

# How effective are voice mails?



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Many sales people struggle with the decision as to whether they should leave a voice mail message or not. In a consultative sales environment, once you have identified your ideal client profile and you have developed the most effective messaging, the question is not whether you should leave a voice mail or not. The challenge is to craft a message that is concise, short and relevant while still personal.

The main objective is to be heard. Whether somebody picks up the phone or your phone attempt goes into voice mail, there is only a couple of seconds you have to get your prospect's attention.

Your message should always be tailored to meet their needs, it is not an opportunity to pitch your service or product. Every phone interaction is an interruption of their day.

Unless you have something to offer that will make their life easier, they will not pay attention. Remember, nobody wants to be sold to, so the more you talk about the challenges that your audiences might face, the higher the likelihood that they will listen.

## Be courteous and respectful

Courtesy and professionalism go a long way. When leaving a voice mail message, try to focus on something that will set you apart from the crowd. Make mention of something that will help your prospect put your message into context.

We all get inundated with e-mails, phone calls and voice mails so the more precise and personal you can be, the better the outcome.

## Be relevant

Here is an example of a voice mail that will most likely not get any attention or be deleted:

*Hi, I am calling you from XYZ company to see if you want to talk to us about our superior accounting system. Our clients love our solution and we pride ourselves in having the best customer service in the industry. Maybe we can set-up a time to talk so I can tell you more about our system. Please call me at xxx-xxx-xxxx.*

There is nothing unique or engaging about this message and its full references about the offering and nothing about the prospect's needs.

Below is a message that is more personal and benefit driven.

*Hi, my name is xxxx xxxx and I am calling from XYZ company. We work with companies in your industry to help them streamline their financial transactions to optimise resources and monitor cash flow. I also sent you an email, but will follow up with another message to determine if you are interested in a conversation. I will call you again If I don't hear back before end of week.*

This message includes a value proposition and a call to action. The prospect should know that you will call again which gives them the opportunity to say "no thanks" if there is no interest or to respond in a positive way.

## Be personal

If you have more information on that prospect you can also work it into the messaging, so it is more personal.

For example, if you got an Out of Office reply to your e-mail the previous week you could make mention of it. "I saw that you were out of the office last week, so you probably didn't have the time to review my e-mail".

## Don't take yourself too seriously

The important thing to remember is that a voice mail message should sound personal and not scripted. While using a script can help, it needs to include language that you will be comfortable using, just like sitting next to that person.

Should you flounder or stumble, no worries. Just make a joke about it. My favourite line is "Obviously I have not had enough coffee today" or "Wow, it's obviously getting too late for me to sound eloquent"... This is actually an opportunity to stand out from the crowd, to sound human and not "salesy."

## Practice

If you are not sure how your voice mail will sound, leave one for yourself or a friend and listen to it or have them critique it. It's a powerful exercise. And remember, never say anything that you don't mean or you are not comfortable with, it comes through in your voice.

Authenticity goes a long way, especially in sales.

## ABOUT MONIKA D'AGOSTINO

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