

Sales Mindset Playbook: Reframing Self-Talk and Limiting Beliefs

Introduction

This playbook will help you transform your sales mindset by reframing negative self-talk and limiting beliefs. The biggest obstacle to your success with cold calling isn't your script—it's getting yourself into the right mindset to perform with confidence.

Negative self-talk and limiting beliefs are the internal thoughts that create resistance to making calls. Examples include "No one wants to talk to me" or "I'm not good at cold calling." This playbook gives you practical techniques to overcome these mental barriers.

BENEFITS: Reduced call anxiety, greater resilience to rejection, improved performance, and more enjoyment of the sales process.

Quick Start Guide

Step	Action
1	Become Aware - Monitor your self-talk patterns, especially before calls
2	Reset - Use the 90-second reset when negative thoughts arise
3	Reframe - Transform limiting statements into empowering questions
4	Create Distance - Name your negative self-talk voice
5	Build Evidence - Document successes to counter limiting beliefs

Implementation Steps

1. Become Aware of Your Self-Talk

What this means: Self-talk is your internal dialogue - the thoughts that run through your mind throughout the day. Research shows this runs at 800-1200 words per minute, and about 80% of these thoughts are naturally negative.

How to do it:

- Set 3 daily check-ins (morning, mid-day, evening) to pause and notice your thoughts
- Write down negative thoughts you notice before making calls, such as "They'll just hang up" or "I hate bothering people"
- Notice physical sensations that accompany negative self-talk (tense shoulders, rapid heartbeat, stomach knots)
- For each negative thought, ask: "Is this helping me make better calls or holding me back?"

Beginner tip: Set alarms on your phone for your check-ins to build this habit

2. Use the 90-Second Reset Method

What this means: When you notice negative thoughts or anxiety, this technique helps calm your nervous system. Research shows your brain chemistry can reset from stress to neutral within 90 seconds.

How to do it:

- When you feel stressed before or after a call, set a timer for 90 seconds
- **Option 1: Counting Method**
 - Breathe deeply and count slowly to 90
 - Focus entirely on counting, not on your worries
- **Option 2: Five Senses Exercise**
 - Notice 5 things you can see in your immediate environment
 - Notice 4 things you can feel (chair against your back, feet on floor)
 - Notice 3 things you can hear (background noises, outdoor sounds)
 - Notice 2 things you can smell (or imagine pleasant scents)
 - Notice 1 thing you can taste (or imagine a favorite taste)

Practice tip: Use this exercise 2-3 times daily even when not stressed to build the habit

3. Transform Statements into Questions

What this means: Questions activate the problem-solving part of your brain, while negative statements keep you stuck in emotional thinking. This technique transforms limiting beliefs into action-oriented questions.

How to do it:

1. Identify your common negative thoughts about cold calling

2. Write each one down as a statement
3. Turn each statement into a question that focuses on solutions
4. Review these questions before starting your calls

Examples:

Limiting Statement	Empowering Question
"I'm not good at cold calling."	"How can I improve my skills with each call I make?"
"No one wants to talk to me."	"How can I make my calls more valuable to prospects?"
"Cold calling is a waste of time."	"How can I make my approach more effective?"
"I'll never be as good as [colleague]."	"What specific techniques does [colleague] use that I can learn?"

Implementation tip: Write your transformed questions on a sticky note near your phone

4. Name Your Negative Self-Talk

What this means: This technique creates psychological distance between you and your negative thoughts, making them less powerful and easier to manage.

How to do it:

1. Choose a neutral human name for your negative self-talk voice (example: "Alex," "Taylor," "Sam")
2. When negative thoughts arise, mentally label them as coming from this character
3. Respond to this voice as if it were a separate person

Examples:

- Instead of: "I'm going to mess up this call."
- Try: "I notice Sam is worried about messing up this call."
- Instead of: "No one's picking up. I'm wasting my time."
- Try: "Alex is feeling frustrated that no one's answering."

Why this works: This technique:

- Creates distance from negative thoughts
- Allows you to observe thoughts without being controlled by them

- Makes it easier to respond rather than react to negative self-talk

Beginner tip: If this feels strange at first, try it in writing before doing it mentally

5. Replace Pressure Words with Choice Words

What this means: Words like "should," "must," and "have to" create internal resistance and pressure. Replacing them with "want to" and "get to" creates a sense of choice and purpose.

