



Getting Control of Your Time Management Monster!



By Dirk Zeller

One of the biggest balancing acts you have in your business and life, as a real estate salesperson or real estate broker, is the use of your time. Your ability to maximize your time enables you to dramatically increase your income or not. The most effective time utilizers are the people that understand time strategy and the value of their time; how to stretch its use and leverage it to meet their goals and objectives. Most agents feel that their business encroaches on their personal life and their family life, at times, gets the leftovers after their clients and prospects.

Time management and mastering it does not come from a technology product, social media system or an app you can buy. There are numerous of those available for free and for purchase that will help you leverage your time a little more effectively. To truly “control the monster” you have to acquire, understand, improve your personal skill sets and implement skill-based systems.

I see far too frequently real estate agents thinking a certain technological tool will save them. “If I put this in place or have this app all will be better.” Historically, “more” of something will just make the problem, lack of skill or strategy more pronounced and apparent rather than the “silver bullet” we hoped it to be.

In these pages I am going to give you numerous systems, concepts, strategies, charts and tools to help you improve your income and quality of life. I am going to give you these because I know they work. I used them personally to sell over 150 homes a year but only work Monday – Thursday. I took Friday, Saturday, and Sunday off. Joan and I would get in our car between 4PM and 6PM each Thursday and drive to our vacation home in Bend, Oregon two hours and forty-five minutes away each week. This started in my fourth full year in real estate sales when I switched to a 4-Day workweek schedule. I have taught this with success to my coaching clients to increase income and quality of life.

The truth is, like anything else, you must implement these strategies for them to have the dramatic effect they are capable of producing. Time is one of the barriers to most people’s success. Don’t let it block you anymore from you achieving all you desire in life!

Setting yourself up for success

Time is the great equalizer – everyone has the same amount in a day. No matter who you are, where you live, and what you do, you clock the same 24-hour cycle as the next person. One person may be wealthier than another, but that doesn’t earn him a minute more than the poorest people on the planet.

If that simple fact seems a bit discouraging, think of it this way: You may not have the power to get yourself more time, but you *do* have the power to make the most of it.



You can take your 365 days a year, seven days a week, and 1,440 minutes in a day and invest them in such a way that you reap a return that fulfills your life and attracts the success you dream of.

You really are in control of your time, even though you don't always feel like it – even if you feel your prospects and clients pulling you like taffy; even if you have kids who keep you in the carpool loop; even if you have dreams and goals that involve improving skills, strategy, or consistency.

All in all, discovering how to manage your time well is part mental restructuring and part creating a system. Effective time management for a real estate salesperson requires a little introspection, some good habits and organizational skills, and more than a few logistical and tactical tools. So if you have the time – and I assure you that you do – get ready for a journey that's certain to, if not buy you more time, show you how to make the absolute most of the 24 hours in your day and how to use that time to increase sales, service, and quality of life.

Getting to know yourself

Although everyone gets the same number of hours to work with each day, what people don't have in equal amounts are other valuable assets; skill, intelligence, money, ambition, energy, passion, attitude, even looks. All these unique reserves play into your best use of time. So the better you understand yourself – your strengths, weaknesses, goals, values, and motivations – the easier it is to manage your time effectively. As you look at your strengths and goals, think about how much your time is worth, and observe personal energy and behavior patterns that affect your focus throughout the day.

Assessing your strengths and weaknesses

As a young man, I thought I was good – okay, I admit it; I thought I was *great* – at a much larger group of skills, tasks and job than I do today. In fact, the older I get, the more I realize the list of what I'm *not* good at dwarfs the list of things I *am* good at. Being consciously competent at those few, however, gets me a lot further than being unconsciously incompetent, as I once was. Despite my poor academic record in high school, as a young adult, I was a quick study at what I needed to do to be as successful in life as I wanted to be. At some point, I saw the light and realized I needed to face up to what I had to do to get where I wanted to go.

First, I took stock of my assets: I tallied up my strengths, skills, and even my weaknesses. And I identified things I needed to work on and things I needed to leverage. That's what I realized that although some people were smarter, were more educated, had more money, and knew more influential people than I did,

I had the same amount of time as anyone else. And if I wanted to get ahead, it was up to me to harness my time and invest it in such a way to get a greater return. My willingness to invest more time to gain the edge helped equalize the playing field for me and help me achieve the success I enjoy today.

