

Time is money – in sales more than any other profession

My research shows the typical salesperson spends 10-20 percent of their time selling and 70-80 percent doing everything else. Isn't it amazing that you can earn an income in sales spending less than 30 percent of your time selling? Imagine what you could do to your results and income if you could increase that number only five or even ten percent?

Time management and effective time use is a function of many skills, prejudices, attitudes, habits and personal philosophies. No one can manage time. If a person has a "sales time management" issue or problem it is most likely due to a weakness or lack of ability in some other area of their life (i.e. managing resources, people, decisions, problems, emotions, failure, activities, success etc). In order to improve ultimate time use a person must identify these tendencies, attitudes or weaknesses and then develop skills and abilities to address and overcome them. You can't improve time use, it is a nebulous concept. I challenge anyone to manage the next minute or hour. Can't be done.

The keys to improving time use and territory management – are to:

know yourself... know your tendencies... know your strengths... know your weaknesses... know your goals... identify your common time wasters... have a prospecting strategy... establish regular planning times... be ruthless with your self... discipline... know your prime time. What is prime time? It is that time of the day, week or month when you are at your best. Are you a morning person? Late night person? Other? Does your energy fade during a certain time of the day or week?

Territory management on the other hand is the ability to maximize your results, reach your goals and effectively build your business in your territory while satisfying the demands and expectations of your management team and customers.

How about your Prime Time PLUS-- this is that combination of time when you are at your best and your customers/ prospects can see you. For example if you are a morning person and a client/ prospect wants a conference call in the morning-- this is your Prime Time Plus. However if you are an afternoon person (your energy, creativity, imagination peaks in the mid afternoon) and you are not at your best in the early morning and a prospect wants a meeting in the morning this is not your Prime Time OR your Prime Time Plus. The key is to schedule critical sales activities during Prime Time Plus and non sales activities during your non Prime Time Plus.

You have also most likely known how you have felt when you have finished a day, week or month with a great deal of unfinished business. Everyone who hopes to do more, have more, become more, learn more and contribute more will, sooner or later, have to confront their own needs and style of what personal organization means to them. No one can tell you how to organize your life and career. What learning can do is help you identify where growth, change or a new philosophy is needed so you can regain some sense of harmony while climbing the ladder of personal success, whatever that means to you. Let's take a brief look at a few of the

issues that will require your attention as you attempt to better organize your time, territory, career and life.

It is important to know the difference between the words: effective and efficient.

-Efficient means to do things well or right.

-Effective means to do the right things well or right.

Note the difference? It is one thing to end your day tired due to the business of completing your list of activities. It is another thing to end your day having completed the important things— those things that needed to get done, not those things you wanted to do because they were easy, fun, you could finish them etc.

One of the key characteristics in effective territory management is to do a better job of qualifying prospects prior to giving them your time, energy or corporate resources.

Let's look at a few ways to better manage your resource of time and territory management.

Ask more effective questions earlier in the sales process.

1. Pay attention to their answers to determine whether this is a good time to try and sell this prospect.
2. Develop a customer profile to use as a template for your prospecting.
3. Audit your sales call activity by dividing the number of calls you make in a week by the number of miles you drive in that week. This number will give you your call route effectiveness.
4. Spend more prospecting time getting referrals.
5. Develop strategic alliances to help you improve your prospecting activity.
6. Plan you call activities early in the week, month or day.
7. Don't give poor prospects more time than they deserve.
8. Develop a daily checklist of what you will need to do to be effective.
9. Try to get more of your prospects to visit your location, plant or office.
10. Don't spend time giving presentations to non-decision makers.

What are some common time/ territory management attitudes?

1. There is always tomorrow.
2. There are too many demands made on my time.
3. There is too much paperwork.
4. My geographic territory is too large.
5. I have too many prospects/ customers.
6. I don't have anyone to delegate to

Working from lists is a critical skill in sales... it will ensure that you:

don't forget to do something important
work on the important stuff first
can feel good about your day
end the day/ week/ month without neglecting an important task, activity or role
can enjoy the time you have
sell more easier and faster

Work from lists of things TO DO. Here's how...

1. Make a list.
2. Prioritize the items on the list according to your goals, needs, desires, activities, demands etc.
3. Start with the important ones (must do's) first.
4. Finish these before you move to the less important ones (should do's)
5. Finish these before you move to the unimportant ones (will do's if I get time)

Work from lists and you will get more done in less time.

Develop the habit of spending a certain amount of time each day/ week/ month and year in solitude or mini breaks for recharging your battery. It doesn't matter if it is a walk in the park, slow relaxed meal, meditation time or just sitting doing nothing.

