

Time and Sales Management Techniques

HOW EFFECTIVELY DO YOU MANAGE YOUR TIME?

Most financial professionals realize the importance of time management. However, sales create many tasks that need to be done, yet take time away from the main focus, that of connecting with clients and creating new ones. There are many things you are doing that work, some that you may need to add, and some that you need to delegate to others to increase your effectiveness in attaining your goals.

Identify the Necessary Tasks You're Already Doing

There are daily, weekly and monthly activities that lead directly to the achievement of your goals:

- Find and develop new relationships to grow your business.
- Qualify those prospects to see if they meet your definition of your target market.
- Help individuals achieve their personal financial goals, such as education, travel and retirement.
- Provide advice and peace of mind so that your clients feel financially secure.
- Set specific review and goal-setting meetings with your top clients to provide proactive advice.

It's easy to get discouraged and frustrated when these activities don't lead to results immediately. Just remember that if your business plan is solid, your sales activity success formula is based on real data, and you review and manage these sales behaviors regularly, these good business practices will lead to the accomplishment of your goals.

Concentrate On and Review Your Goals Often

Remember the "SMART" principle; make your goals Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound¹. Turn these activities that lead to success into personal habits:

- Determine specific goals (include personal as well as professional). Start with 100 goals, boil that down to the top 10, and then filter out the top three non-negotiable goals.
- Have a specific plan to reach your goals and include specific activities. Set "standards" for each of these activities.
- Have a process to measure achievement of these standards. Are you doing the activities required to be successful?
- Have an accountability program — hold yourself accountable for achieving your success.
- Have a process of reporting activities and results — set up a group of your peers and have a weekly sales huddle. Peer pressure is hugely motivating.
- Be a life-long learner. Just having been in the business for 20 years is not enough, you need to be more knowledgeable today than you were last year.

Adjust to the marketplace. This goes beyond dealing with the volatile economic climate. Technology has changed the way many people receive information — much of what you formerly provided is available on the Internet. Your role today is to help clients identify their financial goals, make the right choices to reach them, and then implement the appropriate steps.

Consider Eliminating or Delegating Certain Activities

You also need to stop doing certain time-consuming activities if you are going to get to the next level.

- Stop getting immersed in operations. Find the right people in your organization to handle those tasks.
- Your door cannot be always open - schedule specific time for important meetings and avoid drop-ins.
- Set specific times during the day to review emails and phone calls with your staff.

Put Your Plan Into Action

Ascertain what you need to keep doing, start doing, and stop doing to increase your business and follow it every day.

**TO DISCUSS WAYS IN WHICH AQUILA GROUP OF FUNDS MAY BE ABLE TO HELP WITH YOUR MARKETING EFFORTS,
PLEASE CONTACT YOUR AQUILA REGIONAL SALES MANAGER OR CALL 800-437-1020.**

¹The term "SMART" was originally introduced by George T. Doran in the November 1981 issue of *Management Review*. Since then, other variations of the acronym have been used for a variety of management criteria, including time and sales management.