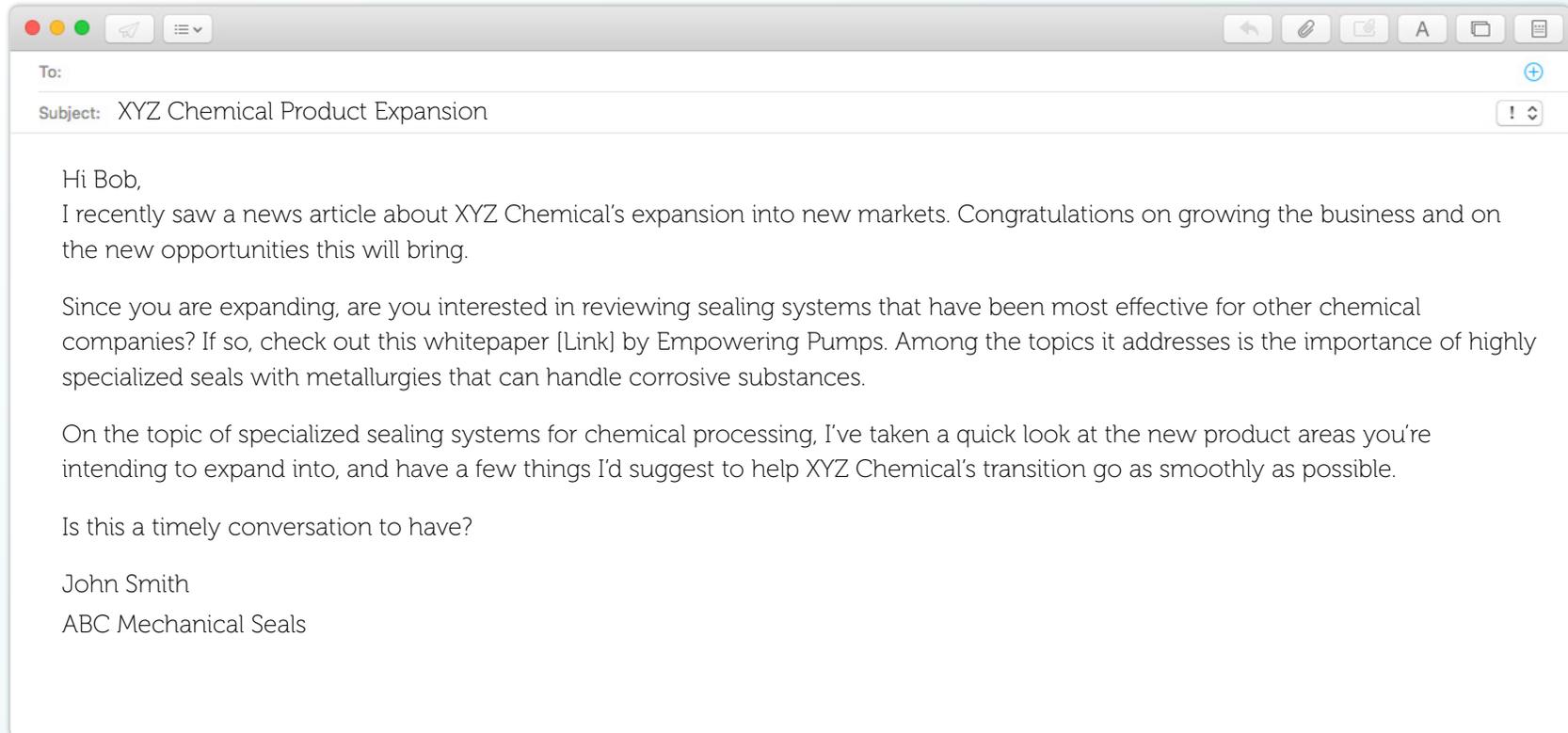
*"Hi Bob, this is John Smith from ABC Mechanical Seals. You and I have not spoken before, but I was doing some research and came across a news article that said XYZ Chemical is expanding into new product areas—congrats on growing the business. I was calling to see if you are interested in reviewing sealing systems that have been most effective for other chemical companies? If so, I'm going to email you a whitepaper from Empowering Pumps that covers that very topic. I've also taken a quick look at the new product areas you're intending to expand into, and have a few things I'd suggest to help XYZ Chemical's transition go as smoothly as possible. Is there a good time to connect? You can reply to my email or feel free to call me direct at xxx-xxxx."*