Chances are that by this point in your life, you've discovered some skills that you come to naturally or perhaps have worked hard to acquire. Maybe you're a master negotiator or a whiz with numbers. You may create connections with prospects and clients that are strong and enduring. Whatever your strengths, developing the handful that brings you the most return on your efforts, propelling you forward to attain your goals, is a more productive course of action than trying to be the best at everything. For most people, these strengths typically number no more than a half-dozen. The real question is what are your half-dozen?

In addition to pinpointing your strengths, you need to identify the areas where your skills are lackluster. Then figure out which tasks are essential for meeting the goals you want to accomplish, and build those skills. Invest time in honing and maintaining your strengths, and improve the weaknesses that you need to overcome to reach your goals. Remember: To be successful, you need to be selective.

Now take the time to really do the evaluation. The strengths are more critical than the weaknesses. While we can improve the weaknesses you rarely will be able to turn a weakness into a strength. The strengths are the key to more production in less time.

Identifying your rhythm to get in the zone

Athletes talk about being *in the zone*, a place where positive results seem to stick like a magnet. Well, I'm here to tell you that the zone isn't some magical place where wishes come true. Anybody can get there, without a lucky token or fairy dust. What it takes is focus, singular focus.



As an ex-professional athlete in racquetball in the 1980s and 1990's, I can say I've been in the zone a number of times. And I've experienced that same distillation of focus and electric energy on work projects as well – times when my volume and quality of work was bordering on unbelievable. If you can get your focus under control, you can visit the zone every day and make great things happen.

If you know your rhythms – when you're most on, what times of day you're best equipped to undertake certain tasks – you can perform your most important activities when you're in the zone. Everyone works to a unique pace, and recognizing that rhythm is one of the most valuable personal discoveries you can make. Some of the aspects you need to explore include the following:

- ✓ How many hours can you work at a high level each day?
- ✓ What's your most productive time of the day?
- ✓ How long of a break do you need so you can come back focused and intense?

The key to greater productivity and reduced time is putting the highest value activities of your day in the high value time. Too many people operate in crisis and aren't selective in combining high value with your high productive time. There are just some things in real estate sales you can do with half your brain tied behind your back; what those are and where to put them in your day.

Putting a value on your time



Depending on your values, different kinds of numbers may be important to you: To some, it's cholesterol count and blood pressure figures; to others, it's the number of years they've been married. Too many, the sum total in the retirement account is the number-one number, and some people zero in on the amount left on their mortgage.

But I content that your per-hour worth should be among the top-of-mind numbers that are important to you – no matter what your values or priorities are – **increasing what you are worth per hour should be your objective**. Knowing the value of your time enables you to make wise decisions about where and how you spend it so you can make the most of this limited resource according to your circumstances, goals, and interests.

Obviously, the higher you raise your per-hour worth while upholding your priorities, the more you can propel your efforts toward meeting your goals, because you have more resources at your disposal – you have either more money or more time, whichever you need most. In real estate sales a high hourly rate can have dynamic impact to you earnings. You have a few activities that have high value and many others that have low value.

Getting a good grip on the time – equals – money concept

Your per-hour value translates to your quality of life, both now and in the future. Not only does your income influence how you spend your nonworking hours, but it also determines how much leisure time you have to spend.

As you can imagine, your hourly value reaches beyond the basics: It impacts your health, too. For instance, studies show that lower-income earners have more health problems, including heart disease and diabetes, which are often attributed to poor diets and lack of medical care. Additionally, the challenge of trying to make ends meet can cause great stress, leading not just to physical illness but also to depression and other mental health problems.

And though it's important to live in the present, it's also important to keep an eye toward the future. How well you prepare does have an impact on your quality of life right now. Making enough money to be able to save for retirement and other major life expenses -including a child's education - results in a sense of comfort and safety about your future. Someone who leverages time well dramatically moves the odds of accomplishing their goal in their favor.

