

SALES CONCEPTS, INC.  
PROACTIVE PROSPECTING

2026



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*“Introducing the 8-Touch System.”*

*Program review notes*

*Prospecting must be a priority*

# PROACTIVE PROSPECTING

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If your life depended  
on you doubling your  
sales next year, how  
would you do it?



SALES CONCEPTS

There are really only two ways to  
grow sales...

1. Add more customers.
2. Sell more to existing customers.



SALES CONCEPTS

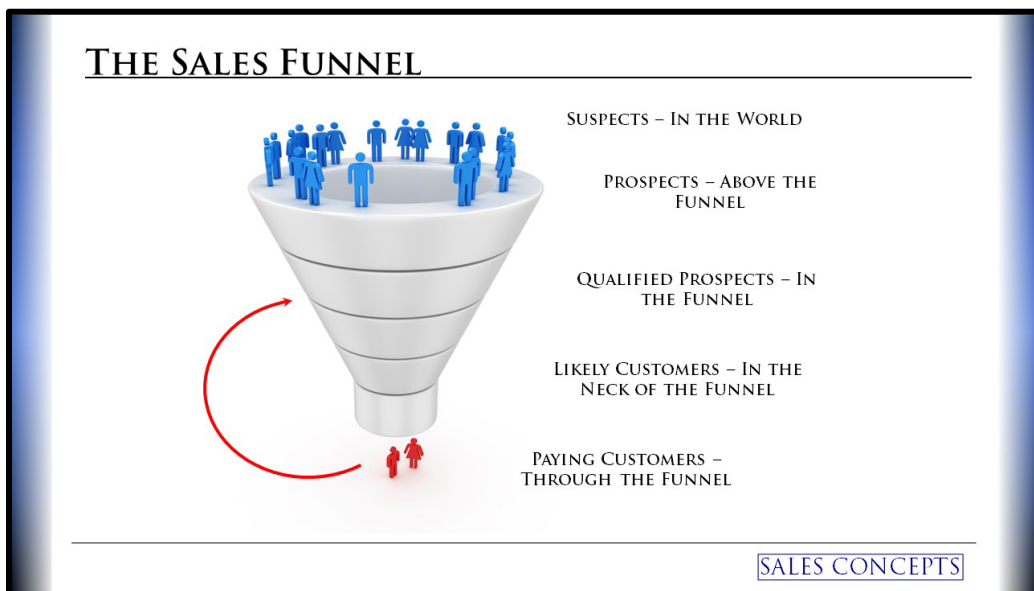
# PROACTIVE PROSPECTING

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*What is prospecting?*



Successful salespeople who consistently meet their quotas set priorities for working at the top of the proverbial sales funnel. Salespeople describe how difficult it is to take time to call The World. Ignoring this action will eventually cause the stream of customers to run dry.



# PROACTIVE PROSPECTING

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## *The power of potato chips!*

The other day a coworker was talking about his lunch. He is counting calories and successfully losing weight. He was complaining about how you could not eat just one potato chip and said, “Never underestimate the power of potato chips!” As soon as I heard that phrase, I knew it related to prospecting.

We all know you can't eat just one potato chip. They are so delicious! Most of us have been guilty of eating chips and not even thinking about the amount we've consumed. You keep popping them in your mouth. Rarely does a person say, “I am only going to eat one chip.” Imagine if you stopped at just one chip. You wouldn't even notice that chip on the scale. Your clothes would not be tighter. You would not feel bloated from the salt. One chip would not change your day or your weight much at all. Not true for a whole bag of chips. Unfortunately, you would notice it on the scale and in your clothes!

So, what does this have to do with prospecting? Simple — one is not enough! You cannot make just one call to prospects and expect that to change their day or your forecast! Prospects rarely call you back after the first call. Unfortunately, most salespeople make one call, maybe two to a prospect, then assume there is no interest and move on. Even more shocking, we hear from attendees in our Prospecting classes that when prospecting, many don't leave messages!

At Sales Concepts, we liken prospecting to a lumberjack. Picture a tree. Would a tree ever fall if a lumberjack hit the tree haphazardly with an ax on the trunk? Can you imagine a lumberjack just swinging the ax and hitting the tree wherever on the trunk? The tree would never fall. However, if you hit the tree consistently in the same place over and over, the tree WILL fall — approach prospecting in the same manner. You must be consistently persistent. You cannot make just one call. People are busy. Usually, they will not return your calls.



Statistics show that 48% of salespeople never follow up with a prospect after the first call. 25% of salespeople make a second attempt and never try again. 12% of salespeople make more than three attempts and become the elite group of salespeople who win the business of new prospects and rise to the top of their sales organization.

