

# YOUR FAST TRACK TO OPPORTUNITY

## HOW TO GET TO THE DECISION MAKER

A proven guide to help you get past gatekeepers, connect with key decision-makers, and accelerate your sales results.



# HOW TO GET TO THE DECISION-MAKER

If you've been in sales for any length of time, you know it's the universal challenge – how to reach the person you actually need in order to be able to offer your services. How successful you are at reaching the decision-maker can make or break your career in sales.

You may be wondering, how can I reach the decision-maker the first time, without playing weeks of phone tag? How can I convince their receptionist to put me through? If I have to leave a voice mail, what should I say in order to get a call back?

At Southwestern Consulting, we feel your pain. Our professional Sales and Leadership Coaches have conducted over half a million hours of training and been in more than 40,000 offices just like yours worldwide. And we've learned a thing or two about sales along the way – certain techniques that work and those that don't.

*So let's dive in!*

## 1 GETTING PAST THE GATEKEEPER

OK, so the first step of effectively getting to a decision-maker is getting past the gatekeeper. The gatekeeper's job is to specifically screen people the decision-maker may not want to talk to and to protect the decision-maker's time.

Here's where most sales people blow it – they give out too much information up front. Remember, gatekeepers are generally trained to get you off the phone as fast as possible. These questions are designed to screen you quickly and send you to voice mail, if need be.

But don't give the decision-making power away to someone who isn't the decision-maker! Knowing just a few effective techniques can help increase your odds of getting to the right person.



## QUESTIONS A GATEKEEPER MAY ASK:

- + “Who may I say is calling?”
- + “What company are you with?”
- + “What is this call regarding?”
- + “Are they expecting your call?”

### PRO TIP

Don't give your entire spiel to the gatekeeper. You want to avoid giving them all the information they need to “make a decision” about you, and leave that part for the person you need to talk with, the actual decision-maker.



## 2 HOW TO **AVOID VOICEMAIL**

When going through all the trouble to get past the gatekeeper, the decision-maker may or may not be actually available, and the last thing you want is to be sent to voice mail (aka. "Voice Jail"). So if you do get transferred to voice mail, what's your best move?

SWC professional Sales and Leadership Coach Emmie Brown explains more about How to Avoid Voicemail and get decision-makers live on the phone in the training below.



## 3 SPEAKING TO THE **DECISION MAKER**

OK, so your prospect has picked up the phone and you've made it to the right person. What you say next is crucial! There are some key phrases to avoid, and some key tips to ensure your prospect sees you as a person, not simply a salesperson.



### EXAMPLES OF **WHAT NOT TO SAY**

"How are you today?"  
"Is this a good time?"



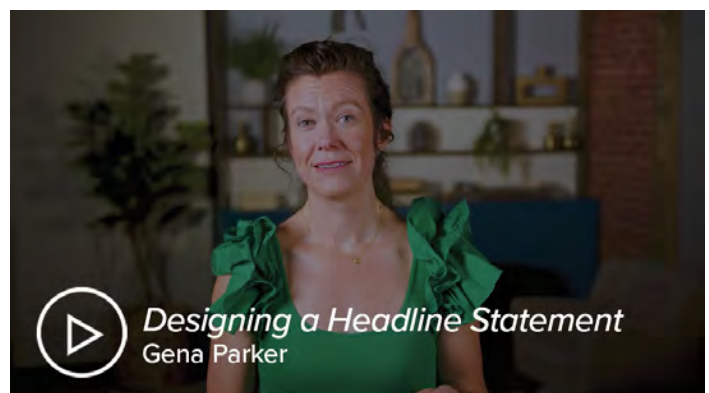
### EXAMPLES OF **WHAT TO SAY**

"Thanks for taking my call."  
Your unique headline statement.

## **HEADLINE STATEMENT**

A headline statement is a short statement that teases the value of what you offer – not 3-4 sentences of sales talk, but a quick 1-2 sentence elevator pitch: "I help people in your industry save money on [blank] by [blank]. I've helped three other businesses in your office complex cut their energy bills in half and wanted to see if it was something that might be worth your time."

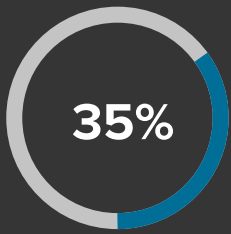
Watch SWC professional Sales and Leadership Coach Gena Parker explain more about "death phrases" and headline statements.



