**How to Get an Appointment with a Prospective Buyer**

**Brian Jud**

There is an enormous opportunity to sell your books to people in local businesses and large corporations. Your prospect may be the owner of the business or a corporate marketing, sales or Human Resources manager. Regardless of your prospective buyer’s title, you must get an appointment with him or her in order to make your pitch.

There are a several ways to make initial contact, but one of the best is to call first. By so doing you can confirm that the person you are trying to contact is still in that position. Do not assume you will get through to people quickly. Most people use voice-mail messages to filter out those with whom they do not want to speak.

Before you call, create a 15 – 20 second voicemail message. This is your Solution Statement a “take-away” that follows the formula, “I help… who want... get.” Here is an example of a productive voicemail message: “I help authors and publishers who want greater income get large-quantity, non-returnable sales to non-bookstore buyers. My information has proven to help companies such as yours. If I may have five minutes of your time, we can determine if I can also help you.”

Depending on your Solution Statement you may reach your prospect quickly. But getting through to your prospects is typically a six-step process, with each call getting you closer to speaking with them personally. Here are the steps in which these calls may evolve.

**Step One**: Make the first call and leave your Solution Statement as a “take-away.” Do not leave your contact information, but say that you will call back tomorrow at a specific time.

**Step Two**: Follow a similar pattern on the second call, giving three specific points or reasons why your prospect should be interested in talking with you. Give your name, but no phone number or email address. Say you will call back “in two days” at the same time.

**Step Three**: On the third call name a few companies that you have helped achieve the success you described in the first two calls. End by asking the person to contact you and give your telephone number and email address. Repeat both, especially if there may be some confusion “My email address is [BrianJud@bookmarketing.com](mailto:BrianJud@bookmarketing.com). That’s b-r-i-a-n-j-u-d (one “d” in Jud) at bookmarketing.com.”

Assuming that your prospects are not out of the office for some reason (vacation or business travel), about half will contact you by this time. When that occurs, ask what specifically got their attention (revealing their pain points). Then describe how you may be able to help and ask for a personal meeting (if nearby) or continue your information gathering on the telephone. If there is a trade show coming up at which your prospect is attending, set a time to meet there. Go on to Step Four for those who do not contact you.

**Step Four**: Call two or three business days after third call, putting you in the next business week (for those who may have been out of the office the week you made the earlier calls). Say that you will send a brief package of information and call soon to confirm that it was received. Clearly repeat your contact information in case your previous message was lost or your contact information not clear. If replying by email, agree on the subject line so your prospect will recognize the email as legitimate. Send your information by a method in which you can confirm when the package was received.

**Step Five**: Call the day after the package was delivered to confirm receipt, highlight facts, repeat your testimonials and arrange a time to talk after your prospect has had a chance to review your information. Ask the person to contact you and give your telephone number and email address.

**Step Six**: Call the next day and say you do not want to appear as harassing the person, so you will place the prospect’s name in a follow-up system and touch base again in about three months. Ask the person to contact you if circumstances change before then and repeat your telephone number and email address.

Studies have proven that a large percentage of sales occur after the sixth attempt at contacting a potential buyer. The key to getting an appointment with a prospect is to be professionally persistent. Do not let your annoyance show in your voice after a few calls. The prospect may have valid reasons for not replying quickly and may be considering your proposal for a future campaign. Allowing your irritation to show could destroy your chances for deal later. Keep at it and eventually you will make that large sale.

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Brian Jud is the Executive Director of the Association of Publishers for Special Sales (APSS – [www.bookapss.org](http://www.bookapss.org)), and the administrator of Book Selling University ([www.booksellinguniversity.com](http://www.booksellinguniversity.com)) Contact Brian at BrianJud@bookmarketing.com or www.premiumbookcompany.com