

## TALES OF TELEMARKETING

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[Assignment: Use the principle of classification to describe for your readers a group of people about whom you have specific knowledge. To be informative, this essay should offer insights new to the general reader.]

(1) That clock has to be fast. There is no way that it's already 8:58 a.m. Welcome to another fun-filled day at the *New York Times* newspaper. I hope this job isn't as hard as everyone says it is. So far, almost everyone in the office has told me that his job requires a great deal of patience because the contact (the person who receives the call) rarely lets you finish the sales pitch. How hard could it be to sell a newspaper over the phone? I can't believe that I've actually succumbed to being one of those annoying telemarketers who never understand the word "No." Oh well, it's only for six hours a day.

(2) What if my code and password don't work and I can't get into the computer system? I'll look like such a fool. Calm down, take a deep breath and follow the instructions from the manager. Beep! I'm in. Time to relax. Look at all those function keys! How will I ever get them straight? Sale, no sale, answering machine, no answer, disconnected. Erin, don't lose your cool, just take it slowly and everything will be fine. Now I just have to get the contact list activated.

(3) "Good morning. My name is Erin and I'm calling for the *New York Times* newspaper. We're offering a great special on home delivery in the Chicago area: all seven days of the week for the price of only three dollars. That's the newsstand price of the Sunday edition alone, so the company is actually offering to deliver the paper all seven days for the price of that one edition. This special runs for the first thirteen weeks, so that total is thirty-nine dollars. All I need to do is verify your address with the one that is on my computer screen and you will receive your first paper within a week."

(4) "The *New York Times*? I live in Chicago. Why on earth would I want a New York newspaper?"

"This is the national edition, sir. It's read by millions of people each day all across the United States and Europe."

"What's so good about it?"

"Well, sir, besides containing coverage of national and world events, it has several other features. To name a few, it has the Science Times, Arts and Leisure, Entertainment, not to mention our famous Business section. The Sunday edition comes with a beautiful color magazine and book review."

"How much did you say it was?"

"Three dollars a week for thirteen weeks."

"Thirty nine dollars. That's not a bad price. What happens after thirteen weeks?"

"Well, if you decide that you don't wish to continue receiving the paper, all you have to do to cancel your subscription is call our toll free number."

"It almost sounds too good to be true. But with the state that the world is in right now, you can never know enough. Go ahead, sign me up!"

( 5 ) Now that wasn't so hard, was it? If the rest of the day is like this, I'll be rolling in commission money in no time! Let's see who's behind line number two.

( 6 ) Ring . . . ring . . . ring . . . ring. Am I supposed to hang up after four or five? Never mind, they picked up the phone.

"What do you want?"

"Good morning, My name is Erin and I'm calling for the *New York Times* newspaper . . ."

"Don't want it. Never have, never will."

"Well, sir, we're offering a great special on home delivery . . ."

"Don't want it. Never have, never will."

"Are you familiar with our paper, sir? It's the most read paper in the world . . ."

"Don't want it. Never have, never will. Bye, toots."

( 7 ) Okay, I lost one. Big deal. I was just lucky to make a sale on the first call I made. Only five and a half hours left until I sign out for the day. Let's see who is contestant number three.

( 8 ) "Good morning. My name is Erin and I'm calling for the *New York Times* newspaper . . ."

"Thanks, Erin. Do you know that you just got me out of the shower? You people are so annoying. This is the third call I've gotten from the *New York Times* this week. Don't you people get it?--no means no!"

( 9 ) You don't get a prize, ma'am, but thanks for playing. It's not my fault that your name and phone number ended up on my computer. Oh, well. Who's next?

( 10 ) Ring . . . ring . . . "Hi! You've reached the Smith residence and we can't come to the phone right now. Unless, that is, you're trying to sell us something. In that case, we're deliberately trying to ignore your very existence."

( 11 ) Cute, Mrs. Smith, really cute. Go ahead, make my day. Isn't it break time yet? Where's that Snickers bar I threw into the drawer? Inquiring minds want to know: Do Snickers really satisfy?

( 12 ) We really need more than one break a day. With all the talking we have to do, we need time to unknot our tongues. Oops! They picked up the phone already. Time to get back to work.

"International Church of Satan. This is Tabatha speaking. May I help you?"

I think not. Catch you later, Tab baby. Devil worshippers, huh? I guess it can't get much worse than that. Here we go again.

( 13 ) "Good afternoon. My name is Erin and I'm calling for the *New York Times* newspaper . . ."

"¿Que? No habla Inglés."

"Thank you for your time, sir."  
I spoke too soon. They can't speak it, so how can they read it?

( 14 ) "Good afternoon. My name is Erin and I'm calling for the *New York Times* newspaper . . ."

"That's nice. Go to Hell." Click.

( 15 ) That's it. I've had it. From this point on, I'm keeping a tally sheet of all the calls I make. I'm going to tally them by types. This could get interesting. My mouth is so dry. I need a glass of water. But who has the time to even take a sip? As soon as I raise my cup, the person on the other end of the phone picks it up . . .

( 16 ) Thank God that the day is finally over! If I even hear the word "newspaper," I'm going to scream. What are today's totals? Three sales, one hundred and fifty-two answering machines, seventy-eight numbers that were disconnected or changed, one hundred and thirteen with no answer, eighty-three hang-ups, fifteen insults, and only one Church of Satan. The day was certainly interesting. Understatement of the year. At least it wasn't boring. Well, tomorrow is another day.