

# The TOP 10 DUMB

**Cold-Calling** *Mistakes*  
**that Ensure** *Failure*  
**and** *REJECTION*

*by Art Sobczak*

# ***The Top 10 Dumb Cold Calling Mistakes that Ensure Failure and Rejection***

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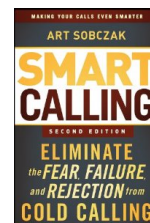
(Reprinted from "*The Top 10 Dumb Cold Calling Mistakes that Ensure Failure and Rejection*," By Art Sobczak, based on the best-selling book, *Smart Calling*.+To get a copy of the report, and other free tips, resources, and articles how to avoid cold calling, go to <http://www.BusinessByPhone.com/mistakes> )

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# **The Top 10 Dumb Cold Calling Mistakes that Ensure Failure and Rejection**



**By Art Sobczak**

Perhaps you had interest in this report because of any of the following,

- you've been told "I'm not interested," or have been hung up on more times than you care to admit,
- you are repulsed by the cheesy techniques you have heard—or even experienced—from other cold calling salespeople,
- you tense up at the thought of calling people you don't know,
- you sound like a blabbering fool when you get on a phone call because you don't know what to say, or you avoid making calls for fear of that,
- you need to get new business, but aren't quite sure what to say on the phone in order to make that happen,
- you'd rather have needles stuck in you than place a "cold" call, or,
- perhaps you have your own reasons for not wanting to get on the phone to drum up business.

Relax, I'm here to help.

There's no shame in feeling those emotions. In fact, I've felt most of them myself. And I've watched and listened to other people experience them, both as a sales trainer, and a buyer *receiving* those horrible calls.

That's why I devoted my entire business life over the past 30+ years to finding, testing, refining and sharing ways to avoid placing "cold" calls, avoiding rejection-inducing mistakes, and saying and doing the **right things** to get more success and income by using the phone.

I've personally worked with tens of thousands of sales reps over the years in the 1500+ sales training programs I've delivered, and have touched millions more with my articles, newsletters, books, audios and videos. (If you're not familiar with me, Google "Art Sobczak" and you'll see this is not my first rodeo). I've become successful because I help others become successful. And I want to do the same with you and your prospecting.

My newest book, [\*\*“Smart Calling-Eliminate the Fear, Failure, and Rejection from Cold Calling”\*\*](#) now in its Second Edition, shows you how to do exactly that. Of course, I encourage you to get the book (it's so inexpensive, I was initially mad at my publisher for pricing it so low). I must admit, it is some of my best work. Others agree, since we hit #1 on amazon.com's bestseller list for Sales books the day it was released and they sold out.

In this Report, which is based on the book, I have compiled for you some of the top mistakes I see cold callers make that pretty much ensures they will get blown off the phone. Just by reading this Report, and following the Tips you will become better. So let's dive in!

## **Dumb Cold Calling Mistake 1: Making it About YOU and Not Them**

This will be a real shocker to lots of cold callers reading this: the people you call do not care about you at all. They don't give a rat's behind about what you want to do. They are not concerned about your quota. That YOU think you have a great product or service? Not a blip on their radar. What's that you say...you need to get in front of 10 new prospects every week? No one cares, aside from you.

The problem, the Dumb Mistake, manifests itself when the cold caller then acts and sounds like, well, a cold caller. Really, many of the other Dumb Mistakes stem from this one: the caller doesn't prepare adequately, doesn't research the prospect, throws together a Dumb script that actually creates resistance, or worse, wings it every time with the first thing that comes to mind, which is usually about, the cold caller and what he wants: He wants to talk about his products, discuss what it would take to do business together, or set a up a time to get together.

The reason caring about yourself does not work is that on the other end of the phone you have a prospect who cares mostly about—you guessed it--the prospect. About what he or she will do next, and how it will affect him or her. And that is what you need to care mostly about as well: the prospect. If you want any chance at all at being successful with prospecting everything you think about, do, and say needs to be about the prospect.

So get over yourself. You are not going to buy from you. From this point forward, it is all about them.

The interesting dynamic at work, though, it is OK for you to want the prospect to do something. Actually, that's a key element of the Smart Calling™ process, your Primary Objective. However, you accomplish it only by making it all about them. The great motivator, Zig Ziglar, says that “You can get whatever you want in life by helping enough others get what they want.”

