

Hooked!

7 Tips to Capture a Prospect's Attention



Paint a Picture when Prospecting



Nigel speaking: You know I talk *a lot* about how to effectively prospect. When you're prospecting, it's tough to capture the attention of today's frazzled customer. All of us have become busier-and-busier and better-and-better at screening out messages (your email, your voice mail, etc.)

The more prospecting weapons you have, the better.

My answer to this challenge has been to develop a prospecting approach I call "Social Calling." In our tests, we've found Social Calling ***approximately eight times more effective*** than traditional volume cold calling. A pretty huge improvement – but over a process that is fundamentally broken.

The basic Social Calling framework includes calling the right people, calling at the right time, and leveraging relationships. It's key to integrate these three factors into language that *gets through*. You need language that truly paints a picture: hence the use of metaphors and why I wanted to write this white paper with ace language strategy expert Anne Miller.



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Anne speaking: Why metaphors? Because people are wired to notice and react more quickly and emotionally to visuals, which are processed in our right brain, than they are to information alone, which is processed in our left brain. Compare: “Joe is persistent, resilient, and hard-working,” to “Joe is like Rocky. Knock him over and he comes right back for more.” Determination, persistence and energy, captured memorably with a single image. In a world where people are drowning in too much information, metaphor is a sales person’s life-saver. Anyone who sells, influences, or motivates needs to be a “Metaphorian,” a master of metaphor.

We are using metaphor in its broadest sense to mean any comparison that creates an image in another person’s mind. That can also be an analogy, story, or a saying. For example, if you are urging a client to update her systems, you might say, “Even if you’re on the right track, if you just sit there, you are going to be hit. Similarly, while you are doing well now, if you do not continue to update your technology, you are going to get hit and hit hard by the competition.”

You *can* master this technique. You already speak in metaphors: “That is a train wreck waiting to happen,” or, “She hit that one out of the park,” or, “I don’t have the bandwidth to think about that now.” The challenge is to go from casual to intentional use of metaphors and leverage them strategically to make a difference in your bottom-line.

Tip #1: My Reason for Calling

In the Social Calling framework we're pretty keen on using trigger events. Trigger events put you in front of prospects at the *right time*.

Trigger events are useful for another reason: they give you a perfect reason for calling. There's something very natural in saying "The reason I'm calling is..."

Now, wouldn't it be nice to make your "is..." something that resonates and sticks in your prospect's mind? That's where metaphors come in. They can help you immediately arouse curiosity for your services.

So rather than say, "*My reason for calling is because you have a new CEO and new CEOs make changes in management and we help with organizational change,*" How about saying, "*I see you have a new CEO and new CEOs can be like new brooms...they tend to sweep out a lot of the old stuff and bring in the new. We specialize in helping you make that clean sweep quickly and painlessly.*"

Or if your trigger event is a new product launch say, "*The reason I'm calling is that I noticed you have a new product introduction and I have some ideas how to make your product take off like an iPad.*"



Tip #2: How to Describe Your Past Projects

When you're prospecting you need to back up your value proposition with some "proof points," typically projects you have completed and how they delivered results. You may need to do this on a live call, in a voice mail message, or in an email.



Cold hard numbers work really well in explaining your value, but are often forgotten, because your buyers also hear competitors' laundry lists of similar-sounding proof points. And, they all blur together. To stand out, make an impact, and be remembered, punch your numbers up in metaphoric terms. For example,

"Our software helped ABC Insurance turn an unmanageable flood of claims processing issues into an easily handled trickle, from 87% down to 15%."

"We help you reach one million consumers: that's ten Super Bowls of new customers for you."

"Working with us will save you 15 basis points on this deal, enough to build that new shopping center in the Caribbean you are planning."





Tip #3: Email That Pops

Getting someone to open and then read an email has become as frustrating as getting someone to take your call. You are again fighting information overload and the limits on their time. What can you do?

Make your subject boxes and opening lines “pop” with imagery. For example, writing to a Sales SVP:

Subject Box: *From Willy Loman to Steve Jobs*

Email: *Ms. Prospect, as you mentioned in this week’s XYZ article, the old “slap’ em on the back and take’ em to lunch” approach to selling is dead and has been dead for a while. What is needed today are Jobs-like salespeople, able to think laterally and connect the dots for clients with creative solutions. We can help your team not only think more creatively, but also show bottom-line results within thirty days....*

Or, writing to a Shoe Buyer for a Department Store Chain

Subject Box: *Bottom-line “Shoe-in”*

Email: *What snow is to Eskimos, luxury shoes are to us. We know what appeals to selective customers like yours and would like the chance to show you our collection...*

Tip #4: Handling a Question on a Cold Call

You are on a call live with a prospect (hey it happens sometimes!) But for some reason they really don't seem to be getting your key point (often your unique value of all things!).



It's crazy because you've tried and tried to make it simple enough that even grandma should understand it. But this frazzled prospect must be looking at their Blackberry at the same time as he is talking to you.

Clarify it fast (you probably only have fast as an option before they say "not interested"). Go to the "metaphor draw!"

"OK let me explain it this way. Our software is like a filter that just pulls out the three gold nuggets from a ton of rock."

"I have a stock you should look at. Its earning are... Its growth is... Its management is... It does..." (Yeah, yeah, yeah.) "Think of this opportunity like Microsoft in 1984."

"I am a life coach." (Huh?) "I help people become the DJs of their own mental iPods."

"We enable women in third world countries to gain economic independence by providing them with critical financial support. Think 'Citibank for the poor.'"





Tip #5: Dealing with a Tough Objection on a Cold Call

Why do people persist with their objections? Obviously your solution is the best thing since sliced bread. But, nonetheless, just as you are getting somewhere with your cold call, your prospect throws up an objection.

