



D&M Communicator

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

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From The Desk Of The President

Here's a scenario I am sure you can relate too—I just spent \$70 to fill up my gas tank! As the big picture goes, \$70 is not a lot of money, but when you consider how often I fill up my tank, it starts to add up, and quickly!

The same could be said about those bogus cramming charges (a.k.a. fees for unauthorized services) that tend to infiltrate our client's bills. Although cramming charges are typically less than \$20, they also tend to add up.

Fortunately, D&M is here to help you eliminate these un-

wanted fees and reduce your monthly telephony spend. So the



Steven Gerhardt, President, D&M Enterprise Group

next time you are at the gas station, let that experience remind

you that although D&M can't help you at the pump, we can provide some relief when it comes to lowering your voice, data, and Internet bills.

You'll also find some assistance in this issue of the *D&M Communicator*. Page 2 includes tips on how to be more productive on the phone. And if drafting proposals is part of your responsibility, you'll want to see the story on page 3.

If I can be of any assistance, do not hesitate to call me at 1-888-357-5055.

steve

Tech Support Phone Tips That Get Results

No matter how experienced you are with your computer and its programs, sooner or later you're going to call tech support. Remember that what you say, and how you say it, are important factors in solving your problem quickly. Here are some tips for efficient (and polite) interactions with tech staff.

1. Have the courtesy to do what should probably be obvious: Restart your computer. After restart, make sure you have no other programs opened other than the one causing problems. Try to reproduce the problem.
2. Check for system and program upgrades and install them. Now try to reproduce the problem.
3. Write down what operating system you are using and the name of the version of the software you are using. ("Windows" is not the answer to either question.)
4. Clarify in your mind exactly

what the problem is. Lots of things might confuse or concern you, but they are probably not the problem. You might think you know what the problem is, but try to state the symptoms first. Be prepared to state simply what the symptoms are.

On this point, remember that a simple statement is not the same as an empty statement. Do not contact tech support and say "It doesn't work." That is not stating the problem. Do not attempt to make the tech support person play 20 questions with you before he can even get to the point of the call. You might find out that less-than-patient tech support persons can and will waste your time, too, and then nothing will be solved.

5. Remember that 99 percent of the time the problem is not with the computer or the program. The problem is most likely with the user. So, put your frustration aside, adopt a humble, business-like attitude, and treat your tech

support colleague with respect.

6. Be open-minded and patient. The support person will likely have several theories about solutions and will walk through them with you. Even if you have used the program or computer for years and have never had this problem, try to be open to possible solutions the tech support person offers. You may have never had a problem with your CD drive, but it is possible that today is the day you are having one.
7. Offer context when it seems relevant. If you just added new hardware to your computer, and your problem is with the computer, mention this to the tech support person. If you opened an email attachment, and now you are having problems, tell this to tech support.
8. Lose the attitude. Accusing tech support of dishonesty, incompetence or suspicious lineage, doesn't solve the problem.

Quote Of The Month

"Give me a man without a goal and I'll give you a stock clerk. Give me a stock clerk with a goal and I'll give you a man who will make history."

James Cash Penney
(1875-1971)
Founder of J.C. Penney stores

Improve Your Telephone Skills: Tips For 8 Different Scenarios



Having good telephone skills is crucial as the call may be the catalyst for a prospective sale or provide vital counseling for a member of the public. However, since both parties may not see each other face-to-face, a telephone conversation may not lead to favorable results; it may even lead to unintended misunderstanding. Here are some tips:

1) Even voice tone

It is important to speak clearly in an even tone. If you are anxious or even short of breath, the other party may perceive that you are distracted. This may cause the phone conversation to be terse and unproductive.

2) Identify Yourself

It is important to identify yourself to the other party before you proceed with the conversation. It is not a good idea to assume that the other party knows you.

3) Identify The Other Party

Along the lines of the previous point, you should also ask for the identity of the other party. You do not want to reveal confidential information to the wrong person on the other line! This is not so far-fetched since speaking on a mobile phone may create voice distortions as compared to using a fixed-line phone.

4) Structured Call

If you are making a sale over the phone, it is important to ask the customer if you can have a few minutes of his time. You should then proceed with providing more important features of the product. Be

mindful that if the call recipient is speaking as if he is driving, his mind may not be fully registering



what you are selling – in this type of situation, it will be more productive to call him later at his office or home.

5) Emotional Caller

If you receive a call from a member of the public who is in an emotionally unstable state, it is good to ensure that you are not in a distracting environment; you should give your full attention is with the caller.