So, what do your prospects want, and how can you possibly help them get it?

### **Smart Calling™ Tip**

At the beginning of your prospecting session, first, get into your “All about them” mindset. Then, you need to crawl into the minds of your prospects to define the possible value you might be able to deliver. In the book, we define that as your Possible Value Proposition (and go through exercises to help you come up with them), which is specifically what you might be able to help them gain, or avoid. In what ways might you help them increase revenue, lower costs, avoid risk or otherwise benefit? Get specific with your descriptions, as we will use them later.

## **Dumb Cold Calling Mistake 2: Not Getting or Using any Intelligence About the Prospect**

A magazine writer is assigned an interview with Oprah Winfrey. He begins his conversation by saying: “So Ms. Winfrey, let’s start with this...what is it exactly that you do?”

Ridiculous, right? Such a scenario would never take place.

Now imagine this: A sales rep phones a company, gets someone she believes to be a decision-maker on the phone, and says, “Hi, I’m Erin Nelson with Able Supply, a company that sells maintenance supplies. I’d like to tell you about our products and talk about becoming a vendor for you. Now -- what is it that your company does?”

Though equally absurd, conversations like these occur every day: unprepared salespeople blindly make phone calls, using tired old-school sales techniques, hoping that because they picked up the phone and made a call that they will find someone who will agree to what they want to accomplish.

Let’s look at a prospecting call opening from a sales rep who “gets it.”

*“Hi Michael, I’m Pat Stevens with Insurance Partners. Hope you enjoyed your golf vacation. In speaking with your assistant, Suzanne, I understand that you are evaluating your competitive edge in the employment market and what you can do to attract and keep the top talent in your various locations. We’ve been able to help other companies in the same situation lower their recruiting and hiring expenses, and increase their retention of managerial staff. I’d like to ask a few questions to see if I could provide you some information.”*

Pat was able to do a number of positive things in this opening:

- He used Michael's first name, since he knew that Michael was somewhat of an informal guy who no one called "Mr. Johnson," and hated to be called Mike.
- He knew Michael is a huge golf nut, and just returned from a golf weekend
- He mentioned Michael's assistant Suzanne, adding credibility
- He knew that the company had recently missed out on some managerial candidates who were hired by the competition because of a better benefits package, as well as some existing employees who left for that reason
- He did not talk about insurance or benefits, but instead, results-- the precise results that addressed the issues that Michael now faced.

And all of that took place in the first 10 seconds or so. Later in the call Pat also:

- Asked questions to which he pretty much already knew the answers about the company's growth plans, their position in the marketplace, and the existing benefits package and how people felt about it.
- Commented on the great article that Michael had written for Construction Executive magazine.
- Asked about Michael's experience working with one of his company's competitors prior to coming to work for this company two years ago.

As a result of all of this, Michael of course viewed Pat not as the typical sales rep, but as someone who understood his business and what he was concerned about right now. Plus, he liked Pat. And Pat got an appointment.

How did Pat accomplish all of this?

The same way you can. Pat did his research. He did **Smart Calling™**. There's no excuse NOT to. He used several search engines and other online resources and social media sites to get personal and professional information about Michael, his company, and industry, and very importantly, what Michael was concerned about right now.

Then Pat used "social engineering," the process of speaking with other people within Michael's company to gain intelligence about the company's current situation regarding their recruiting, hiring, and retention issues, and present benefits package. He also learned about Michael personally from his assistant Suzanne and a few others in the department.

### **Smart Calling™ Tip**

Can you see the difference between this Smart example and a typical “cold” call, where the sales rep knows nothing about his prospect, and is simply smilin’ and dialin’, repeating the same tired lines and closes to everyone who will listen? Of course you can. In the book, Smart Calling™, we show you exactly how to do Social Engineering to get others to give you valuable information about your prospect and company, and share a number of other resources you can use to collect information you never thought you could find.

There is no reason—other than laziness—to ever place a “cold” call. Use these ideas to gather information before you dial to make your calls Smart, and successful.