## 2

### Send a corresponding email.

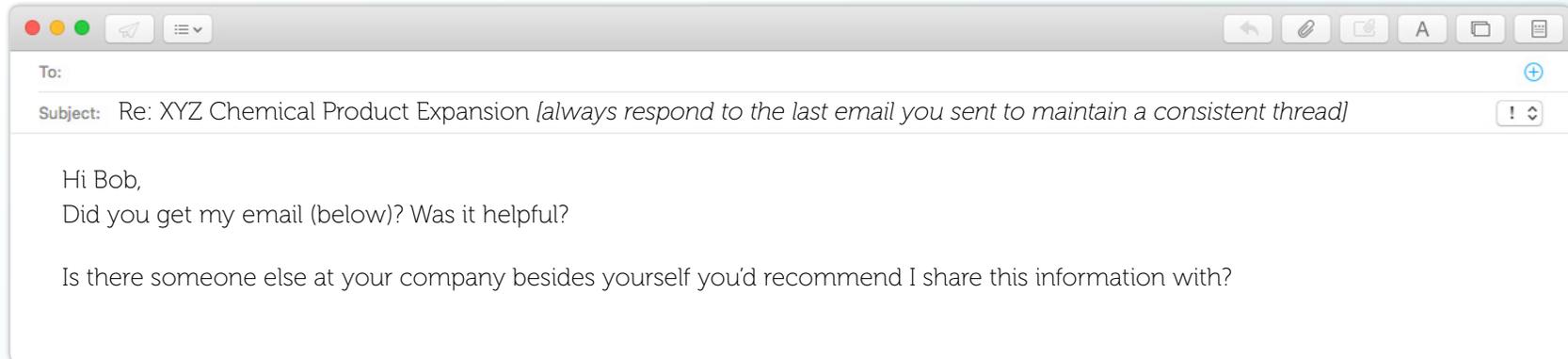
#### EXAMPLE:



### 3

## Follow-up: Did you get my email?

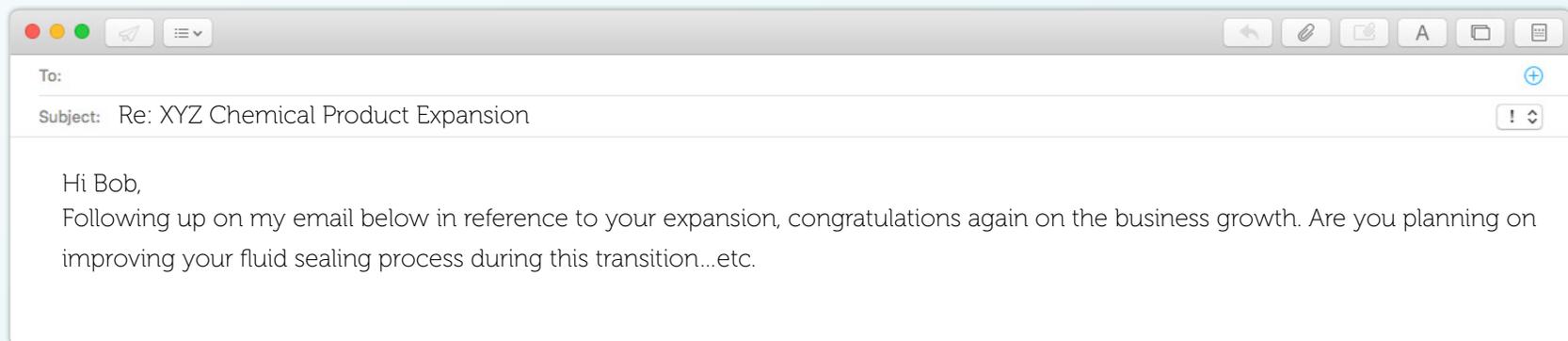
### EXAMPLE:



