

LEAD GENERATION

26 Appointment Setting Scripts

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Appointment Setting Scripts: 26 Scripts for Phone, Email and LinkedIn (With Objection Replies)

Short answer: An appointment setting script is a short, planned conversation that earns a meeting, not a sale. A good one states who you are and why you are calling in under 15 seconds, asks one question about a likely problem, offers a specific next step, and handles one objection calmly before booking a time in the prospect's calendar.

Key takeaways

- A script sells **the meeting, not the product**. If you are explaining features, you have left the script.
- Give every phone script a **talk-time budget**: about 10 to 15 seconds before your first question, and never more than 30 seconds without one.
- Handle each objection **once** with acknowledge, question, ask. A second push turns a maybe into a complaint.
- The meeting is not set until it is **in their calendar with a stated purpose** and the closer has a handoff note.

The stopwatch rule: budgets for every channel

Touch	Budget	What must fit inside it	What you ask for
Call: opening	10 to 15 seconds (25 to 40 words)	Name, company, honest reason, permission	30 seconds of attention
Call: reason and question	20 to 30 seconds (50 to 75 words)	One problem, one proof point, one question	Their view of the problem
Call: meeting request	10 to 15 seconds	Purpose, length, two times	A calendar slot
Voicemail	Under 20 seconds (45 to 50 words)	Name, one reason, where you will follow up	Nothing: point to your email
Email	50 to 90 words	Context, problem, one ask	Interest first, time second
LinkedIn connection note	Under 200 characters	Why you, why them	Only the connection
LinkedIn message	40 to 60 words	One observation, one question	A reply, not a meeting
Objection reply	10 to 15 seconds	Acknowledge, one question, one ask	A second look, once

1. Permission opener cold call (full script) (template: copy and adapt)

[0-12 sec]

Hi [First name], this is [Your name] from [Company]. You were not expecting my call, so I will be quick. Can I take 30 seconds to say why I rang, and then you can tell me whether to carry on?

(stop and wait)

[12-40 sec]

Thanks. We work with [type of company, e.g. logistics software firms with 20 to 100 salespeople]. The usual reason they talk to us is [problem in their words, e.g. reps spend the first hour of the day hunting for who to call]. I do not know whether that is true for you. How do you handle [that area] today?

(stop and listen; take notes in their words)

[Follow-up question, 10 sec]

And when that goes wrong, what does it cost you: time, deals, or something else?

[Meeting request, 12 sec]

That is the situation we look at in a first conversation. It takes 20 minutes with [closer's name], and you leave with [specific output, e.g. a view of where the hours go], whether or not we work together. Would Tuesday at 10 or Wednesday at 2 suit you better?

2. Trigger-based cold call (template: copy and adapt)

[0-15 sec]

Hi [First name], [Your name] at [Company]. I am calling because I saw [trigger, e.g. you are hiring four account executives in Austin]. Have I caught you between things, or do you have a minute?

[15-40 sec]

When teams grow that quickly, the common headache is [problem, e.g. new reps have empty calendars for their first quarter]. Is that something you are planning for, or is it already covered?

[If it is a concern, 12 sec]

Worth 20 minutes then. [Closer's name] can show you how [similar companies] fill those calendars in the first month. Does Thursday morning or Friday after lunch work?

3. Referral call (template: copy and adapt)

[0-12 sec]

Hi [First name], this is [Your name] from [Company]. [Referrer's name] at [their company] suggested I call you. Is now all right for a minute?

[12-30 sec]

We helped [Referrer] with [short outcome in plain words], and they thought you might be dealing with the same thing. Is [problem] on your list this quarter?

[10 sec]

Then a short call makes sense. I can do 20 minutes on [day] at [time], or [day] at [time]. Which is easier?

4. Second call after no answer (template: copy and adapt)

[0-12 sec]

Hi [First name], [Your name] from [Company]. I sent you a short note on [day] about [topic] and left a message. I am following up in person, as I said I would. Do you have a minute?

[12-30 sec]

The short version: [one sentence on the problem]. I wanted to ask one thing. Is that worth a 20-minute look this month, or should I close the file?

5. Calling back an inbound lead (template: copy and adapt)

[0-10 sec]

Hi [First name], it is [Your name] from [Company]. You asked about [what they requested] this morning, so I wanted to call while it is fresh. Is now good?

[10-30 sec]

So I point you to the right person: what made you look into this now?

(listen)

[10 sec]

That is exactly what [closer's name] covers. I can book you 30 minutes tomorrow at [time] or [day] at [time]. Which one shall I send?

6. Gatekeeper script (template: copy and adapt)

Hi, this is [Your name] from [Company]. I am hoping you can help me. I am trying to reach whoever looks after [area, e.g. outbound sales] at [their company]. Would that be [Name], or someone else?

