

Leaving the **MOTHER SHIP**

Warming up the cold call

Getting beyond "cold call paralysis" to land your dream job



The key to a successful job search is connecting with decision makers. But when it comes to making the "cold call," job seekers often get paralyzed with fear and become blocked from moving forward.

"We spend much of our lives speaking to strangers, yet when it comes to calling about your career, candidates often freeze in their tracks," says Randall Craig, management consultant, speaker and author of the career-planning book *Leaving the Mother Ship*. "It is human nature to avoid activities that are out of our comfort zone, and cold calling certainly qualifies."

To make the cold call easier, Randall Craig suggests these tips:

- 1. Be a giver, not a taker:** Make sure that your reason to call adds value to the person you are calling. For example, tell them something that they want to hear (but didn't know). Otherwise, why would they spend time with you? Don't forget to send them something (that they want) after the call.
- 2. Prepare your script:** Before the call, write down the key points to address. This will ensure your ideas are logically ordered and keep you on track.
- 3. Remember the process:** The call is only one step in the process of developing a relationship. What is the next one? Before you make the call, ensure you know what the next step will be.
- 4. Call first thing in the morning:** Not only are you fresher, but it is often a good time to reach people in their office.
- 5. Prepare your calling list the day before:** This will separate the thinking about who to call from the task of actually calling. Doing so lets you hit the ground running.
- 6. Get some help:** Credentialization always helps. If there is any way that someone else can make an introduction for you, your chances of connecting will be far higher.

7. Change the channel: There are many ways to connect: in person, by phone, direct to voicemail, email, fax, and of course, old fashion snail-mail. If one channel isn't working for a particular contact, try another.

8. Set a quota of calls: Those in sales know the benefits of setting targets. You can do this too, with the number of calls you make each day.

9. Don't give up: How often do you get messages you can't respond to? Or how often will you be working on a high priority issue, and an incoming call is simply not a priority? Connecting with your target person may require several attempts.

10. Be a giver, not a taker - really: This is so important it bears repeating. Without receiving value during the first call, your target will not want to speak to you again.

Says Randall Craig, "These tips can help whether you are looking to find a new job, get an informational interview, or meet a new sales prospect. There is no reason for a cold call when there is a warmer -- and more comfortable -- alternative."



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Randall Craig is a management consultant, speaker, and author of several career planning books, including *Leaving the Mother Ship*, www.LeavingTheMotherShip.com. He speaks on the topics of Career Planning, Work-Life Balance, Entrepreneurship, and Consulting.

