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Success Equals Quality Time

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There are sales calls to make.

There are only so many minutes in a day.

The minutes don't match the calls to make.

Faster. More. Hurry. Everyone else made their quota. Time is money.

Who wouldn't be stressed? Four of 10 Americans stress about getting work done, says a Gallup Poll. As a professional organizer, I say the "time is money" adage is dead wrong.

The problem: The time is spent, not invested for the best payout. Try this equation: Sales equals the quality of time on the revenue line. However, this discipline doesn't just happen and can't happen on the fly.

A local commercial real estate professional called me: "I do not know where my time goes. I can't reach my sales goals."

We analyzed his days with a time map, a log of 15 minute intervals for five business days. Analysis: Less than 30 percent of his time had tasks on the revenue line. His days were busy with minutiae. That's not why he is at the firm. It costs the company when his time isn't invested in sales.

We set up his weeks with two priorities: 1) Revenue generators – time "making the sale" and 2) Revenue supporters – time to back-up and track sales or prospects.

Revenue generating first. Cold calls are in the morning when he is fresh. Time is built in to wrap up each call. Calls are documented in a previously underutilized database. He blocks two to three lunches a week with prospects. One day is blocked for field networking like walking project sites, attending networking events and face-to-face time with prospects.

Revenue generators are calendared in green. He can visually see if he is "on the revenue line."

Revenue supporters are grouped by function. Phone calls, follow-up letters, prospect and client e-mail and scheduling lunches are revenue supporters done together for efficiency. He does administrative functions appropriate to make or support sales. The rest are done by someone else.

Tasks farthest from the revenue line are for late afternoon – energy level is lower. (Never show low energy to prospects.)

Client files have two drawers: 1) active client deals (green files, of course) and 2) prospects. A "To Read" file is always with him to tap any down-time, like waiting for prospects. He has options for action no matter where he is.

He now exceeds his sales goals by investing his time for the best potential payouts.

Salespeople, got your toes on the revenue line? Sales managers, do you help your salespeople step up to the revenue line? Try these four steps:

- Create your time map.
- Analyze where you spend your time.
- Emphasize tasks on the revenue line; squeeze out tasks farthest from sales generation or support.
- Schedule, each day, on your calendar the tasks that are on the revenue line.