Statistics also show that less than 2% of sales occur on the first contact, yet 48% of salespeople never reach out again. Less than 3% of sales occur on the second contact. Roughly 5% of sales happen on the third contact, and fewer than 10% of sales close on the fourth contact. A shocking 80% of sales close between the fifth to twelfth contacts to a prospect! If you keep reaching out to your prospects, you are bound to surpass your competition and increase your odds of closing new business!

So, act like a lumberjack who eats potato chips. Be consistently persistent. Treat prospecting like potato chips. Don't stop at just one!

***“The reports of my death have been greatly exaggerated.”***

*-The Cold Call*

A trendy opinion is that with all of the social media available, cold-calling is no longer necessary or effective. At Sales Concepts, we vehemently disagree.

Now, that is not to say that we don't value all that the Internet has to offer. We believe the Internet and social media have, forever and irreversibly, changed the way we communicate. To that point, we offer a course entitled *Selling in the Digital Age* to ensure that salespeople make the most of the resources available on the Internet.

We are saying that social media should be used in addition to cold calling, not in place of it. Salespeople who choose not to cold call do so at their peril.

How many cold calls do you make a day, a week, a month? Tasks can be broken down into two categories based on their importance and urgency. Judge everything you do by these two criteria. When faced with a task, ask yourself: “How important is this?” and “How urgent is this?” Instinctively you focus on tasks that are important and urgent. It is fairly easy to shuffle less important non-urgent tasks to the bottom of the priority list. Most salespeople tend to get into trouble with less important urgent tasks. Many times we work on these tasks to procrastinate from doing something that is less fun or glamorous while the important but non-urgent tasks languish quietly in the background. Cold calling is an important task. It does not seem all that urgent unless you make it so. Our advice is to set appointments with yourself. For instance, *this Thursday afternoon between 2 PM and 4 PM I will call new prospects*. Look at your schedule, and determine what works for you. Do what you must to make yourself accountable.

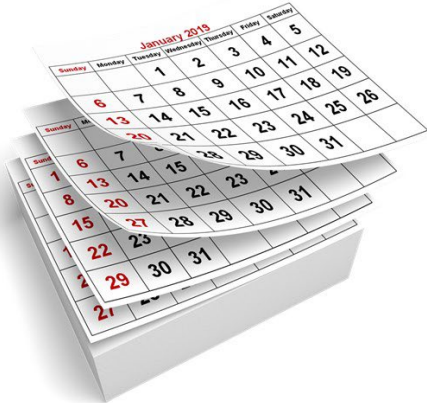
Hold yourself to daily, weekly, and monthly prospecting goals and become an elite salesperson.

# PROACTIVE PROSPECTING

*A historical perspective of prospecting.*

**PROSPECTING THROUGH THE YEARS**

Good Times  
VS.  
Bad Times

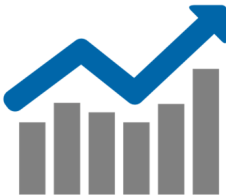


SALES CONCEPTS

*Prospecting is the foundation of all successful selling!*

**PROSPECTING THROUGH THE YEARS**

A historical perspective of the US Economy. . .



1990 - 1991	Bad Times
1992 - 1999	Great Times
2000 - 2002	Bad Times
2003 - 2007	Good Times
2008 - 2010	Bad Times
2011 - 2016	Fair Times
2017 - 2019	Good Times
2020 - 2023	Covid-19   Bad for Most   Good for Some

**2024-26 ???? | Mixed | War, Inflation, Tariffs**

SALES CONCEPTS

# PROACTIVE PROSPECTING

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*Prospecting is often the difference between an average salesperson and a top-performing salesperson, even in tough economic times.*

