

## Flipping the call to achieve cold calling success



Laurence Ross, Highcap Group

Cold calling still remains one of the more challenging and core elements necessary in breaking into the difficult world of commercial real estate sales. The ability to prospect successfully on the phone is what separates tomorrow's aces from the rest of the pack. Dialing a stranger to obtain a listing is not an easy thing to do. There is nothing worse than being hung up on, however canvassing the "blue book" and becoming familiar with the players is a rite of passage that sales agents must go through.

Most new agents will both come right out and ask the landlord, or person answering the phone, whether there is any interest in selling, while others might say, "I have a buyer interested in your property." Another story I often hear is, "I happen to be in the neighborhood with a client of mine and he asked me to call you to see if you would be interested in selling."

While these types of approaches do work, another suggestion I often give is to flip the call around. Try to get to know the person on the other end of the line and find out what their needs are and how you can be of service to them, rather than how they can "help you." You are in a service business and need to remember that every potential seller was, or is, a potential buyer. Find out if they are in the market and what their acquisition requirements may be and THEN ask whether they have any properties they may be looking to sell. Establish yourself as an agent looking to service them, as someone who can provide some usefulness. Remember, flip the conversation and begin building that relationship.

Laurence Ross is the managing principal of Highcap Group, New York, N.Y.