Remember not to speak too loudly and allow other people to overhear details of your confidential phone conversation.

6) Incoming Call

It is rude to abruptly pick up an incoming call and expect your phone partner to hold. If the incoming call is urgent, it is a matter of courtesy to tell your phone partner that you will get back to him shortly. Remember to get his number.

7) Using the email/fax

In sales, you can complement the phone conversation with email attachments or even a fax. This allows you to go through the product's specifications and together be more persuasive in closing the sale. The other party is able to better visualize your product.

8) Your handset

If the battery in your handset is running low, remember to inform the other party. It is also a good practice to ask for his number if it is not reflected in your phone system.

How To Write A Proposal That Gets A “Yes”

Many companies and their decision-makers require written proposals, and if you are like many sales people, you probably shudder at the thought of this request. However, writing a good proposal doesn't have to be painful provided you keep a few points in mind.

First, recognize that closing the sale in a business proposal is a process, not an event. It doesn't occur just because you have asked for a commitment or because you have presented all the features and benefits of your product or service. When a customer or prospect agrees to do business with you after reviewing your proposal, it means that you have addressed their key issues and demonstrated exactly how your solution will benefit their company. This requires a bit of strategic planning.

Unfortunately, too many sales people spend too much time talking about their company, product or service at the beginning of the proposal. The drawback with this approach is that decision-makers are extremely busy which means they don't want to waste their time reading something that has little or no relevance to their situation. Salespeople will argue that this information is critical and that they need to present it in order to show how their solution is appropriate to the customer's situation. While this is true, it is essential to direct your initial focus on the customer and demonstrate that you have a good understanding of

your prospect's issues and concerns.

Great proposals often start with an executive summary which highlights the prospect's current situation or problem and how this issue is affecting the company. This means you need to ask your prospect key questions during your conversations. In the hundreds of sales training workshops I have conducted over the years, I have discovered that the vast majority of sales people fail to ask their prospects sufficient insightful, thought-provoking questions. As a result, they fail to understand the negative impact of a particular problem on the company's business. However, stating the impact of the problem in your proposal can reinforce to the decision-maker, the importance of implementing a solution.

Closing the sale in a proposal means positioning your solution and demonstrating exactly how your prospect will benefit by using your product or service. Far too many sales people forget this critical element. They discuss many of the features and benefits of their solution but they fail to outline the impact of their solution on the prospect's business. The challenge is that the majority of sales people do not discuss this with their prospect. Therefore, they cannot address it in their proposal.

Reduce the prospect's risk. Many people would rather tolerate working with a vendor who is not performing well rather than make a change because of their fear of the unknown or the pain that is often associated with making a significant change. I once retained the services of a particular individ-

ual even though I was not completely satisfied with his work simply because I dreaded the hassle of finding a new vendor. If this is a potential concern of your prospects, then offer some type of reassurance or guarantee to reduce or eliminate this fear.

Closing the sale in a proposal also requires some form of action or commitment. Ending your proposal with a feeble statement such as, "If you have any questions please let us know" is not effective. It is essential that you clearly outline the next step(s) you expect from your prospect along with a time frame.

Lastly, keep your proposal as brief as possible. Unless your solution is extremely complex, you need to keep it short, clear and concise because executives simply don't have time to read a fifty-page document. Besides, short proposals are usually much easier to read and understand. I recall the very first proposal I was required to present. Because I didn't know any better, I only included information that I felt was relevant to my prospect and was able to outline a thirty thousand dollar project in just three pages. After we reached an agreement I asked what influenced their decision and was told, "Your proposal was easy to understand."

The bottom line? If you have asked your prospect enough of the right questions and positioned your solution in a manner that demonstrates exactly how your solution is the best one for your prospect, and removed the risk, you increase your ability to close the sale.

This article was authored by Kelly Robertson, author of *Stop, Ask, and Listen*.

“Did You Hear About...”

"The reports of my death are greatly exaggerated" was one of many famous Mark Twain quotes. Harmless but witty.

However, the impact of incorrect reports of Alfred Nobel's death were much more profound. In 1888, a French newspaper mistook the healthy Swedish industrialist for his late brother, Ludwig.

During his lifetime, Alfred Nobel's most famous achievement was



Motivated by a mistaken obituary, Alfred Nobel (1833-1896) recreated his legacy.

the invention of dynamite. Although this substance revolutionized mining and construction, Nobel's premature obituary took an entirely different slant. It focused instead on the contribution his invention had made to modern warfare.