### **Dumb Cold Calling Mistake 3: Trying to Go Through, Around, Over or Above the Screener**

Here’s another area where lots of bad information has been repeated over the years. Nonsense like,

*“Don’t give them any information. They can’t buy from you.”*

Wrong. Sometimes they can indeed buy from you, and often, they may influence a decision. The one thing they can do is make sure that no one will buy from you.

*“Answer their question abruptly, and make a demand of your own. As in ‘I’m with AB Company. Will you connect me please?’”*

Oh, so that will intimidate them into putting you through? Right. People generally don’t respond all that favorably to a rude demeanor.

*“Just tell them, ‘It’s a business matter that I need to speak with him personally about.’”*

You might as well say, “I’m a cheesy, self-important salesperson and I don’t respect you.”

Here’s a key point that cold callers don’t get: assistants and screeners hold the key to the buyer’s door. Treat them like dirt and you have no chance. Instead, pay close attention here,

Treat the screener as you would the buyer.

That's right. With the utmost respect. And if they want to know why you're calling you need to be prepared to tell them.

Plus, by working WITH screeners instead of against them, you can actually get them to be your advocate in getting to the buyer. And I have countless examples of how a screener was actually an influencer, or sometimes an actual buyer.

### **Smart Calling™ Tip**

In addition to treating the screener like the buyer, anticipate the question, "What's this in reference to?", and prepare and practice your answer so it rolls smoothly off your tongue. And what exactly should that be, you might be wondering? Easy. It's a version of your interest-creating opening where you are hinting at the possible results you might be able to deliver for them—something they might have some interest in based on your research. Notice I said results. You do not, I repeat, DO NOT want to talk about your products or services. It's easy for screeners to say, "We already have that and are not interested."

## **Dumb Cold Calling Mistake 4: Opening Statements That Create Resistance**

You've got about 10 seconds to grab a prospect's attention and say something that will cause them to think, "OK, this sounds like it might be worth listening to."

The Dumb Mistake is that most callers say things that create resistance almost instantly. Over the past 27 years of studying and doing sales, and listening to tens of thousands of calls (and mistakes) I've compiled over 20 of these opening mistakes that I share in Smart Calling™.

Let's look at a few of the major and most common ones.

***-“Wanted to introduce myself and company to you.”***

This isn't a cocktail party or a networking mixer. Remember who they care about: themselves, not you. It adds no significance and takes up valuable time.

***-Any mention of products or services without an accompanying results statement.***

As in "I'm with Dunlap Services, a local messenger service. I'd like to talk to you about your messenger needs." In response, people can very easily say, "We don't need that" or "We're satisfied with who we're using" if you mention a product or service without the result. Products and services can incite resistance. Results are much tougher to reply negatively to.



**-Asking for a decision, or even hinting at one. For example,**

“I’d like to talk about becoming one of your vendors.”

“I would like to talk about developing a relationship with your company.”

“We have some great products and would like to come out there and discuss them with you. Would 3:00 Thursday be good?”

Hmm, kind of puts it in perspective, doesn't it? Granted, all of those requests could be the end result, but it is far too early to ask for a decision, or even hint at one, in the opening.

Important point: When your call arrives, prospects are not in the preferred state of mind to hear a request for a decision, or even the insinuation that you are going to ask for a decision of any type. We must first earn the right to someone’s time by piquing curiosity and quickly communicating some possible value. And we must keep earning it throughout our calls (and visits) to make appropriate recommendations when the time is right, and then secure commitments.

So, what to do? Make sure that you are developing opening statements that hint at the value you might be able to provide, and avoid the common mistakes.

### **Smart Calling™ Tip**

In the book, we cover all the mistakes to avoid, so certainly it should be no surprise that I suggest you get it if you haven’t already. In fact, Chapter 9 alone, where I go through all of these mistakes will pay for the entire book.

We also go through the proven process for creating interest. For now, here’s a very basic template you can fill in the blanks on:

“Hi Mr. Prospect, I’m \_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_. I understand that your company is in the process of (fill in with your acquired Smart intelligence). We’ve worked with a number of other firms in similar situations, helping them to (fill in with the results you deliver) and (another result they might want). I’d like to ask a few questions to see if I could provide you some information.”

