



## **San Diego Better Business Bureau (BBB)**

### A Career in Correspondence:

Gaining the Gift of Gab to Get Going

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Cruising in and out of first gear in bumper to bumper traffic on the 5 freeway with little time to get frustrated – although it would be the opportune moment for frustration. I am simultaneously running late, checking directions, and receiving (illegal) texts to put out fires, all the while trying to avoid the car in front of me. For some reason the driver of said car decides that switching back and forth in traffic is a useful strategy to discover a route or lane no one else on the freeway has yet discovered. As I watch this modern day Magellan angrily shift lanes, I take a moment to relax, laugh, and remind myself this is the game I'm in.

That game is producing a TV show, and the key to having guests on the show (or any proper business connection, for that matter) is correspondence. Sitting in traffic, I was going to meet a possible guest for the show in Encinitas.

Our world is a complex set of interdependent products, procedures, principles, and people which are all useful networking tools and resources to create a successful business. Correspondence creates partnerships that provide mutual benefits for multiple people, parties, and organizations. Affective communication links your personal goals with more access to resources, while efficiently managing your effort.

The quickest way to correspond in our technology-fueled world is by e-mail, but most people will delete e-mails from unknown recipients, and are wary of any messages with open-ended offers (You're not a Nigerian Prince looking for an American bank account). Therefore the most successful approach in first contacting a potential client, organization, or business is to get them on the phone.

Talking to someone on the phone allows you to explain goals, clarify questions and feel out the needs of the client. The advantage of a phone conversation is the ability to clearly explain your goals and ideas to another person as questions may arise, allowing for a free-flowing discussion that displays your own expertise.

Once you've gotten past the pleasantries of common phone courtesy it is time to deliver your elevator pitch. The elevator pitch is a statement of 50 words or less that clearly defines your goals. The idea is if you jumped in an elevator with someone, you could explain your situation before they exit. With an enthusiastic voice and a strong elevator pitch, you would then explain to the potential client how they could be involved in achieving your goals. No one wants to be asked for money or a favor without proper justification, so it is important to be clear and direct about how a partnership will benefit your shared goals.

Oftentimes, more important than justification, are the benefits your clientele will receive from this partnership. It is your job to motivate and encourage a partnership decision.

From your initial conversation, request an e-mail address, with the promise of more details to follow. An e-mail is now more useful because the person you are attempting to contact is expecting to hear from you. This allows you to detail your phone conversation, as well as any further information on your product or idea, to a more responsive contact.

This strategic correspondence can now develop into a healthy relationship and strong partnership. Keep networking, San Diego!