

Daily Essentials for Success

by Michael D. Hargrove

How do I keep productive at work? What should I do when there's no floor traffic. Who should I spend time calling? I hear these questions all the time from my new clients.

Although most of us do need a little down time to stay sharp, it should never be more than a very small percentage of our day in sales. Once we accept the fact that we are in control of our own pay check and that we are basically running our own business within a business, we will then learn to make the time to do all of the things we need to do to be successful.

It comes down, however, to basically this: we need to be either selling something right now, creating or maintaining a steady stream of ongoing sales leads, or working on our own skill sets. These are our main high payoff activities.

So, based on feedback I get from my top producing clients, here are some suggested activities to do each day:

- The customer in front of us now always takes priority over everything else. Period. Everything else stops.
- Value our own time and others will start to value it too. Give prospects a choice of "available" appointment times (even if our day is totally open). Ask our receptionist to please hold all calls when assisting a prospect (preferably within earshot of that prospect). Always check in/out with our receptionist and sales manager (better yet, beat them in). Our time is precious, act like it is.
- Have a things to do list. At the end of each shift or the beginning of the next one, take the time to put in writing our plan of attack for the day. Never come to work without a plan.
- Check our inventory particularly our pre-owned inventory. Get to know the history of as many of the pre-owned units as possible. Note what got sold yesterday, and what is now available to sell. It sure beats wasting time searching the lot (or surfing the site) with our prospect in tow.
- Devote at least thirty minutes per shift to evolving our craft, every shift, no exceptions. Learn a new objection strategy, or a closing strategy, or a phone prospecting talk track, maybe a new marketing approach, etc. Something, every shift, no exceptions.
- Follow up with yesterday's prospects. Remember if they didn't buy from us yesterday they just may be buying from somebody else today.
- Invest the time necessary to execute a disciplined long term marketing process to build and maintain a constant flow of repeat and referral opportunities. These are our most valuable customers by far.
- Check to see what current clients of ours or what prospective clients are scheduled to use our service department this week and set an appointment with them. These are some of our best prospects since they are already committed to our product, already spending money with us, and are already coming in anyway.
- Check the newspaper, Craig's List, the "dead deal file", orphan customer lists, etc. every day. We are certain to find at least one promising lead there each day if we just take the time to seek them out.

- After each sales transaction, whether we make the sale or not, debrief it with our desking sales manager. That way, whether we make money (make the sale), become a better sales person (learn something), or both, we always win!
- Review our sales activities numbers: unit sales, gross, and our ups/demos/write-up/commitment/close ratios. Knowing where we currently are is essential to helping us get to where we want to be.

Consistent success takes discipline, hard work, a certain amount of planning, and it takes a massive amount of action! These are the essential activities we need to incorporate into our daily work plans. And please remember this: If we aren't working our own plan, then we are probably just a part of someone else's plan.

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Michael D. Hargrove is the president and founder of the private automotive success coaching firms Bottom Line Underwriters, Inc. and MySuccessCompany.com. He can be reached toll free at **(888) My Success** or via e-mail at **mhargrove@bluinc.com**.