



## 33 TIPS TO GET PAST THE GATEKEEPER

1. Ask the gatekeeper for help.
2. Start at the top. Explain why you are calling and ask who is the best person for you to speak with.
3. Ask for the Sales or Marketing department. Gather background information, get contact names, and develop a message based on the company's business needs.
4. Research to get the best name and then ask for the contact by name.
5. Check your social network for a connection to secure a referral and hot message to use.
6. Research the contact on your social networks to look for similarities you can use in an email or the first conversation.
7. Follow-up, follow-up, follow-up—even a year later. The prospect may not have made a decision or may have another need.
8. Leave a message or don't leave a message—that is the dilemma. We recommend leaving a message to begin to convey your personality, professionalism, and value.
9. Leave your message with the assistant and keep talking to build rapport and establish a relationship.
10. If you don't have brand recognition, plan to call and leave messages at least 9 times over 3 weeks. Leave a message only every other day even if you call more frequently.
11. Ask the gatekeeper to schedule time on the contact's calendar; request a 15-20 minute appointment.
12. Follow your voicemail with an email.
13. Mention you are sending something; then ask information gathering questions as you collect mailing address information. Be sure to send something as promised.
14. Mention how you've helped improve operating expenses for other companies (or whatever it is you help improve that will grab the prospect's interests.)
15. Do your research on the company before dialing; then use it in your conversation. Avoid a product discussion.
16. Focus your opening statement on the business issue you suspect the prospect might have.
17. Use: "I'm in town visiting another client and would like to stop by." Or, "I'll be in your building and wanted to drop off some information." Ask to meet the gatekeeper to get to know him or her if you can't get an appointment with the prospect. Call back and ask for an appointment once you've met.
18. Smile throughout your conversation. Use a mirror to watch your expression. You'll sound more approachable and personable.
19. Thank the gatekeeper for his or her time.
20. Call before hours—after hours—during lunch hour—on weekends.
21. If you have a referral, ask the person who referred you to call or send an email as a personal introduction.
22. If you don't have a referral, use a reference of a client with a similar business issue and discuss how the client addressed that issue.
23. Quote real business results in dollars and cents.
24. Avoid talking too much. Use prepared questions based on your research. Listen. Ask for guidance and don't assume.
25. Stretch to warm up before you begin calling—visualize the flow of successful calls—then dial.
26. Send a handwritten "thank you" note to the gatekeeper before and after speaking with them.
27. Use a series of 4 letters spaced over 4 weeks to get attention—then call.
28. Have coffee and bagels delivered with a personal note and some brief literature or a letter to read while enjoying them.
29. Send a short letter about how you've helped other companies like the prospect's, including financial benefits.
30. Send a package with 1 shoe and a note that reads, "Now that I've got one shoe in the door, can we meet?"
31. Send a personal, handwritten note requesting an appointment.
32. Send a lumpy letter, including something that will catch attention.
33. Remember to watch your investment of time, money, and energy. If it gets too high, move on to another prospect.

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