This is the second installment of a two-part series written by Debra Feldman, the head of JobWhiz, a career management and transition firm for executives. Sharing her article with our members does not mean that the TENG, Bruner Consulting or I am endorsing her services. These two newsletters will cover a topic that strikes fear into nearly everyone, namely making cold calls. You should find her advice timely and relevant. If you wish to send her feedback or contact her, you will find her Web address and phone number at the end of this article I am grateful for her contribution. Ed Pospesil

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# How to Make or Not Make Cold Calls – Part Two

By Debra Feldman, the JobWhiz—Swift Confidential Career Transitions

Cold calling is one of those things, like eating vegetables, that's very good for you. But it's an acquired taste, not something that most of us find is an inherent talent. It's a rare person who reports that cold calling is fun. Some do it because they know it is good for them and they are driven to succeed even if it means doing something distasteful or scary. Others force themselves to master cold calling techniques, but they never actually enjoy the process. A third group might have the gift of introducing themselves to strangers without getting a huge lump in their throats that threatens to choke off their air supply and end their career forever.

Who finds it fun to talk to strangers? Who gets a kick out of being flatly rejected, made to feel inferior or worse, guilty for asking? Despite all the evidence to the contrary, statistics keep rolling in confirming the positive value of cold calling as a successful job search technique. If you are going to go with the facts, then initiating contact with target employers is a good way to identify potential job opportunities. If you are not yet able to initiate cold calls in order to network, then read on about ways to bypass cold calling and additional tips to improve your cold calling skills.

1. Identify someone with a relationship to the company ( an employee, past employee, supplier, consultant, etc.) and have them pass your information along. Cold calling is just one way of getting inside to present your credentials and interest and to find out if you are a good match for a company's needs and culture. Whatever you do to generate an interaction with the employer so you can personally interact and get that interpersonal chemistry going will move your search forward.
2. Think dialing up is too hard? One alternative is to develop a customized proposal for the employer describing how you would address a challenge they face or provide a solution to a need. Creating this document takes substantial research as well as writing, but it is likely to generate sufficient attention from a company insider to result in them contacting you, thus getting you recognized and invited to have further discussion. By providing a sample presenting the quality of your

work and your taking the initiative to research and prepare this material, you make a very compelling case documenting your value and sparking an employer's interest in you.

3. Part of what makes cold calling difficult is having to sell yourself to a stranger. It is usually easier to introduce someone else than to talk about yourself. Consider having someone else make these calls for you and have them arrange an appointment time for you to call back. Then, it's not a cold "unsolicited" call because the person you want to speak with will be expecting (gave permission) to hear from you, the awkwardness of the first moments is removed and even better, the employer may agree to call you. Everyone involved is more comfortable, no one is on the spot to take an unannounced call and the timing is convenient—you don't have to be worried about interrupting.
4. Plan ahead about what you are going to say. Prepare some notes to guide your introductory statements and have a contingency message for voice mail, an assistant or someone else answering the phone. Do not say that you are calling about a job. Emphasize that you are "just networking" making connections with people in your industry. Create a plausible script of why you are connecting to them, how you selected them and got their contact information and how you would like them to help you.
5. Rehearse what you plan to say until you are comfortable and make sure that you include the essentials like your name, telephone number, best time to call you and purpose for calling. Stand up and project your voice. Call your own voice mail as a test run.
6. Cold calls get warmer if you can say that you know someone in common, have a mutual interest or affiliation, saw their name or heard them speak or read their article. Thus a little research goes far in smoothing the introduction with some ego boosting small talk. Most people are flattered that someone saw their name in print or online. Just be mindful that you aren't interrupting and are sensitive to the timing of your call. It may not be that they won't speak to you, it can be that when you called was not a convenient moment.
7. Put your efforts into identifying by name the individual who is most likely to have hiring authority over your area and contact this person. Line managers usually are receptive to a request, often are on constant look out for new, qualified talent for when and if they need more assistance on their team, and can relate to times when they were job hunting and got a warm welcome themselves. Administrative assistants and junior staff members are a great resource for finding the appropriate senior level contact and hooking up with the boss. Getting other team members involved starts building up your internal relationships and may provide important insights into what you should be emphasizing or avoiding in your preliminary discussions with an employer.
8. Toughen up!! Don't necessarily suffer from personal rejection. You have no idea why the person couldn't spend some time chatting. It is just as likely to have nothing to do with you and your call—you might have contacted them at a bad moment. Ask if you might try them again and when would be convenient. Don't be surprised if it is weeks especially with how executives travel extensively. If you sense that you have "caught" someone off guard, offer an apology. Always,

when cold calling, ask the person, after introducing yourself by name, if now is a convenient time for them to take a call; don't just launch into your practiced introduction until you have their cooperation and attention. Be sure to say your name clearly at the beginning and end (spell your name as well) and say thank you even if the conversation did not go well. Ideally you will come away with a plan to explore mutual interests further or a request to send your resume or come in for an appointment or a referral to two other contacts or resources that will move your campaign forward.

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JobWhiz is the first and still the only career management service for senior executives that provides personal introductions to decision makers at target companies. By connecting directly to employers through a respected personal talent agent, job seekers quickly identify and swiftly land new opportunities. Developing and implementing a focused, extremely efficient campaign project eliminates unproductive cold calling and efforts wasted on ineffective job hunting. To learn how JobWhiz will kick start your connection to a new, higher paying challenge now and turn your stress into success, contact her at www.JobWhiz.com.

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