Your personal time has value, too. And by having a grip on the value of your work hours, you gain a better grasp on what your downtime is worth. After all, most people work so they can make the most of their personal time, whether they're devoting it to family, hobbies, volunteer work, travel, or education.

When you recognize that your free time has a monetary value just as your work time does, you gain the perspective you need to make choices:

- ✓ Is the extra money you'll gain by working more time with prospects worth giving up your holiday with your family? The value of our time with our family is priceless. For many of us in the real estate business if we put a monetary amount on our family time we would be more likely to embrace it with more gusto.
- ✓ Can you afford to take a leave of absence from your career to do a volunteer stint in Haiti?
- ✓ Should you take on more clients even though it means giving up all your free time for three months to fund your dream trip to Bali?

But what is an hour of your personal time worth? Well, that's not a question you can easily answer. How do you put a price on time with your young

children? Or apply a dollar value to travel experiences that bring you in touch with new worlds? Or equate the quiet therapy of a walk in the woods with the stress of a work presentation?

The harsh truth is that you don't get paid for not working. But that doesn't mean your personal time has no monetary value. Just thinking about your time as a commodity with a value helps you sort through and recognize the activities that are most important to you.

Calculating your hourly income

No matter your level of production in your real estate career, ***everyone sells time for a price***; it's just a lot more transparent in some situations than others. Most obvious are individuals who receive a wage or a fee based on the hours they work, including minimum-wage workers and self-employed individuals such as tutors, house cleaners and consultants.



Some businesses and professions charge customers based on an hourly rate, although workers don't directly receive that per-hour fee. Instead, their salary or compensation is based on the revenue the company can bring in based on those hours. Law firms and plumbers, for example, may charge for their services on an hourly basis and pay their employees a salary or a per-hour rate.

As a real estate salesperson your hourly rate is one of the seven key numbers in a real estate practice. ***In real estate we are really in a fixed fee business. When we decide to service a prospect or client we have fixed the fee for our service.***

If you decide to service, engage or work with a buyer who is going to purchase a \$300,000 property, you have decided to work, in most markets, for about \$9,000. If they end up purchasing a home for \$285,000, your fee is \$8,550. Big deal...\$450 less.

The real issue that is left over is how soon are you going to collect your fee? What is the cost in terms of time and treasure to serve the client? Doing an exceptional job of serving that client in the minimum amount of time is the best and most profitable course of action. This is why your hourly rate is so important.

Here's how to calculate your hourly income. This number doesn't affect how you're paid, but it puts you in touch with what an hour of your work time brings you.

1. Calculate the number of hours you work per week.

$$\text{Work hours/day} \times \text{days/week} + \text{overtime} = \text{hours per week}$$

To be completely accurate, calculate your hourly rate based on the hours you actually work. If you consistently put in more than 40 hours a week, add those hours to your total. Here's an example:

$$8 \text{ hours/day} \times 5 \text{ days/week} + 2 \text{ hours overtime} = 42 \text{ hours/week}$$

2. Figure out how many hours you work per year.

$$\text{Work hours/week} \times \text{weeks/year} = \text{hours/year}$$

Make sure you subtract time off. For instance, if you take three weeks of vacation each year, subtract that from your total number of weeks worked. If you have a three-week vacation and an average 42-hour work week, here's how many hours you work per year:

$$42 \text{ hours/week} \times 49 \text{ weeks/year} = 2,058 \text{ hours/year}$$

Now, I realize in real estate sales your time invested from week to week can vary. We have to start somewhere and establish a reasonable benchmark we can use.

3. Divide your gross commission income by the number of hours you work per year.

$$\text{Gross Commission Income} \div \text{hours/year} = \text{hourly income}$$

$$\text{For instance, } \$80,000 \text{ divided by } 2,058 \text{ hours is } \$38.87.$$

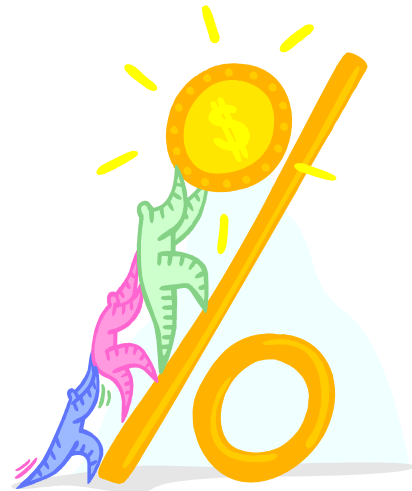
Your hourly rate is an amalgam of all the hours you work and actions you take. In real estate sales time can be segmented by quality of actions. Some actions and activities are just worth more than others. I will go into more depth in a few pages.

