



## Telephone Tips – “First Contact”

Ah, the 800 pound telephone. We think and think and think about how to get clients to call us, design the very best in marketing campaigns, spend a lot of money, execute perfectly, and generate hundreds of call ins. That’s our history. Good campaigns, good results. They call us.

What happens next? Some of us do GREAT; others just freeze up or worse still avoid the phone. Why? Wouldn’t you bend over to pick up a \$1000 bill? Well, that’s what you should think about when you reach to pick up the phone. Put it in that context and **you’ll take all your calls every time.**

But now that you answered the call what do you say? This is the “art of the call”. Phone sales are at the same time the simplest yet HARDEST thing a LO has to do. You can’t just “pick up the phone” on these types of calls.

***You must be all of these things at once.***

1. READY TO SPEND 10-15 MINUTES
2. AVAILABLE 24 HOURS
3. LISTENING NOT SPEAKING
4. ALWAYS CHEERFUL
5. “RD” (RELATIONSHIP DRIVEN)
6. PATIENT
7. PROBING not THREATENING
8. CLEAR SPEAKING using PLAIN ENGLISH
9. NO MORTGAGE TALK
10. QUIETLY CREATING A SENSE OF URGENCY AND COMMITMENT

Because as you can see, this is more complex than you thought, you are probably wondering how to be all those things in the call. Well, the best phone people never try to “do it all in one call”. They recognize the fearful nature of MOST seniors, and defuse the FUD before they ever get to the facts. That’s a good cliché to remember.

## “Defuse the FUD before you give the FACTS”

How do you do that without confusing your client? Divide your call into TWO. The POWER of TWO. Remember that. **Don’t** try to “do it all in one call”.

**Call ONE:** On this first call, you should spend almost the entire call probing and digging, to learn as much about the client by listening to how they answer your questions. What Questions? The ones that build trust and relationships, not the ones that get technical and use mortgage speak. This first call has to defuse the FUD. If you don’t get past FUD, you end up a DUD. **DEFUSE THE FUD FIRST!**

Here are some responses and questions you could use that are probative and non-threatening.

1. Well, hello there. I am so glad I grabbed the phone.
2. Well, thank you SOOO MUCH for calling me. These calls are so important!
3. You sound familiar. Have we ever spoken before?
4. Is that a puppy I hear in the background?
5. It is so nice to get such a friendly call. I really appreciate it.
6. How did you find my number? Was it a postcard, or radio, or a referral?
7. Do you have children? Are they treating you OK?
8. Are you sure you are at least 62 years old? You sound so young!

By now about 3 to 5 minutes should have passed and it is time to get down to business. However, if they still sound nervous, spend a few more minutes speaking to them about things personal; health, weather, the neighborhood; etc. NO MORTGAGE SPEAK until they seem comfortable and are sharing with you freely.

Once that happens, then – here’s the “gold” - get the senior to start giving you an idea of their knowledge level – you LISTEN and ANALYZE. Still no MORTGAGE SPEAK.

1. What do you know about our program?
2. Who told you that? Do you TRUST THEM?
3. How is your house? Is it still working OK for you?
4. What would you change about it if you had the cash?
5. Do you have any other options regarding paying off your mortgage?
6. Did they say they would give you money?
7. How are you with computers?

Now you move into the closing part of the call. Be sure you ask these questions.

1. Can I have your birth date?
2. How much is your house worth?
3. What is your mortgage balance?
4. Do you have a home equity loan too?
5. How do you want your money? (This is a BIG ONE, you are closing the deal)

Now you have reached the end of the call. Here is what not to do. NEVER plug the numbers into your computer and give them results. NEVER tell them it looks like they might not qualify. NEVER sound anything other than CHEERFUL and OPTIMISTIC.

Tell them the following. You need a few minutes to check the HUD calculation on how much federally insured money might be available for them. Ask them if they will give you ten or fifteen minutes to check the data. When they say yes, end the call by getting their agreement that they will pick up the phone when you call back. RE-VERIFY their phone number. Then close out the call with something they won’t expect; something like this. This is my personal favorite.

“OK, I will be back to you in a few minutes. I want to ask a favor. Here’s what I want you to do while I’m running your benefit analysis. I want you to sit down, shut your eyes, think about what you need the most right now, and how you are going to feel once you get it. Because you can use your federally insured cash for anything you want, so start dreaming. I will be back in a few minutes.”

Next week: The SECOND CALL – explaining benefits, and how to give “bad news” in a “good light”