

MAKING THE MOST OUT OF A LIVE CONNECTION

On those occasions that you do **catch a prospect live**, it is just as important to have a prepared and purposeful script or talk track as it is with voicemail. Moreover, it is of continued importance that you show respect and professionalism by always asking for the prospect's permission to chat. Also, avoid asking, "How are you?" In most situations, this question is a turn-off; it is often overused and trite. Instead try asking, "Did I catch you at a good time?" or "Are you in a meeting?"

Sample Live Approaches:

If you're reaching out to an executive with no connection or common ground:

"Hi [PROSPECT FIRST NAME], Ray Ruecker with Connect 5000. I'm following up on an email I sent you recently. I noticed your LinkedIn profile and thought it made sense to chat. Did I catch you in a meeting?"

(Wait for them to respond.)

"We've helped companies like yours accomplish [ABC], resulting in [XYZ]. I thought we might be able to accomplish similar results for you. But to begin, I would like to ask you a few questions."

At this point, ask open-ended, thought-provoking questions with the sole purpose of keeping your conversation on track. Like:

- "Is [BUSINESS PROBLEM] a current challenge for your organization?"
- "Is [XYZ] a pain or problem?"
- "Is [XYZ] a priority?"

Avoid interrogating your prospect. Depending on how they respond, ask some of the following questions to get them to go further.

- "How so?"
- "How long has this gone on?"
- "Tell me more."
- "Could you please elaborate on that?"

Remember: The goal is to get a meeting, not sell him/her on the spot.

If you have a referral within an organization:

"Hi [PROSPECT FIRST NAME], Ray Ruecker with Connect 5000. I'm following up on an email I sent you recently. [REFERRAL FULL NAME] in your firm suggested I reach out to you. Did I catch you in a meeting?"

(Pause and wait for your target to answer. If you get the go-ahead, then proceed.)

"We've helped companies like yours accomplish [XYZ] by [X]% or [Y] dollars. I'd like to ask a few questions to see if it makes sense to chat further."

If — and only if — there's interest, ask how the prospect's calendar is to meet, visit, or chat in the next few weeks. Give them plenty of options so you have a better chance of fitting into their already busy schedule.

If an Executive Assistant in C-Suite referred you:

"Hi [PROSPECT FIRST NAME], Ray Ruecker with Connect 5000. I'm following up on an email I sent you recently. [EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT'S FULL NAME] in [C-LEVEL EXECUTIVE'S FULL NAME]'s office suggested I reach out to you. Did I catch you in a meeting?"

Mutual LinkedIn Connection:

"Hi [PROSPECT FIRST NAME], Ray Ruecker with Connect 5000. I'm following up on an email I sent you recently. I noticed your LinkedIn profile because we're both connected to [LINKEDIN CONNECTION'S FULL NAME]. Did I catch you in a meeting?"

Don't automatically assume the prospect knows the name you just mentioned.

As an alternative, you may ask after you name drop:

"Does his/her name ring a bell or sound familiar?"

Past or Present Client Connection:

"Hi [PROSPECT FIRST NAME] Ray Ruecker with Connect 5000. I'm following up on an email I sent you recently. I noticed your LinkedIn profile because we're both connected to [LINKEDIN CONNECTION'S FULL NAME], a [PAST/PRESENT] client of mine. Did I catch you in a meeting?"

(Wait for a response.)

"We helped [LINKEDIN NAME]'s company accomplish XYZ. I'd like to ask you a few questions to see if it makes sense to chat further."

(Ask open-ended questions as listed in the first scenario number above.)

If a prospect returns your call:

Sometimes our diligence pays off and the targeted prospect decides to return our call. And if that happens, exchange pleasantries and get to the point.

But if you get stuck, lose your train of thought, or simply forgot who this person is or what the call was about, ask this simple question:

“[PROSPECT FIRST NAME], thank you for returning my call. If you don’t mind me asking, what prompted you to call me back / return my call?”

If he/she seems unsure about his answer, ask the question a different way:

“[PROSPECT FIRST NAME], you’re busy and you get calls all the time, what was it about my voicemail that caught your attention and returned my call?”

Remember that something in your message triggered them to call you back. Make sure you find out what it was before you get too far into the conversation.

In the age of technology and social media, people still buy from other people. During a live conversation, don’t be afraid to weave in your personal story and reveal a little of your personality to your clients. In choosing your words and content wisely during a live connection, you give yourself a greater chance at a follow-up conversation.

 **For more samples and examples, download a free copy of our step-by-step guide to shorten sales cycles and multiply revenue *How to Score from First Base! (In Sales)* at www.connect5000.com/book.**