[If asked what it is about]

It is about [plain reason, e.g. how the sales team books first meetings]. I sent [Name] a short email on [day]. Is there a time of day they usually pick up, or is email better for them?

[If they offer to take a message]

Thank you. Please say [Your name] from [Company] called about [topic], and that I will email a short summary today. May I check I have the right address?

7. Voicemail (under 20 seconds) (template: copy and adapt)

Hi [First name], [Your name] from [Company]. I am calling about [one reason, e.g. how your new reps get their first meetings]. No need to call back. I am sending you a two-line email now with the subject [subject line], and a reply to that is easiest. Thanks, [First name].

8. Pre-call email (template: copy and adapt)

Subject: Calling you [Thursday]

Hi [First name],

I will ring you [Thursday morning] about [topic, e.g. how [Company] books first meetings for new reps].

Reason: [one line about them, e.g. you are adding four AEs in Austin], and [similar companies] tell us that is when [problem] shows up.

If a call is not the right way to reach you, reply with a better one and I will use it.

[Your name]

9. Email after a voicemail (template: copy and adapt)

Subject: [Subject line you named in the voicemail]

Hi [First name],

I just left you a short message. Here is the reason in writing:

[Type of company] usually come to us when [problem]. We fix it by [plain outcome].

Is that relevant to you this quarter? A yes or no is all I need.

[Your name]

[Phone]

10. Email after a good conversation (template: copy and adapt)

Subject: 20 minutes on [their problem in their words]

Hi [First name],

Thanks for the time just now. You said [their words, e.g. new reps take about three months to fill a calendar]. That is what [closer's name] will focus on.

Two options, both [their time zone]:

- [Day], [time]

- [Day], [time]

Reply with the one that suits and I will send the invite. If neither works, here is the calendar: [link].

[Your name]

11. Email when they asked for information (template: copy and adapt)

Subject: The one page you asked for

Hi [First name],

As promised: [one link or one attachment], which shows [what it shows in a sentence].

The part most relevant to you is [section or page], because you mentioned [their words].

I will call you on [day] at [time], as we agreed, to hear what you think. If that time has stopped working, tell me a better one.

[Your name]

12. Connection note (under 200 characters) (template: copy and adapt)

Hi [First name], I work with [type of company] on [topic]. I saw [specific thing: their post, hiring, talk]. I would like to follow what you are building at [Company].

13. Message after they accept (template: copy and adapt)

Thanks for connecting, [First name].

A quick question, since you run [area]: when [trigger or situation], how do you currently [task]? I ask because [similar companies] tell us it is where [problem] starts.

Curious whether you see the same thing.

14. Voice note script (about 25 seconds) (template: copy and adapt)

Hi [First name], [Your name] here. Thanks for the reply. You mentioned [their point]. That is the exact thing we look at in a first call: 20 minutes, and you leave with [output]. I will put two times in a message below. Pick one, or tell me it is not a priority and I will leave you in peace.

15. Message after a call attempt (template: copy and adapt)

Hi [First name], I tried you by phone on [day] and sent a short email about [topic]. I do not want to chase you across three channels, so one question here: is [problem] something you are working on this quarter? If not, say so and I will stop.

Objection replies (9)

They say	It usually means	Script
Not interested	A reflex; they have not heard a reason yet	16
Send me an email	A polite exit, or a real preference	17
We already have a vendor	The problem is real and being paid for	18
No budget	Not a priority yet, or wrong timing in the year	19
I am busy	True, and the easiest one to work with	20
How did you get my number?	A trust check; answer it straight	21
Call me next quarter	Either real timing or a soft no	22
I am not the right person	Often true, and useful	23
What does it cost?	Interest, with a wish to skip the meeting	24

16. Reply to 'not interested' (template: copy and adapt)

That is fair, and you do not know me. Before I go, can I ask one thing: is [problem] already handled well at [Company], or is it simply not a priority right now?

[If handled] Good to hear. Thanks for telling me, [First name]. I will not call again.

[If not a priority] Understood. Would it be useful if I sent one page and checked back in [month]?

17. Reply to 'send me an email' (template: copy and adapt)

Happy to. So I send the right thing and not a brochure: is it [problem A] or [problem B] that would be more useful to read about?

(listen)

Got it. I will send that today. Shall I ring you [day] at [time] for five minutes to hear what you think?

18. Reply to 'we already have a vendor' (template: copy and adapt)

That makes sense; most companies your size do. I am not asking you to change anything. Out of interest, if you could improve one thing about how it works today, what would it be?

(listen)

That is the part [closer's name] could give you a second opinion on in 20 minutes. Worth having a comparison in your back pocket?

19. Reply to 'no budget' (template: copy and adapt)

Understood, and I am not asking for budget today. When does planning for next [quarter / year] start for you?

(listen)

Then a 20-minute conversation before that gives you numbers to plan with, even if the answer is no. Would [date before planning] work?

