



6 SALES CALL

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**MISTAKES**

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THAT MAKE

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PROSPECTS

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HANG UP



As a sales rep, you're no stranger to rejection.

You've made hundreds if not thousands of prospecting calls in your career, and regardless of how well you prepared or how perfect the prospect was for your offering, some of those dials resulted in hang-ups.

Getting hung up occasionally is an unfortunate consequence of being in sales. Nothing to obsess over.

However, if hang-ups are the rule rather than the exception for you, something's awry.

### **Top reasons prospects hang up on salespeople**

1. Mispronouncing the name of the person or company
2. Being overly familiar
3. Ignoring the prospect's objections
4. Sounding scripted
5. Interrupting
6. Pitching before you've built rapport

If you're making one of these call-ending mistakes, take corrective action immediately.





## 1. Mispronouncing the name of the person or company

If you have an unusual name, you've felt the pain of mispronunciation. When someone messes up your name, not only does your mood take a turn for the worse, but that person instantly loses credibility in your eyes.

Clearly, they don't know you, and didn't care enough before meeting you to practice your name. It's no wonder that you tune them out immediately.

This is exactly how prospects feel when a salesperson slaughters their name or the name of their company. A butchered pronunciation signals that the rep didn't do their research, and frankly, doesn't care.



### How to fix:

Mispronunciation is the number one reason prospects hang up on reps, and it's impossible to recover from.

With this in mind, call the company and double-check the pronunciation of your contact's name before you dial them.

Asking for the receptionist's assistance upfront can prevent a hang-up later.



## 2. Being too familiar

Oftentimes, reps will talk to a prospect like they're best friends right out of the gate. However, there's a fine line between trying to build rapport and obscuring who you are.

When buyers pick up the phone and hear the overly familiar language on the other end of the line, they often conclude that they must know the person, and start racking their brain to call up the relationship.

But when they realize that you're actually a salesperson they've never talked to before? They get mad -- and slam down the phone.



### How to fix:

Recognize the difference between friendly and familiar -- between "Hi, Jim" and "What's up dude?"

Don't speak to a buyer you've never talked to before like you've known each other for 20 years.

Rudeness is not acceptable, and using inappropriately informal language with a buyer is precisely that.





### 3. Disregarding the prospect's objections

Here's a common scenario you might be able to relate to:

**Sales rep:** "Hi there! I'm Adam calling from Tagteam. I'd like to talk about the house you would want to buy."

**Prospect:** "Well, now's not really a good time."

**Sales rep:** "Okay, I understand it's not a good time. Tagteam. can help you maximize your rates. We've worked with X, OY, and Z! -- "

**Prospect:** [Hangs up]

What went wrong? Even though the prospect objected to the call, the rep ignored her concern and launched into his pitch.

This makes it clear that the salesperson isn't listening to the buyer. And when people feel they're being ignored? They hang up.

**How to fix:** First, listen to and respect a prospect's objections to your call. Maybe they're telling the truth and maybe they aren't, but that's not for you to decide.

Great salespeople know they should never ignore their prospect's feelings, and this rule holds from the very first call.

Second, before you even pick up the phone, define a few alternative paths the call could take and a number of results that would be acceptable to you.

For example, if you're going into a call hoping to identify the decision-maker but the contact brushes you off with a quick

"I don't have time,"





pivot your ask in the following manner:”

“Ah, it’s a bad time, okay. Well, in that case, where can I find more information about your HR function so when you have time I’m better prepared for our conversation?”

This question accomplishes two things:

1. It lengthens your talk time.
2. It disrupts the prospect from thinking about time and prompts them to think about resources instead.

You might not have achieved exactly what you wanted to on the call, but these alternative results are promising.

In addition, you’ve set yourself up nicely for a second call -- and several short interactions that go well are better than one long interaction that goes poorly.

#### **4. Sounding like a robot**

Note that I didn’t write “using a script.” You might be using a script, and you might not -- either way is fine.

