



## Suggestions for Contacting Companies

Here are some suggestions to get you started in the right direction when contacting companies in your area to see if they would like to purchase products as corporate gifts for employees or customers.

Please remember to read over the Girl Scout Internet Safety Pledge and clear your potential corporate customer list with your council before you start contacting them.

### Email:

- When contacting a company through email go onto the company's website. They normally have a Contact Us section. Look there for an email address for a general mailbox, the receptionist, or someone in HR. Unfortunately there is not one person who would be the correct contact in every business. This is why you need to remember to ask, "If you are not the person I should be asking, can you please direct me to someone who I would be able to talk to about corporate gifts?"
- If you cannot find a contact name, address your email: To Whom It May Concern OR Dear Sir or Madam.
- In the body of the letter make sure to include:
  - An explanation of what you are doing
  - The benefits of ordering from you versus another company
    - Your name
    - A way to contact you
    - Seller ID number
    - CFO website address
  - Ordering information
- You also can send emails from the CFO website under the activities section. This email has the brochure on it so customers will be able to see all of the products.



### Letter:



- Go onto the website and find their postal address and either the name of someone for general questions, the receptionist, or someone in HR. (See first bullet under Email for additional information.)
- If you cannot find a contact name, address your letter: To Whom It May Concern OR Dear Sir or Madam.
- While you are on their website, take 10 minutes to do a little research on them. See if there is something you can add to your letter about their company. Comments might include mentioning their new products, company's rank within the industry, or their growth over the recent years.
- In the body of the letter make sure to include:
  - An explanation of what you are doing
  - The benefits of ordering from you versus another company
    - Your name
    - A way to contact you
    - Seller ID number
    - CFO website address
  - Ordering information
- Make sure you also include your ID card and a CFO Brochure. Both are found on the CFO Website.

## Phone:

- Go to the company's website and look under contacts to see if there is a name and number for either general questions or the HR department.



- While you are on their website, take 10 minutes to do a little research on them. Your goal is to have a two-way conversation with them, so the more you find out about their company and their needs, the easier it will be.
- Come up with a dialog that you would like to use. Not every conversation is going to go the same, but practice a number of different scenarios so you will be prepared.

- Make sure you speak clearly and do not rush your words. Also, speak with a smile on your face. Even though they can't see your smile, they can hear the difference in the tone of your voice!
- Before you get too far into your conversation make sure you ask if you are speaking to someone who handles corporate gifts. If they aren't, ask for the name and number of the person who could help you. You want this information in case you need to call them back, or your call doesn't transfer correctly. Then ask if they can transfer you to the correct person.
- You could start out by introducing yourself and asking if they could help you reach your goal.

*Hi, my name is Daisy and I'm with Troop 200 from Girl Scouts of Any Town Council. My troop is selling high quality corporate gifts to try and earn money to build a community garden. Can you help us reach our goal by looking at our website and purchasing items for your corporate or thank you gifts?*

- If you can, come up with 2 or 3 specific problems that the CFO product solves for them.

*Do you have a hard time deciding on what to send out for holiday or thank you gifts? Well this year I have a great idea for you!*

- If they are going to have someone call you back remember to leave the CFO website address so they can look at the site right away.
- Make sure to be polite and end your conversation by saying "Thank you for your time" or "I look forward to hearing from you".

## In Person:

- Before you go into a company, do some research on them. You need to know something about them before you start a conversation. Your goal is to have a two-way conversation so you find out more about their company and their needs.
- Come up with a dialog that you would like to use. Not every conversation is going to go the same, but practice a number of different scenarios so you will be prepared.
- Be sure to dress in suitable business attire. Your Girl Scout uniform can be part of your advertising strategy and an advantage in closing the deal!
- At most companies there should be a receptionist. If there is not a receptionist, for instance at a bank, then find someone you can ask for help. Once you have found someone, introduce yourself, explain what you are doing, and ask who you could talk to about the program and corporate gifts. This is a great time to practice your elevator pitch! (Information on how to prepare your elevator pitch can be found on the Marketing Plan download under the CFO activities tab.)
- When leaving, make sure to say thank you and that you appreciate their time.
- Remember to bring copies of your ID card and CFO brochure to leave behind. Both are found on the CFO Website.



## Other Tips:

- **Practice:** Before calling, try practicing on a friend or family member to see how well the conversation flows and to see how comfortable you feel.
- **Less is better:** You know a lot about your products however when selling it, saying it in as few words as possible is the key. That leaves room for them to ask you questions.
- **Be Positive:** Make sure you are excited and positive. If you are not, it will be harder for people to buy into what you are selling.
- **Prepare beforehand:** Know who you're calling and how your products fits their company.
- **Do not take rejection personally:** Learn from your experience and see if there is anything that you can improve on for your next call.
- **Following through:** After you have made contact, follow up with the company. You could even send them a thank you note showing that you appreciate their time and remind them that if they have any questions to contact you. Failing to follow through could potentially hurt your chances at a sale.
- **Generate leads:** Make sure you network. After you have gone through your presentation and they have purchased products, make sure to ask them if they know of any other companies or people that might be interested. It doesn't hurt to ask!

