



Michael A. Brown's

Business To Business By Phone[®]

Fourth Quarter 2002 Edition

WANT BETTER CALL GUIDES? STUDY BROADCAST JOURNALISM!

Except for radio advertising, most marketing and sales material is written for the eye. Print, web site, and e-mail copy is visual. But phone is an audio medium and requires call guides written for the ear.

The very best way to get good at crafting "listener-friendly" call guides is by learning and applying broadcast journalism. The broadcast part is self-evident. But why journalism and not marketing? Because broadcast journalists must write concisely, using action verbs to create powerful mental images. And they typically have very little time to tell their stories, much like phone-based reps.

Best Advice: Enter "radio news writing" at your favorite search engine. Choose a few resources and apply what you learn to modify a present call guide or create a new one. Rehearse. Then call me and try it out! **800 373-3966**.

HELP YOUR REPS SPEAK WELL

Having a terrific call guide is one thing. Making it sound natural, and not like a script, while coming out of different reps' mouths, is another. Do make sure your reps practice with new call guides. But don't force them into one speech pattern.

IT'S TIME TO DRIVE A STAKE INTO MATRIX MANAGEMENT!

I suppose we should have expected an idea like matrix management from the 1970s, the same decade that brought us polyester leisure suits. Let's stop it now.

Matrix management messes up companies and their people because it's a way for everyone to be involved in everything without responsibility for anything. If you have matrix management, you have a committee of amoebae. Forget focus. Forget deadlines. Forget results. Participation is the thing.

Please understand that I am not pitching autocratic rule by know-it-all bosses, nor am I advocating a return to bloated, top-down hierarchies. I am making the case for establishing legitimate business goals and objectives and assigning *clear* responsibilities for carrying them out! Someone, preferably the executive group, has to step up to the strategic issues and then work the operational details with management and staff. During development, all parties with a piece of the action deserve to have their opinions heard. But once the decisions are made and implementation is underway, cut the matrix nonsense and get on with it.

Well-run organizations know this. The San Francisco 49ers didn't put each play to a vote. Joe Montana and Steve Young called the plays the coaches created and the players ran them to perfection. They won five Super Bowls. Air traffic controllers don't solicit "buy-in" to takeoff sequences. They tell United 50 to wait for American 109 and the pilot does so. Passengers like this much better than airplanes colliding on the runway. The musicians in the National Symphony Orchestra all play from the same scores under one conductor. Audiences appreciate this more than a cacophony from a matrix band.

We all acknowledge the need in day-to-day business operations for cross-functional activities and inter-discipline projects with their own leaders. That's OK. But it is *not* OK to set up elaborate and confusing "multiple-masters" organizational charts ... matrices ... simply because people are working outside their own departmental cubicles.

Best Advice: If your prospect's company operates with matrix management, double your standard sales cycle and shorten your payment terms. Expect delays and new decision participants to appear constantly. If you land the account, deliver or perform quickly, get paid, then decide whether you want to continue and can afford to. If you work for a company that still has fuzzy matrices with lots of "dotted-line" relationships, polish your resumé tonight. If you *run* such a company, start fixing it right now. Want ideas? Call me. **800 373-3966**.



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ADVICE IN A SENTENCE OR LESS

For medical office staffs: Treat us not only as routine patients, but as valued customers.
For companies with CRM: Ask your customers if they have noticed that you have it.
For companies considering CRM: Ask your customers what they would do if you had it.
For "spam" victims: Delete but don't type "remove."
For Delta and Continental Airlines: Flying sardine cans ... pull some seats, Leo and Gordon!
For Americans: "Ask not what your country can do for you ... ask what you can do for your country."

PHONE PHRASES TO AVOID

- "Can I have your name?" (No, I need it.)
- "What was your name again?" (The name is not "again," it's Michael.)
- "The ultimate ... " (Until the next one.)
- "I'll be honest." (And up 'til now?)
- "How are *you* today?" (Oh no, a telemarketer.)

FINALLY! A GOOD USE FOR THOSE CDs!

Most of us have a dozen or more unrequested CDs from software companies and Internet service providers. Rather than using them as landfill or drink coasters, donate them to your local youth sports teams! They make terrific sideline and end zone markers because they glint in the sun and under the lights. Referees and umpires can see them clearly, which reduces questionable calls. That, in turn, promotes greater amity amongst the players, parents, and coaches.

SALES LEFT OUT OF CRM?

"CRM software was never designed to support the actual selling process." So wrote Klaus Besier at *destinationCRM.com*. He runs a CRM software company. My question: how good can CRM be if it *doesn't* support the selling process?

THE ARTISTRY AND PRODUCTION OF SELLING

Sales people sometimes perform as artists and other times as production workers. Our attitudes and often our results reveal which we prefer.

Much of selling *is* production: making lots of phone calls and writing lots of e-mails, for example. The production aspects appeal to some sales people because production work demonstrates activity and perhaps predictability.

The artistry, which some sales people love and others avoid, isn't always as visible. It is the sudden ingenious idea in the middle of a restless sleep. It is the will to create and present an alternate strategy when the "smart money" or political climate says otherwise. It is the ability to grasp and communicate the forest as well as the trees. So ...

- Make no presumption about whether artistry or production will earn a prospect's business. Through your questioning, qualification, and listening, you will discover which to emphasize.
- Do not mistake activity for results. If the production elements lack artistry, nothing gets sold. But artistry without production yields missed quotas and job loss.
- Infuse your production with artistry and vice versa. Recognize and revel in each.

PLAN YOUR 2003 KICKOFF EVENTS NOW!

Start the New Year fast and strong with a fresh, new keynote presentation. Hot topics include:

- Marketing and Selling Into the Economic Recovery: Five Controversial Strategies
- Why Marketers Must Sell and Sellers Must Market
- Four Keys to Restoring Trust to Marketing and Sales

Reserve today! **800 373-3966**