When a salesperson sounds like they’re reading from a script, they don’t treat their prospects as individuals, and their own humanity takes a hit.

And if a prospect feels as if they’re being talked at by a robot, they won’t feel bad hanging up the phone.



**How to fix:**

Ensure you don't sound scripted by following three simple rules.

First, lower your tone.

Oftentimes, salespeople will start their calls with an unnaturally high pitch.

Although reps might think they're conveying excitement, prospects come to a different conclusion -- the salesperson is being fake.

Speak in your natural tone for the entire duration of the call.

Second, slow down. Because fast talking can signal a scripted approach, the faster a rep speaks, the more likely it is that the prospect will hang up.

Instead of trying to cram everything into a few seconds, slow your speech.

You'll find it's much harder for a person to interrupt someone's who's speaking slowly than for them to interject during a lightning-quick pitch.

Third, have a frequent pauses throughout your call. Pauses prevent the knee-jerk reaction of a hang-up and also indicate that you're truly engaged in the conversation. I recommend around two seconds.



## 5. Interrupting

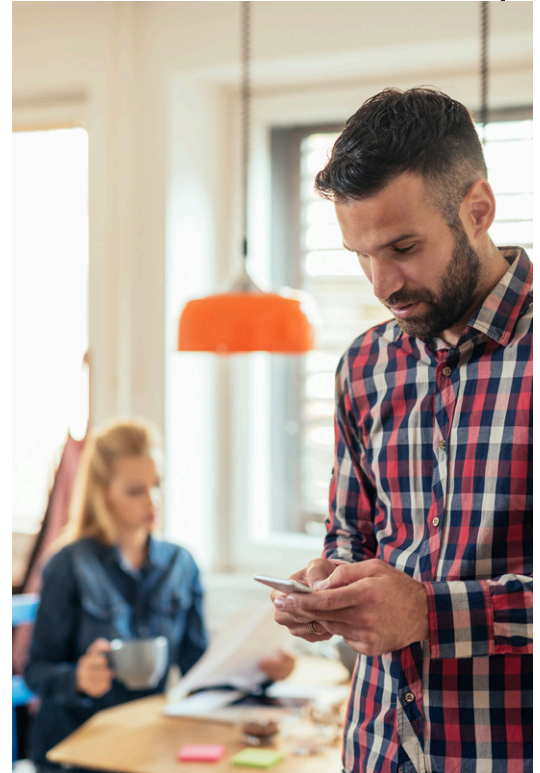
Often times reps interpret silence on a call as a sign that it's going poorly.

So whenever a silence occurs, they rush in to fill it.

The problem with this is that salespeople can interrupt their buyers without even knowing it.

The prospect might have been opening their mouth to say something -- but you cut them off by trying to fill the silence.

And while it's acceptable to interject when someone you know well is talking, interrupting a buyer you've never spoken with before -- intentionally or unintentionally -- creates a terrible **first impression**.



### How to fix:

After you ask a question, pause.

When your buyer is talking, stop talking.

Words such as "okay," "great," "sure," and "uh-huh" are often used to demonstrate listening and comprehension, but they can interrupt the buyer's train of thought, and signal that you're simply waiting to start talking again instead of truly paying attention.





## 6. Pitching before you've built rapport

If the first thing you say to a prospect when you get them on the phone is, "Hello, I'm Adam, I'm a salesperson with Tagteam, and I'd like to talk to you about [benefit],"

no wonder your prospects are hanging up on you.



### How to fix:

The opening outlined above says "I" three times and "you" once -- and that's the problem.

It's all about you. Keep the conversation focused on your prospect from the moment you get them on the phone.

Switch your opening greeting to, "Hello [Prospect name], I help company's like yours [benefit]. Is that something you'd be interested in learning more about?"

Getting hung up on every once in a great while is a reality in sales. But if you want to reduce your hang up rate to zero, avoid these six common mistakes.



**Let's TAG TEAM this DEAL! ®**