## PROSPECTING THROUGH THE YEARS

### **Selling During the Bad Times**

33% Fail and Leave

55% Struggle

**12% Overachieve!**

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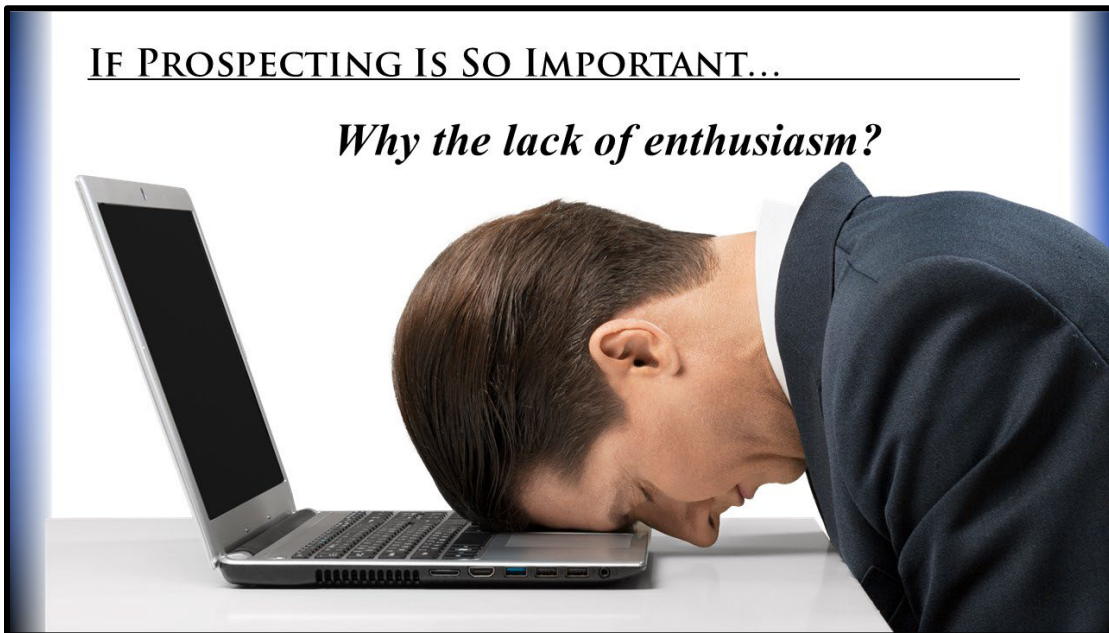
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# PROACTIVE PROSPECTING

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IF PROSPECTING IS SO IMPORTANT...

*Why the lack of enthusiasm?*



*If prospecting is so important, why don't most salespeople do it?*

IF PROSPECTING IS SO IMPORTANT...

*Why the lack of enthusiasm?*

**Fear  
and  
Rejection**



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# PROACTIVE PROSPECTING

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## FEAR AND ITS CAUSES

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- Lack of skill
- Need for approval
- False perception of reality
- Poor self-image
- Negative self-talk

SALES CONCEPTS

### *Reasons salespeople don't prospect:*

- Fear of rejection.
- Lack of preparation.
- Lack of a perceived need to prospect.
- Lack of an understanding of value.
- Poor assumptions about the customer's attitudes.
- Unable to do it effectively, lack of skill.
- Waiting for something to happen, like a new product introduction.
- Too busy taking care of current accounts.
- Poor time management.
- Think it's outdated.
- Do not believe it works.
- General negative attitude or laziness.
- Think it is beneath them.
- Just don't like doing it.

# PROACTIVE PROSPECTING

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## *How is prospecting like cabbage?*



We know cabbage is good for us, but that doesn't mean we like to eat it! prospecting is like cabbage. We tend to push it aside. If it is on our plate, we know we should eat it. However, we often don't. Prospecting is something that most salespeople know they should do but still put it off until later. It's easy to justify why we should do it tomorrow or next week. The problem is that tomorrow is never today.

You need to set aside a time each day or week, in the office, to prospect. Maybe 30 minutes each day at 9:00 AM, two hours on Thursday at 3:00 PM, or call three people before lunch. Set aside a time to prospect and DO IT! Many successful salespeople believe the best time to prospect is on Friday afternoon! What? Are you kidding? No. People are usually in a good mood on Friday afternoon and anticipating the upcoming weekend. They may not want to work as hard as they could. They may see your call as a welcome break! Think about that the next time you want to slow down on a Friday afternoon. Be different! End the week strong and productive.

We recommend you monitor and track what you do hourly every day for a couple of weeks. Then pick a time that is best for you to prospect. *Your time is expensive!*

# PROACTIVE PROSPECTING

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Now that you are making prospecting calls, you will inevitably run into voice mail. Many people in today's world think that leaving voice mail messages for prospects is a waste of time. After our email blast on forecasting, we had a customer jokingly call to let us know that leaving voice mails is a waste of time if the customer does not return your call. Thanks Jimmy S. That was funny. All kidding aside, leaving voice mail is far from a waste of time and may ironically be one of the best uses of it. Look at it as a free advertisement! You've already made the call, why not leave a message? The problem with voice mail is that it usually takes a while to work. We live in an instant gratification world, and when our calls go unreturned after one or two messages we quit.

