

# 10½ tips that will help you get the most from your phone

How can you do BD when you can't do BD?

## Pt 1: Getting more from your phone

### 1. Remember why the phone is so important

While we can't get out and see people, you have to start thinking of phone calls as your coffee meetings.

They are absolutely essential because that's the only way we now have to stay visible, keep conversations going and maintain our most important business relationships.

### 2. Would a call work better than an email?

Before you send an email, ask yourself that simple question. If the answer is yes – or even, arguably, maybe – pick the phone up!

From an efficiency point of view, a quick call will almost always save you from having to clarify different points back and forth in an email chain.

However, from a relationship point of view, not only will hearing from you be a welcome addition to their day but the longer we're cooped up, the more likely it'll be that people misread the tone of or even the words in an email; having a chat could well save you from any unhelpful misinterpretations.

### 3. Have a system

Make a list of the people you:

- Need to stay in touch with (your clients and your most important/productive/best connected professional contacts)
- Need to reconnect with (your lapsed clients and some of the other professionals and contacts you've met but haven't seen for a while)

Then set yourself a timetable so you're speaking to each once a month or more frequently if there's more at stake.

#### 4. Don't forget colleagues

While your clients (existing and previous) and contacts are the obvious candidates for a call, don't forget your colleagues.

Yes, of course they're a potential source of new work but they're also friends and as things start to drag on, it'll be good just to have a quick catch up.

#### 5. Don't just have a chat

Never call someone just to say hello, have a reason. The obvious reason is a question relating to a recent piece of work but it could also be that you saw something in the news that you thought would be relevant to them.

In the last week or so accountants have been brilliant at this; keeping us up to date with the government's latest thinking on wage safety nets and tax deferrals.

#### 6. Keep up to date

If you can't think of a reason, take a look at the client/contact's website or Google them. Are they doing anything new? Have they said anything new? Are they offering anything new?

#### 7. Tell people what you're doing differently

And if you can't think or find a reason, maybe think about what you're doing differently or direct them to something you've published on your website or to a new email or online update you're offering.

As long as it's directly relevant, the fact you've taken the time to make sure your clients and contacts know about it will be appreciated.

#### 8. Have a follow up step

Good BD is all about leaving your foot in the door so you have an agreed follow up step that'll keep your conversations moving. In the current climate, that is going to be even more important.

Even if it's only 'I'll send that link though as soon as we have it' or 'let's catch up again around this time next month to see how things are', you need to make sure the person you're speaking to knows what you're going to do next.

### 9. What get measured gets done

We've already talked about shortlists and timetables. These provide a really easy way to monitor your progress with nothing more than a tick.

You can see who you have phoned and who you need to phone next. You can start planning next month's calls and tick those of as you go.

### 10. Just do it!

There's always a reason not to do something but the road to hell really is paved with good intentions!

However good your intentions are, however accurate your shortlist is and however well-structured your timetable is, those calls won't happen unless you make them. And if you don't make the calls, you won't feel the benefit.

Just do it!

### 10½. Would a video call work better than a phone call?

Which takes us beautifully on to our next download ...

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