



Interview with Mike Brooks & Lahat Tzvi

Mike Brooks and I have been friends for several years.

I appreciate his work in the field of cold calls, and whenever I need professional advice on the subject, or I need to write a professional script, Mike is the first person I chose to consult. I love his point of view.

His experience and the insights he has gained over the years bought him a place of honor in the "Hall of Fame" and as an expert in the field of cold calls.

I asked Mike to take a few moments to share with us in some insights and tips so that everyone can learn how to make better use of the phone.



Please tell us a little about yourself and the work that you do



As president of www.MrInsideSales.com, and as the name suggests, I am one of the foremost authorities on selling products or services over the phone. I've been recognized for the last five years in a row by the American Association of Inside Sales Professionals as one of the "Top 25 Most Influential" inside sales professionals working in the industry today.

I work with companies selling either B2C or B2B.

My consulting work focuses on four areas these days:

- 1) Writing phone scripts to help sales reps deliver the best practice approach to cold calling, qualifying and then closing prospects over the phone.
- 2) I work with business owners helping them diagnose what is wrong with their inside sales team and then offering immediate, proven fixes to dramatically improve them (average 30%+ improvement in sales in 90 days).
- 3) I train teams remotely by listening to their calls and then holding sales meeting offering best practice solutions to the problems they are having.

- 4) I coach, one on one, with business owners who are looking to develop an inside sales team or improve an existing one.

I'm also a keynote speaker, a breakout speaker offering training on cold calling, closing sales over the phone, and staying motivated.

Lastly, I'm a best-selling author of two books on inside sales: "The Real Secrets of the Top 25%" and "The Ultimate Book of Phone Scripts."



Let's start with the thought question: Are Cold Calls still working?



Yes, if they are done right.

First, despite social media and some people who claim, "Cold Calling is Dead," cold calling is alive and used very effectively by those who know how to do it. You might call it "warm calling" or "social selling," but whatever way you currently find a lead, at some point you need to pick up the phone and make a call, right?

So, again, cold calls do work IF you do it right. That can include:

- A) Doing some research so you aren't going in cold (in other words you have some intel)
- B) You are using a proven script and know how to build rapport quickly and not sound like you're cold calling
- C) If you're prepared for the brush offs and stalls you get, and
- D) If you know how to deal with the gatekeeper.

So, cold calls do still work, you just have to know how to make them effectively. Luckily, that's what I specialize in...



How Social Media/Social Selling changed the way we sell?



Social media has given us, as sales professionals, unparalleled insight into who our prospects are and what some of their buying motives might be. Having this intel can make each contact with them so much more effective.

On the downside, our prospects now have a lot of intel on us and our competition. This can make our jobs harder as well.

In a way, social media has also made sales reps lazier because many would prefer to comb the internet and send emails rather than pick up the phone and have a conversation. That's bad...



What is the biggest challenge today on the sales call?

Unfortunately, there are many, but the biggest is:



- A) Not qualifying prospects. Too many sales reps today will schedule a demo with just about anyone – and then hope and pray they buy...

5) What do you think about that issue: To ask "how are you" or not?

Never liked it. You're just telegraphing yourself as a sales rep! My new favorite is, "Hi, this is _____, with _____, I take it you're doing O.K. today?"

Forcing your prospect to say "yes" is a great way to start. Try it...



What is the "Big Trends" for 2016?



One big trend which started last year and has dominated my consulting business in 2016 already is empowering customer service reps to become more sales oriented in terms of uncovering more revenue opportunities. The transformation of traditional customer service reps into actual revenue producers is becoming a substantial revenue source for many companies.

Customer service reps are being taught to uncover potential opportunities in the form of upselling existing accounts, discovering new departments and needs within customer accounts as well as creating referral opportunities.

The other trend, which I'm afraid will not ease up or slow down, is the creation and reliance on more technology to try and evaluate, predict and increase sales. The reason I see this as a potential negative is that so many industries and companies are happy to invest in what they deem to be the "holy grail" of sales -- the one solution that will allow them to see deeper in the pipeline, etc.

And in doing so, they forego the need and importance of actually training their sales team on the basics of sales. The fundamentals of what it takes to actually prospect and close business.

The shame is that it doesn't need to be this way. Supply an inside sales team with the scripts they need to succeed, the best practices responses to the sales situations and objections they face day in and day out, and you'll instantly increase their close ratio and your sales revenue. Unfortunately, it takes some companies way too long to realize this...



We love if you can share with us some tips for the sales call



- A: Use the opening I've just listed above.
- B: When qualifying on the cold call, ALWAYS get the timeline for making the decision.
- C: Always requalify the prospect at the start of your demo or close
- D: Use trial closes throughout the demo to build a yes momentum.
- E: Script out answers to common objections and stalls.
- F: Ask for the deal at least 5 times before you stand up and REALLY start closing :--)



A lot of companies let their managers write the sales script. Maybe they think is simple, and they can copy from another script that they have. What's wrong with this approach?



If their approach is proven effective, then that's find.

Otherwise, your top performing sales rep should write down what he/she says.

Best approach: Have Mr. Inside Sales write the script....



Does and Doesn't on a sales call



I actually wrote an article about that and you can find it (and many other great scripts and articles on inside sales sales) here: <http://mrinsidesales.com/insidesalestrainingblog/2015/02>



What is the first step in planning a sales call?



Script, script, script out the best approach and script out your answers to common brush offs and objections you're bound to get!



What is the most effective way to open a sales call?



If it's a "cold call," then you must know how to handle the gatekeeper. If it's a closing call, then you must be prepared to requalify your prospect before you launch into an hour demo...



What do you need to do to close professionally a sales call?



You have to be dealing with a fully qualified buyer and you need to know the answers to the six basic qualifiers:

- 1-Why they'll buy
- 2-Why they won't buy
- 3-How many decision makers there are
- 4-What the decision process is like (timeline)
- 5-Who your competition is – and who they are leaning towards
- 6-Budget



Mike, I want to thank you for the time to respond to these questions and your desire to share insights and ideas about the field of Cold Calls. THANKS Mike!