

## Finding H.E.R.B.--the Highest Executive Responsible for Buying

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There are two elements to this challenge. One is finding out who we think is the right person to call in the first place. The second is once we are in an Initial Appointment with this individual; we need to confirm that this is the decision maker. The first issue I covered in a blog dated February 11, 2009, called [How to find someone within a target company to help gain helpful information about the target.](#)

This article covers the second—confirming we’re talking to the decision maker. After all, companies reorganize, or we just could have flat-out been wrong identifying the target even after doing our homework upfront.

1. First of all, let’s review why it’s important:
  - a. Non-decision makers can only say no.
  - b. Long term business relationships are seldom built with non-decision makers.
  - c. As Woody Hayes, the legendary coach of the Ohio State football Buckeyes once said about the strategy of passing the football, only three things can happen and two of them are bad. Intermediaries may very well share with you the true decision maker’s true objectives or intent. However, they are just as likely to either miss-interpret or filter (through their own filters) those objectives or intent. Neither of those two latter outcomes is any good.
  - d. We only have a certain number of hours granted to you by our Creator to sell each year. Waste those on the wrong opportunity, and we never get them back.
2. Second, how do we get past these lower level ‘gatekeepers’ if we get one without upsetting them? Answer:
  1. We must do everything we can to make it palatable, but if we’re not going to sell to them anyway, why worry too



much about it? If we've got a solid value proposition that will resonate with the decision maker, don't worry about what the gatekeeper thinks. We're not being paid to keep everyone happy. We're being paid to sell.

2. How do we do it?
  - a. Ask the person you're talking with to answer the following question, "When you made a decision to make a purchase like this in the past, what was the process you followed to make the decision?"
  - b. If we ask good follow up questions to their answer, including the one that asks who actually signed off on the order, we should be able to ferret out the decision maker.
3. Why does this work? If we ask this past based question early in the buying cycle, people will answer it because:
  - a. They like to show off their knowledge and position in the process (particularly the ones who are controlling – which are the ones that are the problem)
  - b. The real quest behind this question is veiled when you ask it in this fashion because the question seems to not be specific to this situation
  - c. Past based questions are not as threatening as present or future based questions

Caponi Performance Group, Inc., and Contact Science, LLC jointly market the telephone prospecting and cold calling solution called **Coldcalling101™**. It is the only comprehensive solution to solving the biggest barrier to success in most selling organizations – the inability to secure enough Initial Appointments to begin the selling process. We accomplish that through simultaneously addressing both the efficiency and effectiveness of the process. We can be reached at 817 224-9900 or at [barry@coldcalling101.com](mailto:barry@coldcalling101.com). You can find us online at [www.caponipg.com](http://www.caponipg.com).

