

Creating Time to Sell

By Bob 'Idea Man' Hooley

The **Creating Time to Sell** program was originally designed for the BC Management Team of the St. John Ambulance, with all of their branch managers coming together. Our objective for the morning session was in blending solid sales principles with a good use of time to allow their respective teams to be more productive in their sales efforts. It was very well received, and I've spent time refocusing it, expanding it as a tool to offer my clients to help them succeed.

While flying to an engagement in the US last year, I read a study back that indicated the **average salesperson puts in a 53-hour week**. And yet, in spite of this long week, **less than 8 hours of face-to-face sales activity was recorded**. Something is radically wrong with this picture. Work more, produce less is not a good indication for any organization which wants to survive in the 21st Century.

To be effective in sales and business in general, we must deal with **three areas as they relate to our clients**.

- Pain
- Gain
- Sustaining

To the degree that you work with your clients to take care of these areas, your profitability and long-term viability will be impacted. Each area has its focus and profit center. And in the sales process, each has its impact and effectiveness. At times we will work with clients who have these areas as their focus. The time we spend finding out what the real need is for them, increases the likelihood that we will be the one engaged to help solve it.

If we help people with their pain - will they need us when it is gone?

Helping them gain offers a bit more opportunity to serve and build a profitable relationship. But, if you can work with them through their pain, help them gain in the process and then take them through to helping them grow and sustain growth you will become a major part of their team for years to come. That is taking full advantage of leveraging your time in the sales process for maximum return.

They will deal with you time and time again if you help them see and receive the value you provide. I offer it as a mental jog to focus on using your time more wisely and blend some proven sale principles (I'm sure you've had lots of sales courses) into the mix.

Having said that, how can you focus on the above 3 success tools, if you are bogged down with minutia and paperwork or are unwisely using your time each day in non-productive, non-sales-oriented activities?

Ask yourself, no make a decision to track and analyze exactly how much time you spend in the sales process. The results will surprise you; they may even scare you!

Most of us in the sales field find ourselves easily sidetracked. We spend time doing ‘paperwork.’ filling out reports, chatting on the phone, chatting with our colleagues, reading the paper, taking long breaks and other such non-productive activities.

Am I saying to eliminate these in their entirety? NO! Simply be aware of what you spend your time on – and track the results.

You **make money** in the sales field only when you are in face-to-face or phone-to-phone contact with your potential clients. You **earn that money** by delivering on what you contract and **leverage that money** by good client contact and ongoing service. But you need to be in contact with them first.

- Prospecting is good use of time in the sales process – how much time do you spend doing it? Have you developed a systematic way to track and follow up on each one?
- Have you set-aside specific times each day to contact potential clients? When?
- Have you set aside specific times to maintain contact with existing clients to find out when and where you can help them again? **Repeat sales are the best**, and the most profitable! I love it when a client I’ve spoken for calls and asks me to come again. And the referrals don’t hurt the sales process either!
- Have you set aside specific time for follow up, to make sure your clients received what you promised and are satisfied with their relationship with you? Customer service is a success tool for the champion salesperson. And it amazes them when you call – so few salespeople do! It helps turn them into your champions and fans when you follow up and ensure they are happy. When you find out early when something is not working correctly or needs adjustment and fix it!
- Have you worked to make it easier for your clients to find you, get the information they need and track their order or service process? UPS and FEDEX use a tracking system, which is really a very effective sales and marketing tool. In my own case I’m continually evolving my website to make it easier for my clients to investigate what I offer and make the decision to hire me. It is a value-added site.
- Have you systemized your work area to make it easier for you or your colleagues to access information, client files, literature, etc. to serve your clients?
- Have you spent specific time thinking about all the potential challenges or questions that might come up from a prospective client? Do you have solid, well-researched, value-enhancing answers ready and burned into your mind? Why not?

If you invest even a small amount of time working on these questions and implementing the results of your deliberations – you’ll find you spend more time on the sales process. And amazingly enough when you are **Creating Time to Sell** – you end up selling!

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Strive for significance – lead on purpose!’, ‘Speaking for Success’ and ‘The Courage to Lead!’ His articles have been featured in a multitude of North American trade and global consumer publications. He is a respected leader who has been honored by CAPS, NSA, Toastmasters, and the United Nations for his leadership contributions. His creative *Ideas At Work* have allowed him to travel the globe sharing insights, encouragement in 61 countries, so far. With Covid-19 he has been zooming around the globe to share his ideas. His ***innovative Ideas At Work!*** have been successfully applied by global leaders as well as Canada’s 50 Best Managed Companies.