

5 Steps to Help You Make That Call

Reluctance to reach out to new prospects is a problem, but an addressable one

By **Bill Sparkman**, The Coach

As a recovering procrastinator, I can speak from experience about putting things off. But I have learned a lot about what it takes to produce the results you desire from your life and business.

Specifically, I learned a lot about call reluctance. I'll tell you what I believe it is, why we do it and most importantly, a step-by-step system to manage it. The problem might be hard to overcome, but the right tools can help you deal with it.

First, let's look at the problem in terms of achievement. High-achievers do not eliminate high-value, income-producing activities such as prospecting from their daily activities. They work on high priorities first. They are creative and selective about what they put off.

I think that call reluctance is really just prospecting reluctance. I know many underachievers who spend most of their days working on low-value activities. These underachievers tend to major in minor things. They actually spend most of their time getting ready. Everyone procrastinates, period. But these people have become professional procrastinators. Then they call me for help as though they have

some kind of disease.

Why people experience this reluctance is even more curious. Part of their problem could be that they have no plan or structure for their daily activities or generating quality leads. For some, there is no urgency — they just lack motivation. Others just can't tolerate the word "no" and develop a defense mechanism for rejection — they just don't ask. They must blame their lack of production on something so, voilà — another dreaded case of call reluctance.

Here are five steps that could help address the problem.

- 1. Set yourself on fire:** In other words, get excited. Lack of motivation could be the No. 1 competitor for anyone in sales. You can't light a fire with a wet match. Why you are in the business is more important than what to do or how to do it. A lack of motivation will always be the first sign of call reluctance. Enthusiasm and passion for what you are doing create positive actions. Check your own motivation monitor to see if that is a starting point.
- 2. Work on high priorities first:** Start by writing down a step-by-step plan of what you want and how you are going to get it. Daily milestones are important — leaving home, leaving the office, sending five thank-you notes, etc. Keep it simple enough to accomplish things.
- 3. Be accountable:** Audit your actions every day. Keep track of where you are spending your time. Stop thinking that you will catch up to everything.

Just be selective about the actions you put off. What do you postpone regularly? If you can't hold yourself accountable, hire a coach.

- 4. Create more prospecting opportunities:** Diversify your prospecting. Burnout comes from being bored, no matter what you're doing. Focus your efforts on your strengths. Life is too short to perfect your weaknesses. But you can't be reluctant to ask for what you want. You always will experience a decline in business when your prospecting drops off. The more you ask, the more you will hear "no." The more you hear "no," the closer you are to getting what you want. Even small children know that they have to ask their parents at least seven times for something before they get it.
- 5. Perfect your sales skills:** The key word here is "sell." If you are reluctant to make sales calls, you will never make the sale. The average loan originator only closes one out of 10 opportunities. That will affect your confidence as well as your income. Your income ultimately is defined not only by how many times you ask but also by your conversion rate. I am not as concerned about how many sales calls you've made vs. how many applications you've taken.

Stop tolerating not having what you want. After accomplishing that, you will have taken the first step to overcoming call reluctance. Practice these five steps and remember that to achieve better results, you have to get better. **!**



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