

Phone Calls

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Our phone at home rings all the time. About one call a week is for me. Most of the calls are for my wife, Dixie. She sells real estate and every real estate deal requires a lot of telephone conversations. There are calls from the buyers, the sellers, the mortgage people, inspectors, insurance folks, loan officers, brokers, and agents. Sometimes a lawyer gets involved and things get even more complicated. When she isn't home, I have to take the calls.

"Please tell Dixie to call Joe at, 444-4444. Tell her I need to know the discount points on the contingency contract with the kick-out clause on the owner wrap."

"Okay."

"And tell her that my people don't want to do a Fanny Mae. They want to counter with owner financing at nine and one-half with a balloon."

"I'll tell her."

"My people don't want an ARM."

"Right."

"You want me to go over it again?"

"No, I've got it all."

My note for Dixie says, "Call Joe, at 444-4444."

We got an unlisted number a few weeks ago and gave the number to three people. There are only three people outside the family that I care to talk to anyway. We figured we could just let the other line ring when we were eating or in bed or just plain not in the mood. Things are worse than ever now.

The people who had the number before us were on everybody's list. The name was Chambers and they get more calls than we do. I have to answer that line. It might be my son, or Dave, or Craig, or Ray.

The callers are never satisfied with the information that the Chambers no longer have this number. They want to know their new number, where they moved to, and how they are getting along. I don't know any of the Chambers' personal affairs nor do I wish to. I hope they are doing well; however, they must be nice folks to have so many friends who care about them.

The people doing telemarketing are the worst. I was raised to be polite and courteous and these people take advantage of me. They give no opportunity to say, "No," and when I do say, "No," they just go right on talking while my supper gets cold.

I've got a new procedure for them that I'll share with you. You don't have to attend my seminar or

pay me a percentage of your gross. I'll just give it away in hopes it will make your life more pleasant.

After I answer the phone, the guy/girl goes right into the spiel. "How are you this evening," he asks, like he really cares.

I used to just say, "Fine" or Okay." Now, I tell him how I'm doing. I tell him at great length and in considerable detail.

"Not so good," I'll say. "My knee has been giving me trouble for one thing. I don't know what it is, but it aches at night after I go to bed, and it keeps me awake. Then I'm all out of sorts the next morning. My car isn't running too well either. I think it is the transmission because when I accelerate"

I can keep this going for quite a while when I put my mind to it. These people deserve to have their time wasted. Sometimes they catch on and hang up. Most of the time they persist and at the first opportunity start back into their sales pitch. A talk with no breaks in it.

I break in anyway, "What's your name?"

"Mr. Jones, I'm calling on behalf of"

"What's your home phone number, Mr. Jones?"

"Why do you want that?"

"Because I want to call you at home sometime. You have my home number; it's only fair that I have yours."

If he doesn't give you his number, hang up. If he does give you his number, tell him, "I'll get back to you," then, hang up. Whether you return the call is up to you. I suggest sometime after midnight.

I got a call from a chiropractic phone solicitor awhile back and did a great routine on him. "Boy, am I ever glad you called," I said. "We just had an accident this morning and my neck is killing me. We got rear-ended by a BMW."

"It is important that you have that attended to," the caller said. Something about, "pinched nerves."

"Could I make an appointment right away? The name is Chambers."

The caller told me how lucky I was. There was an appointment open the very next day. I said, "There were two other couples and my wife. Is it possible to see all six of us?"

It was possible. what luck!

SEPTEMBER 1990