## **Dumb Cold Calling Mistake 5: Voice Mails That Create Resistance**

I’m amused when people ask me what that one voice mail message is that will get their calls returned. I always tell them it’s the one that is interesting to your prospect. I’m not trying to be a smart ass, it’s true. And know what? It should be almost identical to your opening statement that you’ll use with them live. I mean, really, why would you say something different.

Your voice mail message should essentially have the same goals as your opening: to put them in a curious, interested frame of mind, and get them to want to participate in a conversation with you.

It should not be tricky, gimmicky, evasive, deceptive, or salesy.

The same mistakes that cause someone to put up resistance in an opening will evoke the same emotions on voice mail. What's worse, is that when you commit these mistakes on voice mail, you pretty much ensure you won't get a chance to ever talk to them. They will not return your calls, and avoid future calls.

### **Smart Calling™ Tip**

When you prepare your interest-creating opening, also be prepared to deliver it as your voice mail message. The main difference is that I suggest you end it by saying,

“...and I will CALL YOU BACK on Friday to determine if it would be worthwhile to provide you some more information. If you'd like to reach me before then, my number is...”

## **Dumb Cold Calling Mistakes 6 and 7: Inadequate Questioning, and Premature Elaboration**

One mistake leads to the other so I'm presenting them together.

Recall the last time you were at a social gathering where you mixed with the crowd and made new acquaintances. Think of the person who, within seconds of conversation, bored you to tears and caused your eyes to glaze over like marbles. You rather would have stuck the toothpicks from your snacks under your fingernails than endure more time with this person.

And why were they boring? It's likely they spoke about things of no interest to you. Probably about themselves, for the most part: What they did, what they own, who they are, what they're going to do, their kids ...it was all about them. Certainly not your favorite topic.

What they didn't do was ask about YOU.

Conversely, think of the people you've met that you instantly liked. Among other characteristics, they took interest in you, and listened. They prompted you to speak.

Notice anything similar here?

These same points apply perfectly to prospecting and sales calls.

Further, an accompanying problem with inadequate questioning is that you have no idea what someone is really interested in. Common sense says that if you make a pitch or presentation without knowing what the prospect wants and needs, you will be wildly off target.

Let's put it in a different context: if someone asked you to stop by a store and buy a birthday gift for his daughter's friend, because he won't have time to do it before taking her to the birthday party, would you likely buy something that the birthday girl would enjoy? Of course the odds are stacked greatly against you. You know nothing about the other girl, such as her age, her interests, and very importantly, what SHE might want. Making a presentation with adequate questioning results in the same dilemma.

It's pretty elementary: talk about yourself and your products without first asking questions and you create resistance and objections. Focus on them, and you create interest, cooperation, and sales.

### **Premature Elaboration**

To reemphasize, this is the result of inadequate questioning: presenting too early, and like the term it sounds like, that's a bad thing.

It causes you to say things that are of no interest to the listener.

It's good to listen to recordings of your calls and examine some of the routine phrases you use to explain your company and capabilities. Some of these might be uninspiring, or worse, resistance inducing. Yet you're using them consistently. Examples to watch out for:

*"We've been in business for over \_\_\_\_ years." Or,*

*"We're the largest..."*

And that helps me ... how?

*"We're the most experienced in the industry."*

According to what criteria, and how does that affect me?

*"We're the most respected..."*

Oh really, by whom? That's as meaningless as when CNN says they're the most respected name in news.

*"We're a national company with 30 locations."*

What if I'm a little company doing business in my local zip code?

*"We have a commitment to quality."*

That's nice. Who doesn't? How will that help me, specifically?

*"We were the first to ..."*

So? What have you done since then, and how will it help me?

*"We provide cost-effective solutions ..."*

Uh-huh, and that means ... what ... exactly, as it relates to what I want?

The way to guard against using benefit statements that aren't, is to ensure you begin your call with a value statement to get them talking, and then move to your questions.

By questioning before presenting, you ensure that your description of benefits instead becomes a RECOMMENDATION, instead of Premature Elaboration or presentation.

Think of that word as opposed to "presentation".

A presentation consists of what the speaker wants to talk about.

Boring.

A recommendation is always based on gathering information, and then forming the best solution for the situation.