### 4

## Continue to be helpful & attempt to connect. Call & send another helpful email.

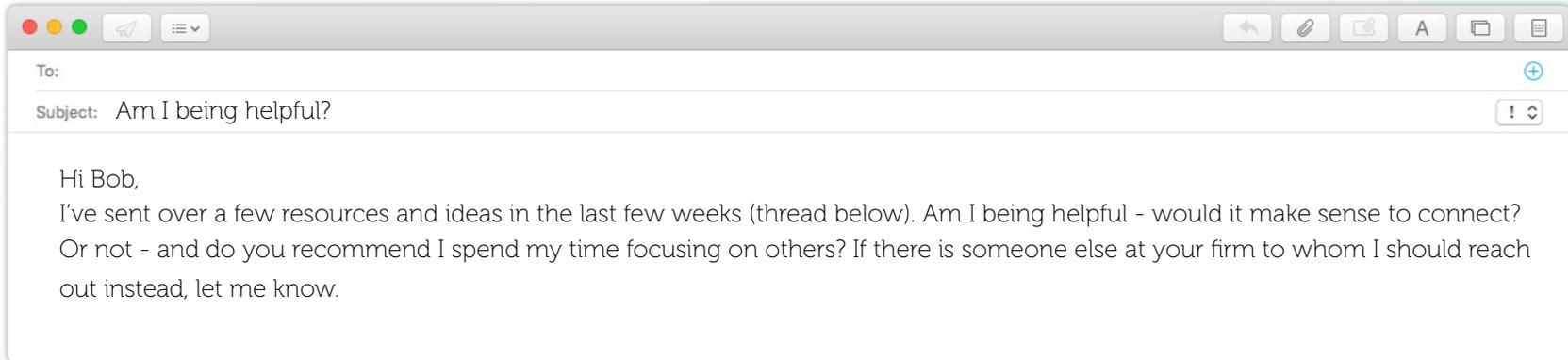
### EXAMPLE:



5

Call and attempt to connect. Send an email asking if you're being helpful.

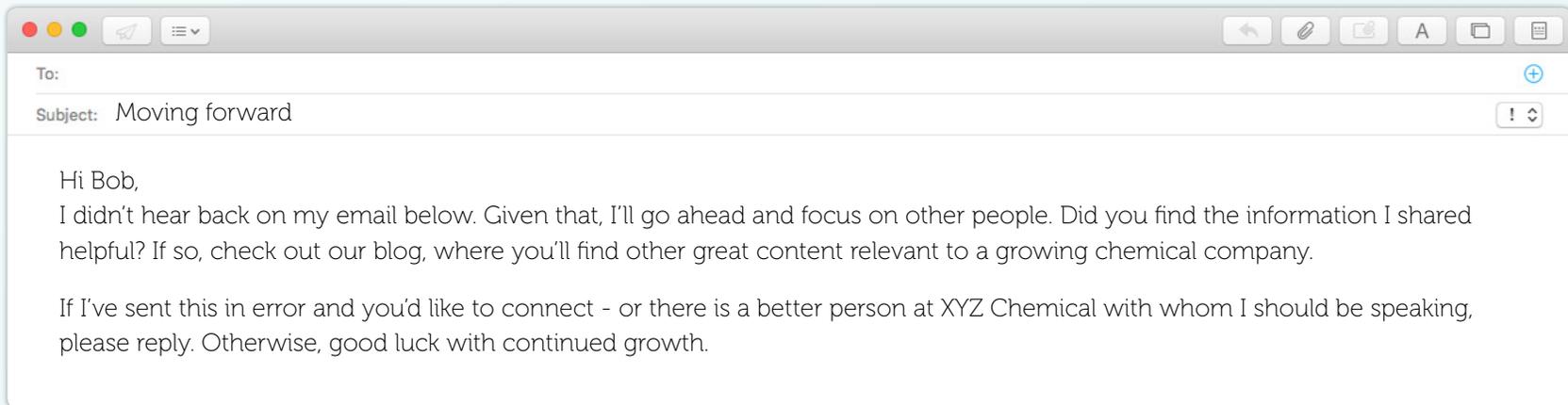
**EXAMPLE:**



6

Time to break up (for now). Make another call and send a final email.

**EXAMPLE:**





## Top Takeaways for Success

- ▶ Only target good-fit companies who match your ideal customer profile.
- ▶ Do your research ahead of time; know as much as you can about the company and the decision-maker.
- ▶ Customize all of your attempts to reach out.
- ▶ Always add value to the conversation.
- ▶ Make at least five attempts to connect, using both phone and email.
- ▶ Monitor and track your process so you know on which prospects to spend the most time.
- ▶ Turn your emails and voicemails into templates you can use again and again and customize for different prospects.

**Don't wait! Start using inbound sales prospecting and go get your ideal customers today.**



**Does your team need to embrace  
the new buying process and  
make it work for them?**



David speaks to sales teams about winning more business by understanding today's buyer. **Start the conversation with David today.**

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