How to do it:

1. Notice when you use pressure words in your self-talk
2. Ask yourself: "What's the deeper reason I want to do this?"
3. Rephrase using choice words that connect to your values or goals

Examples:

Pressure Language	Choice Language	Connected Purpose
"I should make 20 calls today."	"I want to make 20 calls today."	"...because each call creates potential opportunities."
"I have to follow up with these leads."	"I get to follow up with these qualified leads."	"...because they've already shown interest."
"I must prepare better scripts."	"I choose to prepare better scripts."	"...because it will make me more confident."

Implementation tip: Ask a colleague to point out when they hear you using pressure language, so you become more aware of it

6. Create a Personal Reminder Sheet

What this means: This is a personalized list of supportive statements to review before making calls. Even professional athletes like Andy Murray use this technique before competitions.

How to do it:

1. Take a blank index card or piece of paper
2. Write 5-6 specific, supportive statements that:
 - Focus on actions within your control
 - Remind you of your strengths and preparation
 - Keep you process-focused rather than outcome-focused

Sample Reminder Sheet:

None

1. Focus on helping prospects, not just selling
2. Ask good questions and listen fully to responses
3. Stay present with each conversation
4. Remember your preparation and expertise
5. One call at a time - stay in the moment
6. Every "no" gets me closer to a "yes"

Step-by-step:

1. Brainstorm 10 supportive statements
2. Select the 5-6 most powerful ones
3. Write them clearly on a card or paper
4. Keep this by your phone
5. Review it before each calling session

Pro tip: Update your reminder sheet regularly based on what works best for you

7. Build a Positive Evidence Bank

What this means: Our brains naturally focus on negative experiences. This technique deliberately balances that tendency by collecting evidence of your successes.

How to do it:

1. Get a dedicated small notebook or create a digital note
2. Each day, record at least 3 positive things from your calls
3. Include small wins, not just big ones
4. Review this evidence regularly, especially when feeling doubtful

What counts as evidence:

- Successfully navigating past a gatekeeper
- A prospect asking good questions
- Handling an objection well
- Making all your planned calls for the day
- A prospect laughing or connecting with you
- Getting useful information even without a meeting
- Improvising effectively when your script didn't fit

Step-by-step implementation:

1. Take 5 minutes at the end of each day to record your wins

2. Be specific about what you did well (not just what happened)
3. Once weekly, review all entries to see patterns of success
4. When hit with self-doubt, deliberately review your evidence

Beginner tip: Start your journal with past successes if you can recall them

Common Mistakes to Avoid

Mistake	Why It Happens	Better Approach
Trying to implement everything at once	Enthusiasm and desire for quick results	Focus on one technique per week; master it before adding another
Expecting immediate results	Unrealistic expectations about how quickly habits form	View this as ongoing training, like going to the gym – consistency matters more than intensity
Criticizing yourself for negative thoughts	Belief that negative thoughts are bad and should be eliminated	Accept that negative thoughts are normal; focus on changing your response to them
Only practicing when already stressed	Using techniques reactively instead of proactively	Schedule practice times when you're calm to build the neural pathways needed
Giving up after "it didn't work"	Expecting perfection or immediate mastery	Treat each attempt as practice, not a test of whether the technique works

IMPORTANT: These techniques are skills that improve with practice, not quick fixes. Be patient with yourself as you learn.

Your First Week Implementation Plan

Follow this simple plan to get started without feeling overwhelmed:

Day 1: Awareness

- Set 3 alarms on your phone as reminders to check your self-talk
- Write down 3-5 negative thoughts you notice about cold calling
- Practice the 90-second reset technique once

Day 2: Reset Practice

- Continue monitoring your self-talk at check-in times
- Practice the five senses exercise twice (morning and afternoon)

- Notice which negative thoughts appear most frequently

Day 3: Question Transformation

- Take your most common negative thought
- Transform it into an empowering question
- Create your reminder sheet with 4-5 supportive statements

Day 4: Naming Practice

- Choose a name for your negative self-talk voice
- Practice labeling thoughts as coming from this voice
- Begin tracking positive evidence from your calls

Day 5: Language Shift

- Focus on catching pressure words in your self-talk
- Reframe them into choice words
- Continue building your success evidence

Weekend: Review

- Review what worked best for you this week
- Choose one technique to focus on improving next week
- Celebrate your progress in developing this new skill

REMEMBER: Consistency is more important than perfection. Even small improvements in your mindset will compound over time.