



Telemarketers: Not for the Faint of Heart

Telemarketers: Look up this occupation on the Internet and some very negative responses appear: “how to fight off telemarketers,” “pranks to play,” “give a telemarketer a RUDE AWAKENING,” “you can be a telemarketer’s WORST NIGHTMARE!” Sounds as if it’s us against them and their telephone calls trying to get us to buy what they’re selling.

These responses and their underlying animosity would definitely make any job-seeker think twice about taking such a job. However, many people (about 10,000 in Utah) are gainfully employed and happily or unhappily performing the duties of a telemarketer. Telemarketer, as defined in the Standard Occupational Classification Manual, is one who solicits donations or orders for goods or services over the telephone.

While much of the dialogue heard from a telemarketer is scripted and there is little adlib, some are quite successful in persuading the public to purchase a good or service, vote for a candidate, or make a donation to a cause. If telemarketers were not successful in

their endeavors there would be far fewer of them. To persuade the listener, the telemarketer must convey the information effectively while giving full attention to what the listener is saying. Being aware of the listener’s reactions, countering their objections and ultimately making a “sale” are not easy to do.

Many phone calls result in unpleasant, angry, or discourteous people who are bothered by a call made at an inappropriate time or the call’s goal of selling them something deemed unnecessary, or a mere hang-up in the middle of a sales pitch. All the while, the telemarketer must exhibit a professional approach and many persuasive ones will be able to make a sale in spite of the listener’s anger or objections.

Employees in telemarketer positions are trained on the job and usually need a few months to one year of working with experienced employees. Telemarketing is not for everyone but for many it provides a living and a challenge, worst nightmares and rude awakenings aside. ①

State and National Trends for Telemarketers

United States	Employment		Percent Change	Job Openings ¹
	2008	2018		
Telemarketers	341,600	303,800	-11%	8,590
Utah	Employment		Percent Change	Job Openings ¹
	2006	2016		
Telemarketers	9,140	9,600	+5%	370

Job Openings refers to the average annual job openings due to growth and net replacement.¹

Location	Pay Period	2009				
		10%	25%	Median	75%	90%
United States	Hourly	\$7.58	\$8.58	\$10.49	\$13.71	\$18.11
	Yearly	\$15,800	\$17,800	\$21,800	\$28,500	\$37,700
Utah	Hourly	\$7.94	\$8.95	\$10.65	\$12.75	\$14.63
	Yearly	\$16,500	\$18,600	\$22,200	\$26,500	\$30,400

Source: Utah Department of Workforce Services.



Other resources:

- Standard Occupational Classification Manual, 2010
- bls.gov
- jobs.utah.gov