20. Reply to 'I am busy' (template: copy and adapt)

Of course, I called without warning. Two options: I can take 30 seconds now and you decide whether it deserves more, or I call back at a time you choose. Which do you prefer?

[If call back] What time today or tomorrow is quietest for you? I will put it in my calendar and call at exactly that time.

21. Reply to 'how did you get my number' (template: copy and adapt)

Fair question. I found it through [honest source: your company website / a business contact database we license / your LinkedIn profile]. If you would rather I did not use it, say so and I will remove it today. The reason I rang is [one sentence]. Is that relevant to you?

22. Reply to 'call me next quarter' (template: copy and adapt)

I can do that. So the call is useful when it comes: what will be different next quarter?

(listen)

Thanks. I will call the week of [date]. Would you like a short calendar hold for it now, so it does not come as a surprise?

23. Reply to 'I am not the right person' (template: copy and adapt)

Thank you, that saves us both time. Who looks after [area] at [Company]?

(listen)

Would you mind if I mentioned that you pointed me to them? And is email or phone the better way to reach [Name]?

24. Reply to 'what does it cost' (template: copy and adapt)

It depends on [the two things it depends on], so anything I quote now would be a guess. The range for companies like yours is [honest range], and [closer's name] can give you an exact figure in 20 minutes once they understand [variable]. Is it worth getting the real number?

25. The booking close (template: copy and adapt)

Great. I am sending the invite now, so you will see it in a few seconds. It is titled "[Their company] and [Your company]: [purpose in their words]".

Two quick questions so [closer's name] does not waste your time:

1. Besides you, who else would want to be in the room?
2. What would make these 20 minutes worth it for you?

(note the answers)

Has the invite arrived? Could you accept it while we are talking, so it holds the slot? Thank you, [First name]. You will get a short note from me the day before with the agenda.

26. Handoff note to the closer (template: copy and adapt)

Meeting: [date, time, time zone], [length]

Who: [Name, title, company]; also invited: [names]

Why they took the meeting (their words): "[quote]"

Current setup: [tool, vendor or process they use today]

Problem and cost they named: [what and how much]

Objection raised and how it was left: [e.g. has a vendor; wants a second opinion]

What they expect to leave with: [output]

Do not repeat: [what I already explained]

Source: [list, trigger or referral]

A five-day sequence that uses the scripts together

Day	Touch	Script
1	LinkedIn connection note, then pre-call email	12, 8
2	First call; voicemail and email if no answer	1 or 2, then 7 and 9
3	LinkedIn message if they accepted	13
4	Second call	4
5	LinkedIn message tying the touches together	15
On any yes	Booking close, then handoff note	25, 26

Quick answers

What is an appointment setting script?

It is a planned outline for a short conversation whose only goal is a scheduled meeting. It covers the opening line, the reason for the call, one or two questions, the meeting request and replies to common objections. It can be spoken on a call, written as an email, or sent as a LinkedIn message.

What do you say to set an appointment on a cold call?

Say your name and company, admit it is a cold call, and ask for half a minute. Give one sentence on the problem you solve for companies like theirs, ask whether that problem is on their list, then offer a short meeting with a specific purpose and two possible times.

How long should an appointment setting call last?

Short. In our experience a good appointment setting call runs roughly two to five minutes once the prospect engages (an estimate, not a study). The opening should take under 15 seconds, and you should not speak for more than about 30 seconds without asking a question. Longer calls usually mean the setter has started selling the product instead of the meeting.

Should appointment setters read a script word for word?

No. Learn the structure and the exact opening and closing lines, then speak the middle in your own words. Reading aloud changes your pace and tone, and prospects hear it at once. The parts worth memorizing are the first 15 seconds, the meeting request and your objection replies.

How do you handle 'not interested' when setting appointments?

Acknowledge it without arguing, then ask one low-pressure question that checks whether it is a reflex or a real no, such as whether the problem you mentioned is already handled. If they repeat the no, thank them and end the call. One attempt is enough; pushing twice damages your brand.

Which channel works best for appointment setting: phone, email or LinkedIn?

They work best together. Email scales and gives the prospect something to refer back to, the phone gets the fastest answers, and LinkedIn shows a real person is behind both. A common pattern is an email first, a call that refers to it, a voicemail, then a short LinkedIn message.

What is a good opening line for an appointment setting call?

Openers that own the cold call and give context tend to do well. In Gong's analysis of more than 300 million calls, a tailored permission opener reached 11.18% success and asking whether the prospect had heard the company's name reached 11.24%, while asking if it was a bad time reached 2.15%.

How do you stop booked appointments from turning into no-shows?

Book while you are still talking, send the invite before you hang up, and state the meeting's purpose in the invite title. Ask the prospect to accept it on the call. Send a short confirmation the day before with the agenda, and give the closer a handoff note so the meeting starts where the call ended.

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