Ask more about them, talk less about yourself, and you'll be more interesting. And you'll sell more.

## **Dumb Cold Calling Mistake 8: Not "Ritualizing" Your Calling**

Successes in all parts of life are a result of consistent behavior. You don't get in shape by exercising sporadically, when you get around to it. (Actually, being out-of-shape is a result of consistent negative behavior.) The best athletes, musicians, and anyone who strives to excel reaches their levels of success and excellence by committing to "ritualized" behavior...practicing and performing at a predetermined time, and for a planned length of time. The same goes for your Smart Calling™ .

A Dumb Mistake cold callers make is fitting in a call here or there. But, whaddya know, they have a customer question they need to attend to. Maybe they'd rather call some familiar customers—who might not buy anything, but nevertheless, the calls are easier. Perhaps they get distracted and get on Facebook for some mindless and unproductive surfing.

In contrast, the Smart Caller commits to calling—and nothing but calling—for a preset period of time. How much time and when of course depends on what you're looking to accomplish. But whenever it is, say Monday-Wednesday from 9-11:00 a.m., you do nothing but work on calling. No checking emails, writing proposals, texting, BS'ing with coworkers at the coffee pot...no, you do nothing but call. You're in the zone.

And when you are in that zone, stay with it!

One of the greatest baseball hitters ever, Ted Williams, said that when he was on a hitting streak (which was often) he could see the rotation of the seams on a baseball traveling more than 90 miles per hour. Hall of Famer George Brett said the ball looked as big as a beach ball coming in. You also probably have some way to describe that great feeling you have when you're on a roll, and successes are coming for you at every turn. So when you're on a personal hot streak—keep going! Don't stop to dwell on the success too long. Take advantage of the groove that you're in and keep plugging away. Try to beat your best results ever. Success has an uncanny way of piling up when you are in a zone.

### **Smart Calling™ Exercise**

Right now, if you indeed are serious about prospecting success, define a period of time that you will actually commit to do nothing but call.

## **Dumb Cold Calling Mistake 9: Feeling Rejected After Calls**

It has been said that by the time a child is 10 years old, they have heard “NO” something like 10,000 times. And as those of us who have or had kids know, the initial resistance doesn't bother them. They keep plugging away. They don't say, “Aww geez, I got a no. I guess I will just get depressed, feel rejected, and forget about ever asking for ice cream again.” Absurd, right? So we're going to think and act more like a kid, and view rejection and what we're doing with our prospecting in a different light.

Let's face it, just the thought of cold calling is perhaps one of the most distasteful activities that most people could imagine. Part of it stems from the old myth that has been perpetuated over the years: “You need to love the rejection.”

Huh? If I love something, I want more of it. The Dumb Mistake that many cold callers fall victim to is actually believing this, and therefore it becomes reality. They DO feel rejected after calls. And I don't care what type of New Age mantra or chant you want to repeat to yourself about loving rejection, I don't think it's humanly possible, IF you are a sane human being.

Ok, then, what is the answer? There are two.

First, understand that rejection is not an experience. It's a definition of the experience. There are people who obviously like opera. I would rather have my chest hairs removed with tweezers (sorry for the visual).

This should not come as a shocker to you, but not everyone will go along with what you'd like to accomplish on your calls. Duh, no kidding, right? We are going to hear no's. Big deal. So what? Basketball players shoot and miss. Baseball players swing and miss. Like them, we don't need to get every one. What we CAN'T do is view the misses as something so distasteful that it paralyzes us into inaction and puts us in an overall crappy mood.

So change your definition of rejection. Getting a no on a call is not being rejected. Perhaps your family throwing you out of your house, telling you to never show up again, and being told you are a horrible human being might be rejection. (Sorry if that was close to home—no pun intended—for some people.)

Better yet, here's the real key to not being rejected, one that I've been teaching for years: get a "win" on every call. It's not that tough. It could be as minor as keeping the door open for a future contact. It might be leaving someone with a positive impression of your company. It might simply be the satisfaction that you now know this person is not a prospect. It is about your attitude.

I call this your Secondary Objective for your call. It's important because at the end of a Smart Calling™ session you can say to yourself, "I accomplished my Primary Objective three times, and my Secondary on the other calls. That's a lot better for your mental health than, "I got rejected 20 times today. I should try to love it though." Not happening, my friend.

