



Corsini's Point of the Week™

May 19, 2008 — Part 2 of 2



Getting Past 'He Won't Call Me Back!'

Last week we talked about the disappointment salespeople sometimes feel when they have invested their time and talents with a client, and suddenly the communication between the two stops. This can be especially frustrating when you have enjoyed an open dialogue during the assessment and recommendation phases of the sales cycle and suddenly, without any warning, it's as if all outward communication capabilities stop and you can't get a response from the client.

First of all, in this type of situation, we coach people to not try to blindly draw any conclusions about what might or might not be happening. Don't assume the silence is bad. Don't waste time second-guessing yourself or trying to figure out what this means.

Instead, we tell them, focus on what you can do.

First of all, let's say you have left three voice mail messages in the past five business days asking about the status (or a decision) on a proposal you have made. Our first coaching suggestion is to NOT leave one more voice mail. You are not a hawker; you are an advisor, and we challenge you to act like one.

Besides, there are other things you can do:

E-mail them. Sometimes simply changing the method of communications can open up the dialogue again.

Mobile phone. For many people today, a mobile phone is the most accessible way to get (and stay) in touch—especially just before or directly after business hours.

Internal company advocates. Consider calling another contact at the company and see if they know of any answers or any reasons for the unresponsiveness. This is one of the best (and most diplomatic) ways to find out if there is a personal or health issue complicating things.

USPS. Maybe a letter will get the client's attention.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"Consider the postage stamp; its usefulness consists in the ability to stick to one thing until it gets there."

— Josh Billings

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Corsini Consulting Group, LLC

6 Office Park Circle,
Suite 309

Birmingham, AL

35223-2542

(205) 879-0432

coach@corsini.com

www.corsini.com

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Drop in. If the client is local or the deal is big enough, maybe you should just drop in next time you are “in the area.” with credit to Marc A. Corsini

Fax. Yes, some people do read faxes.

Networking / social function. Maybe you know if the person you are trying to reach frequents a particular coffee shop, gym or civic function. Maybe, without being a stalker, you can go, too.

Another advisor / salesperson. Call on one of your colleagues to see if they know something or can find out.

Centers of influence. Think about a person you both know, and consider asking this person to intervene or help in some way.

Get creative. Overnight a mobile phone programmed with your phone number to the person you are trying to reach. Include a note asking for an update. At a minimum, this sort of thing will get their attention.

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CORSINI'S POINT

If you're trying to achieve an outcome with a particular client or new relationship and the communication stalls, don't fret. And don't waste time trying to figure out what might be going on. Instead, focus your energy on an alternative way to restore communications, get your message across and get answers back. Think of another way to move forward to a positive outcome. These are just a few suggestions. In doing what you do better, we're sure you can come up with others.

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Contact Marc Corsini at marc@corsini.com or (205) 879-0432 for more information.