Consider using your metaphor arsenal to fire back a response that will not only relieve their anxiety about the issue, but also stick in their mind when their boss asks about it.

Objection: *It's too difficult.*

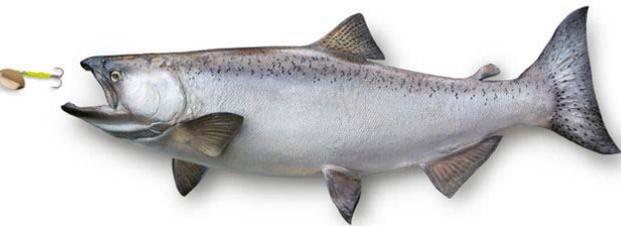
Response: *Don't worry, Jack, that's not a problem. Using our system is like coloring by numbers. It's that simple.*

Objection: *I don't believe in advertising.*

Response: *Think of advertising like bombing the beaches before the Marines come in. The 'beaches' are the marketplace. You bombard the beaches with your brand awareness message to make it easier for the 'Marines,' your salespeople, to 'land,' to get meetings.*

Tip #6: Zippy title for a Follow up White Paper/Blog Post

Hope you like the title page of this white paper. Otherwise, this point may not resonate with you. Sometimes we need to send prospects a white paper, blog post, or article.



There's research showing (guess what?) prospects don't read every white paper, blog or article – even if they downloaded them themselves. Guess what encourages them to start reading? Yup, the title. Just like magazines at the supermarket checkout – a good cover draws you in to reading the first page. First battle won!

So, if you get involved in writing any blogs, articles, white papers or anything that gets sent to your prospect, consider the title. Make it catchy. Examples:

- Who Says Elephants Can't Dance* (leading IBM through change)
- The Tipping Point* (how little things make a big difference)
- Purple Cows* (how to be remarkable in your industry)
- Black Swan* (highly improbable events and their impact)
- Breaking the Glass Ceiling* (getting to the top at organizations)
- Duct Tape Marketing* (how to market effectively)
- Never Let a Barber Do Brain Surgery* (story from Anne's book)





Tip #7: Add some Zest to an Introduction

Ever made an introduction on LinkedIn or even via email? What do you say? People often ask me that when I present *Social Calling* to them. My answer is to make the intro short and sweet. And often: funny.

Share something insightful about both people you are introducing but consider spicing up the intro by using some metaphorical language. As with all the other metaphors people will remember your intro more.

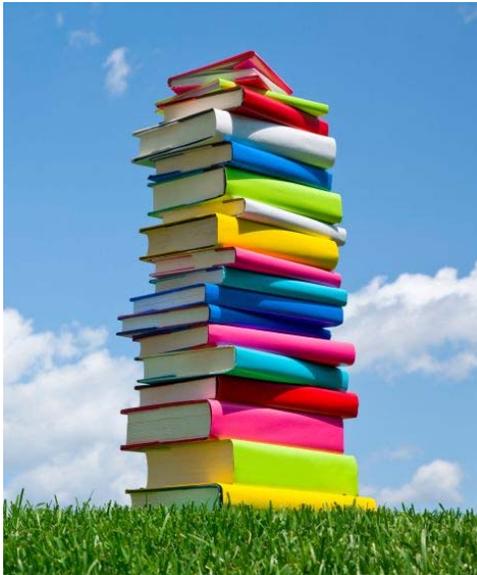
John, meet Steve, Steve Meet John. You guys are both great blokes. I know you will get on like a house on fire.

Anne, meet Peter. Peter, Anne is the guru of metaphors. If she were any more guru-like she would levitate above the ground. You two should talk, I predict goodness will flow like wine.

Rupa, meet Don. Don, Rupa is a combination Martha Stewart, Warren Buffet and Seinfeld. She is perfect to help you build out your company. Rupa, Don is a true Renaissance leader, endlessly curious, always chapters ahead of the competition. The two of you together can create and dominate the future of this industry.



More Resources



- Miller, Anne. **Metaphorically Selling: How to use the magic of metaphors to sell, persuade & explain anything to anyone.** Available on www.amazon.com and as an ebook at www.annemiller.com
- Miller, Anne. **Make What You Say Pay! The language that opens minds, closes deals & wows crowds.** Available on www.amazon.com and as an ebook at www.annemiller.com
- Miller, Anne. **The Metaphor Minute.** Free monthly newsletter. www.annemiller.com
- [“Don’t Cold Call. Social Call”](#) by Nigel Edelshain, Free e-book.
- Hundreds of free articles on Social Selling and marketing to today’s frazzled customer at www.sales2.com
- For more great sales books to use with today’s customer see [Top 20 Sales Books for a Sales 2.0](#)



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About the Authors



Anne Miller, Founder, Chiron Associates, Inc.

Anne Miller helps turn frogs into princes and princes into kings when it comes to high stakes selling and presenting situations. Her clients come from leading media and B2B firms.

Anne's most recent book is **Make What You Say Pay! The language that opens minds, closes deals, & wows crowds.**

Anne's blog is www.annemiller.com/blog

Anne offers a variety of services to increase your bottom-line:

- Sales and Presentations Training, Speaking, & Coaching
- Sales Assessments to identify and grow star performers

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Nigel Edelshain is CEO of Sales 2.0. Companies that work with Sales 2.0 get radically superior sales results by utilizing Web 2.0 and social media in their sales process. Clients are companies in sales-intensive industries such as: IT services, insurance, software, printing and telecommunications



Sales 2.0 offers companies a range of ways to boost their revenue., including:

- Sales training (both e-learning and in-classroom),
- Sales assessments (an analysis of people, process and tools),
- Interim sales management, and
- Speaking engagements

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