### **Smart Calling™ Exercise**

What can you accomplish at minimum every time you pick up the phone? That is your Secondary Objective, and what is will ensure that you are never "rejected" again.

## **Dumb Cold Calling Mistake 10: Sounding Like a Cold Caller**

If you are prospecting, they are not waiting for your call. If you just happen to get them on the phone, and if anything in the first 10 seconds—your tone, lack of preparedness, lack of a gripping, interest-creating opening, or anything else gives them the slightest inclination you are a typical cold caller, you are outta there. Quickly.

It happens every day. On tens of thousands of cold calls. Maybe you have been there. But you don't want to be that guy. Or woman. No one does. And that's why most people hate "cold" calling. Yet, they don't know how to avoid those mistakes, they keep making them, and they keep getting beat over the head with rejection. Or, they quit calling. Leaving themselves with the same problem they had before: no new business, yet the NEED for it continues.

The answer of course, is **Smart Calling™**. I've given you lots of mistakes to avoid, and plenty of tips, ideas, and phrases you can use to help make your calls smarter. However, you need more than I've given you here. That's on purpose. I want you to succeed. And to succeed, you need to do more than read a Special Report. If you are truly, really serious about being successful at prospecting—which means being good at it—you need more than what's in this report. You need the Smart Calling™ system.

The great news is that it doesn't require a big monetary investment. It's actually crazy what booksellers are making it available for. The cover price is less than \$22, and sometimes you can find it discounted for less than that. Two beers at a major league ballpark is more than that.

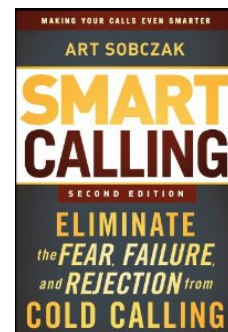
Get the book. Trust me. You will get everything you need to Smart Call, and become proficient at it.

And if you are really serious, I invite you to check out my other resources, which includes the Smart Calling™ Course, comprised of audio, workbook exercises, and more. For the small percentage of achievers who **truly** want to **excel and quickly go to the highest level**, check out my Premium Access to the Smart Calling™ member site, and ultimately my Telesales Success Platinum Inner Circle, where I provide personal coaching.

Here's to your Smart Calling™ success!

# Never Cold Call Again, AND Get a Win on Every Prospecting Call

Do you dread calling prospects? Are you sick and tired of rejection? Prospecting for customers is a necessary part of doing business, but you don't have to suffer through it anymore. There's a better way...



Now Art Sobczak is sharing his proven system for selling by phone in *Smart Calling: Eliminate the Fear, Failure, and Rejection from Cold Calling*. Instead of using tired old formulas and scripts that customers recognize and dismiss from a mile away, you'll find an intelligent method for engaging prospects in conversations that get results.

Art Sobczak works with thousands of sales reps each year helping them get more business by phone. In **Smart Calling**, he lets you in on what he's learned from more than 30 years experience. You'll get the field-tested, practical information you need to make your calls work.

Filled with hundreds of real-world stories and example conversations, *Smart Calling* shows you how to:

- Engage prospects with effective opening statements
- Gain inside information using the latest "social engineering" techniques
- Get screeners, gatekeepers, and assistants working for you
- Deal effectively with buyer resistance
- Get prospects to take action
- Stay motivated
- Never be rejected again
- And more!

Nobody likes cold calling, and for good reason. Most of the time, cold calls don't work and end up wasting everyone's time. *Smart Calling* gives you a new and better way to approach prospects and win sales. So forget about cold calling; get **Smart Calling**. Don't pick up the phone without it!

When you order your copy today, you'll receive instant access to hundreds of dollars worth of bonus gifts from leading business experts, including Bob Burg, Sam Richter, Jill Konrath and many more.

**[Buy Smart Calling Today and Receive Your Bonus Gifts!](#)**

***"If you make cold calls, and want to make them smarter, better, more fun, and actually convert them to sales, THIS IS THE BOOK! Buy it to increase your call to sale ratio, and your sale to bank account ratio."***

**- Jeffrey Gitomer, author of The Little Red Book of Selling**