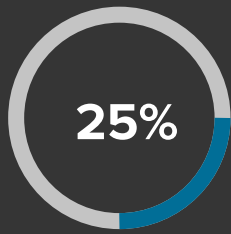


## DID YOU KNOW...

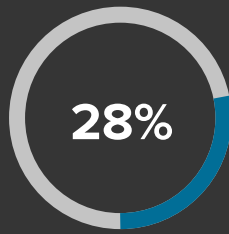
Working with a professional sales coach can **increase your income by 46%**, as well as the following:



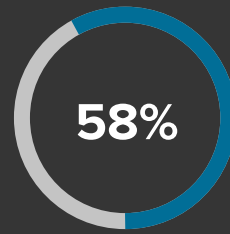
Improvement in Sales Prospecting Confidence



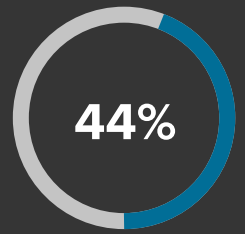
Improvement in Sales Presentation Skills



Improvement in Answering Objections



Improvement in Time Management



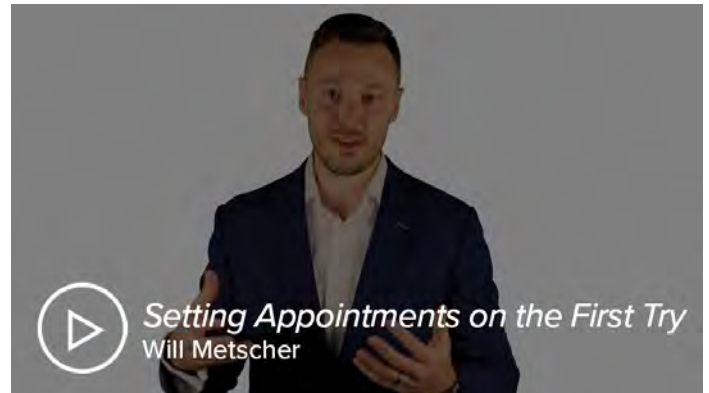
Improvement in Achieving Goals

## 4 **SETTING APPOINTMENTS ON THE FIRST TRY**

So it went well with the decisionmaker – congrats! They're opening to finding out more, or at least hearing more at a later date. So how do you leave the call with an actual appointment and not wind up playing phone tag for weeks?

When you're on the phone with them for the first time, it's your best shot at setting an appointment, so take advantage of it! When people say, "I'll have to check with my receptionist," or "I don't have my calendar in front of me," what they're really saying is, "I don't have time to think about this right now – make it easy for me." Which...you can!

In the video below, SWC professional Sales and Leadership Coach Will Metscher explains how to set quick and easy appointments every time.



## 5 **HOW TO LEAVE A SUCCESSFUL VOICE MESSAGE**



### WHAT NOT TO DO

- Leave a sales pitch.
- Leave a scripted message.
- Give out your company name.
- List why you're calling.
- Leave your availability ("salespeople" do this).



### WHAT TO DO

- Give them your name.
- Keep it friendly.
- Keep it brief.
- Dangle a carrot.



## 5 HOW TO LEAVE A **SUCCESSFUL VOICE MESSAGE** (CONTINUED)

How many voice messages have you left and never heard back from that person? Hundreds? Thousands? How do you get people on the other end of the phone to pick it up, hear your message and think, “I need to call this person!” Despite best practices, when trying to reach the decision-maker, you’re going to get their voice mail a certain percentage of the time. It’s a fact of life. So how do you leave successful voicemails?

First, remind yourself of the basic reason for leaving a voicemail. What is that reason? Not to sell anything. Not to set an appointment over the voicemail. Simply to get a call back.

In the video to the right, we’ll walk you through exactly what information to leave in your messages, including what to do and what not to do.

Sound easier said than done? Professional Sales and Leadership Coach Gena Parker demonstrates how to make this easy as second nature in this video.



## BOOK A **FREE STRATEGY SESSION** WITH A COACH

In just 45 minutes, one of our expert coaches will guide you through a personalized consultation to assess where you are now and where you want to be. After a brief questionnaire, we’ll create a tailored strategy to address your unique challenges and goals. You’ll leave with valuable insights, actionable steps, and clarity on whether coaching is the right fit for you.

If you’re loving these videos, feel free to follow us on social media:



It’s like having a professional coach in your corner!