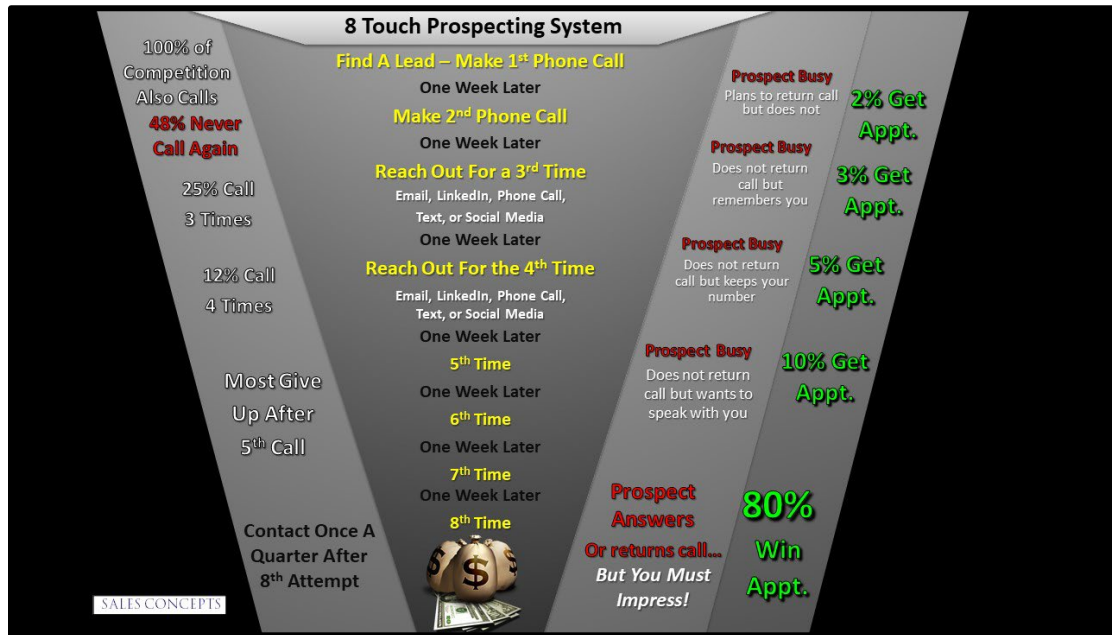
You are going to have an awfully cold winter if you walk into the forest with an ax to chop down a tree for firewood and swing at the tree one or two times and say "Oh well, this doesn't work. Cold calling is a waste of time." Our research indicates that on average you have to leave eight voice mail messages to get a return call. Once you do get a return call after that many messages, the prospect feels a certain amount of remorse for not returning your calls sooner. Usually they will at least allow you a fair shot at their business. Very few will shout "Stop calling me!" They are few and far between. The new customers you win are worth one or two resisting a bit. So, confirm that appointment with yourself and make the calls. Sooner rather than later you will be able to yell "Timber!"

A very wise man once said, "If I knew that I had eight hours to chop down a tree, I would spend the first six sharpening my ax." Welcome to Prospecting! Let's sharpen that ax. Let's get started!



# PROACTIVE PROSPECTING

## The 8-Touch Proactive Prospecting System



Start small if you must, and put five prospects a day on your 8-Touch system. That's 25 a week. Reach out to them once a week for eight weeks. By the end of that time, odds are that you will have created a meaningful engagement with 20 of them. Repeat this process over a year, and you will have had meaningful interactions with 120 new prospects.

What would this mean for you financially if I told you that by this time next year, you could have 120 meaningful interactions with qualified prospects?

# PROACTIVE PROSPECTING

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You wouldn't want to sit on a two-legged stool would you?

Proactive prospecting requires the consistent use of all resources available to salespeople. Do not just rely on one type of communication, such as email. This program works best with a mix of consistent phone calls, followed up with emails, texts, and social media.

PROSPECTING IS LIKE A THREE-LEGGED STOOL



Phone



E-Mail



LinkedIn

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SALES CONCEPTS

*For this system to work, you must consistently use the phone and leave compelling voicemail messages.*

# PROACTIVE PROSPECTING

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*“A journey of a thousand miles  
begins with a single step.”*

Lao Tzu

## TAKE THE FIRST STEP

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Create the messages.



8 Voice Mail Messages



8 Email Messages



1 LinkedIn Connection Request

Send them to: [asharp@salesconcepts.com](mailto:asharp@salesconcepts.com)



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## HOW DO YOU PRIORITIZE YOUR DAY?

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- *You have to take the time to do it!*
- *For this to be effective you have to set time aside to prospect.*

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# PROACTIVE PROSPECTING

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*Use your calendar and book an appointment with yourself.*

**IT'S ALL ABOUT PRIORITIES!**

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*We all have the same amount of time.*



**We suggest you set appointments with yourself and put it on your calendar.**

*How will you use yours?*

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SALES CONCEPTS

*Use our resource page*



<https://www.salesconcepts.com/prospecting-resources>

# PROACTIVE PROSPECTING

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## *Proactive Prospecting*

*The foundation of all successful selling!*



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and ideas.*



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