

Cold Calling

Phoning a potential employer out of the blue to seek work isn't easy. But cold calling, if you pull it off, can help you crack the lucrative hidden job market.

Job advertisements sometimes receive hundreds of applications, but a cold call at the right time can find you a vacancy before it's even advertised.

Use these handy tips to improve your cold calling skills:

Before the call

Do your research

A little bit of preparation will make cold calling easier.

Who do you want to talk to? If you don't know the person's name, work out their role within the organisation. Perhaps they organise work experience or they're the human resources manager.

Calling about a specific job? First research the company and the job itself. When you call you'll want to show how much you know and prove you're the right person for the job.

And be polite to the receptionist - they can be a goldmine of information about their company.

Write a script

Save yourself getting tongue-tied or forgetting what to say with a practice phone script. This will also help you to speak clearly. Look at the examples we have given and adapt them for your use.

Your script should highlight your skills and experience and why you stand out from the crowd. It should vary to suit each potential employer.

You might be transferred to different people in the same organisation - remember to introduce yourself again and explain the reason for your call.

During the call

Find somewhere quiet to make your call, away from interruptions or distractions. And once you're on the phone don't put the person on hold to answer another call. You've worked hard to get to speak to them, don't waste this chance.

Dress to impress

You could sit on the couch in your PJs to make your call, but if you're dressed and at the table it might help you get into the right frame of mind. There's a difference in your voice if you sit straight or even stand, and it'll help you sound more confident on the phone.

Mind your manners

A little bit of preparation will make cold calling easier

Find somewhere quiet to make your call

Politeness is the easiest way to make a good impression on the phone

Research the company and the job itself.

Adapted from
<http://www.youthcentral.vic.gov.au/>

Politeness is the easiest way to make a good impression on the phone:

Speak clearly - Try not to mumble or 'um' and 'er' too much. Speak as clearly as you can and smile - this will add warmth to your voice.

Excuse yourself - Put the phone aside to cough or sneeze - don't sniff or splutter into the phone.

Use names - Show respect and warmth to the person you're speaking to by finding out their name. Using names will make your conversation feel more personable and comfortable.

Say thank you - Before ending the call, thank the person for their time.

Take notes

Keep a pen and paper handy when cold calling. Notes of what was said in your phone calls will save time when you next speak with the employer. You won't have to go over things already discussed and you'll impress because you're organised.

Before the end of your call summarise any action to be taken, e.g. confirm that you will send in your résumé if that is what you discussed.

Be persistent

If you haven't found what you wanted, ask the contact details of someone who may be able to help. You've got to be persistent. If the person you want to speak to isn't there, leave a message or ask when the best time to call back is. If the organisation won't give out direct numbers, get an email address.

After the call

Keep your promises - Once you have made the call, you're almost done. If you said you would email your resume or contact details, do it soon!

Follow up - If someone said they would call you back but you don't hear from them after a week or so, give them another call. Chances are they've been busy and forgot to get back to you. They'll probably be impressed by your enthusiasm in politely following up.

Cold calling will never be easy, but with confidence, politeness and persistence it can make things happen for you.

Cold Calling scripts

"Good morning. My name is _____. I was wanting the name of your company's HR manager (or owner or manager), please. Would I be able to speak with them? Thank you."

"Good morning _____. My name is _____. I'm calling about any opportunities for work at your company. I have a lot of experience in _____ and _____, which is an area I know your company specialises in. I've also worked in _____"

Are there any suitable openings at your company at present? ...Can I send you my resume in case any come up in future?"

"Good morning, my name is _____ and I'm enquiring about the _____ I saw advertised in the _____ on the __ / __ / __. I'm keen to find out more about it."

"Good afternoon, I'd like to speak to _____, please. My name is _____ and I'm hoping to find out about any upcoming employment opportunities with your organisation."

"Good morning, my name is _____ I'm interested in future employment opportunities with your organisation. I'm calling to find out the name and address of the person I should send my résumé to."

Follow up calls

"Hello, _____ How are you? It's _____ here. I'm just calling to check that you received my email with my cover letter and résumé attached. Can I provide you with any further details?"

"Good morning, I'd like to speak to _____, please. My name is _____ I'm just returning his call about my application for the role of _____"

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