

Take Charge of the Collection Call

Combine Power Words with Active Listening

“When you speak, you repeat what you know. When you listen, you learn something new.”
Dalai Lama

A primary goal of collection departments is to motivate the consumer to bring past due debts current. To motivate is to create a desire in the consumer to act, in this case through words. The collector sets the stage by first actively listening to the individual circumstances and then using power words (or phrases) to create an urgency for the consumer to take action.

Active listeners thoroughly absorb, understand, and respond to what is said

Practice being a proactive, empathetic listener with the three A's: Appreciate, Acknowledge, Ask.

- **Do You Mean ... ?”, “I’m not sure I understand”, “It sounds like ...”:** This sort of phrase will help make sure that you heard and understood the details correctly.
- **“Really?”, “When?”, “How?”:** These phrases encourage the consumer to elaborate. Most people are anxious for someone to hear their story.
- **“That’s tough, I’m sorry you’re going through that.”:** When the consumer is sharing their frustrations, make a positive impact by verbally acknowledging the situation

Power words help stimulate action by creating an emotional response.

Using words that trigger curiosity or emotion can persuade your consumer to take action.

- **You, Your, Names:** Take the “I” and “We” out of the conversation as much as possible. Using the consumer's name is personal and conveys that they are important to the financial institution.
- **Practice using key words that motivate:** Can, Will, Must, Possible
- **Cause-and-effect phrases,** use these words (phrases) to connect what has happened to what can or will happen: Because, For this reason, Consequently, Caused by, Cue to
- **Power verbs make language more persuasive:** Achieve, Believe, Jeopardize, Gain, Change, Explore, Re-define

By entering every conversation with the goal of understanding their perspective, consumers will open up because they will feel they can trust you. Combine trust with the use of words that provide a motivation to resolve the outstanding debt. The result for the department will be increased effectiveness and better results.

TriVerity, has worked with over 2700 financial institutions nationwide as a full-service collection agency, providing delinquency management services and collections training exclusively for financial institutions. The Loan Service Center provides first-party collection services to minimize loan loss by managing early-stage delinquency. The Collection Academy offers a curriculum of collection processes with tools that will be effective in your collection department. For more information: www.triverity.com