"The merchant of death is dead", stated the obituary. "Dr. Alfred Nobel, who became rich by finding ways to kill more people faster than

ever before, died yesterday."

Horrified at this interpretation of his legacy, Nobel changed his will. On his actual death, the majority of his estate was used to fund the Nobel prizes. Each year since 1901, prizes have been awarded celebrating outstanding achievement in physics, chemistry, physiology or medicine, literature, and for peace.

Some might argue this was an attempt at atonement — a charge leveled at many of the super-rich who become philanthropists. However you interpret Nobel's actions, this is a great example of putting a legacy first.

Why We Make Foolish And Irrational Decisions

Book Review: You're already thinking the author of *Predictably Irrational* is not talking about a smart, practical person like you. But he is.

MIT professor Dan Ariely has been studying behavioral economics for 20 years. He contends that irrational behavior is a part of human nature. Don't be put off by his academic standing. His new book is an entertaining read.

It's a fascinating romp through the science of decision-making. Ariely shows how emotions, social norms, relativity and expectations lead us astray.

He illustrates how people keep their options open, even when one is obviously better; why a woman can't decide on one of two suitors though one has demonstrated that he is better.

Want to know why a penny difference in price can prompt you to choose a different candy than the one you really

want? Why coffee in a nice setting tastes better? Why a person looks more attractive when a less-attractive person enters the room? Or why people who would never steal money take office supplies?

Ariely says our understanding of economics is now based on the assumption that people behave rationally. It should be based on the natural irrationality of human beings. But once understood, irrationality can be overcome.

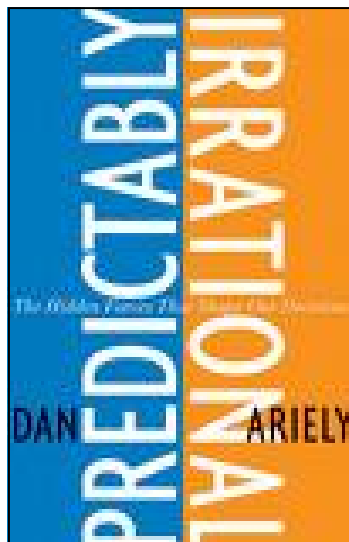
Some of his ex-

periments had surprising outcomes. In one, people were asked to write down the last two digits of their Social Security numbers. After they did, it was found that people with numbers ending

in the highest digits (80-99) were willing to pay more for items like wine and chocolates than those with the lowest numbers, those ending in 01 to 20.

Economists are using the new-found knowledge to design fixes for problems ranging from drug addiction, to under-saving for retirement, or to the positioning of cookies and fruits in the cafeteria.

Predictably Irrational by Dan Ariely, Harper-Collins, 304 pages, \$25.95.



About D&M

Founded in 2001, D&M Enterprise Group has thousands of satisfied clients. D&M utilizes a consultative approach to thoroughly examine every aspect of each client's telecommunications needs and then recommend specific cost-saving and performance-enhancing solutions. We specialize in medium to large-scale applications that include DS3, T1, as well as phone equipment installations.

As independent telecommunications experts, we have the luxury of offering our clients objective advice that truly serves their best interests. Once our clients' telecommunications needs are identified, we match these needs with the services offered by more than 20 of the nation's leading carriers and equipment manufacturers we represent. Because we have the ability to select from a wide variety of carriers and equipment, we can guarantee our clients that they are getting the **best solution** available at the **lowest possible cost**.

HOW WE DO IT: D&M does all the comparison shopping for you! Using proprietary software, D&M analyzes your existing communication, Internet, and data transfer usage. Once this analysis is complete, a comprehensive, customized proposal is prepared that shows the savings you can expect from competing carriers who can provide the same, or in some cases, superior service, at a lower price. Based on your needs, D&M will also recommend service and equipment changes that will save you money too.

In addition, D&M uses proprietary software, which we call our COMMauditor system, to analyze every invoice to ensure you are being charged at the contracted rate and that you are not charged for equipment or services that were canceled or never ordered. We also track all your telephony assets and vendor agreements.

The combination of increasing the efficiency of your business by ensuring you are using the proper services and equipment, along with monitoring your bills for accuracy, guarantees your company will be performing at maximum efficiency without overspending.

As your single point of contact, D&M makes it easy for you to spend your valuable time running your business while we make sure your telecommunications, Internet and data transfer needs are being supplied by the highest quality providers at the lowest possible cost.



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