Boosting your hourly value through your work efforts

Money isn't the scarcest and most valuable resource; time is. There are plenty of ways to make more money, but there's no way to add more minutes to an hour. You have a limited amount of this precious commodity, so you want to protect it and spend it as if it's your own personal trust fund.

Most salespeople think that if they work more hours, they'll automatically make more money. That's faulty thinking: You can devote more hours to work, but if you invest the hours in the wrong actions, you gain nothing – and you lose time.

However, the simple fact is that most people don't have the luxury of raising their income at will. In real estate sales you have to execute a solid plan and strategy with your time for that to happen. So what's the next best step? Change how you use your time so you get the best return on investment – after all, what you do with your time leads to greater prosperity.



To increase your hourly value, you have to decide whether you'll work toward earning more money or earning more time. Then focus on performing high-value activities to achieve that goal; the process of discovering the really important actions or items you can invest your time in can help you change your hourly rate. The decision of how to increase your hourly value – whether to work toward generating more money in the same amount of time or generating the same amount of money in less time – depends on your circumstances.

- ✓ Because you're in a commission-based compensation structure, you can increase productivity to earn additional income.

When evaluating time-for-money trades, be sure not to limit your definition of *return* to money: Ask yourself whether the exchange improves the quality of your life. Look at how your life would change outside the work if you were to double or triple your hourly rate. If what you're trading for dollars does any of the following, it's a good trade:

- ✓ Increases your ability and opportunity to earn more money
- ✓ Increases your amount of family time
- ✓ Decreases your work hours

- ✓ Enhances your physical and mental fitness
- ✓ Provides an opportunity for someone who needs it
- ✓ Removes something you don't enjoy or don't do well from your life

So that's a simple look at the overall strategy behind improving your return on investment.

Focusing your energy with the 80/20 theory of everything

In 1906, Vilfredo Pareto noted that in his home country of Italy, a small contingency of citizens – about 20 percent – held most of the power, influence, and money – about 80 percent, he figured where at the opposite end of that equation. That, of course, meant that the other 80 percent of the population held only 20 percent of the financial and political power in the country. Pareto found a similar distribution in other nations. In the 1940s, Joseph M. Juran applied the same 80:20 ratio to quality control issues, and since then the business world has run with the idea of “vital few and trivial many.”

The basic principle that in all things, only a few are vital and many are trivial is known as the *80/20 rule* (also referred to as the *Pareto principle*), and you can apply it to almost any situation. I've heard it used in the workplace (“20 percent of my staff makes 80 percent of my income”). You can also apply the 80/20 rule to time management.

Matching time investment to return

Generally speaking, only 20 percent of those things that you spend your time doing produces 80 percent of the results that you want to achieve. This principle applies to virtually every situation in which you have to budget your time in order to get things done – whether at work, at home, in your relationships, and so on.

The goal in using the 80/20 rule to maximize your productivity is to identify the key 20-percent activities that are most effective (producing 80 percent of the results) and make sure you prioritize those activities. Complete those vital tasks above all else and perhaps look for way to increase the time you spend on them.

How to implement the 80/20 rule

Step1: Sizing up your current situation

Before you can do any sort of strategizing, you need to take a good, honest look at how you use your time. For people who struggle with time management, the problem, by and large, lies in the crucial steps of assessing and planning. Start your assessment with these steps:

1. Observe how you currently use your time.

Through the observation process, you can discover behaviors, habits, and skill sets that both negatively and positively affect your productivity. What do you spend most of your day doing? How far down the daily to-do list do you get each day? Do you really get the things done each day that lead to increased sales and income?



2. Assess your personal productivity trends.

During which segments of the day are your energy levels the highest? Which personal habits cause you to adjust your plans for the day?

3. Take a close look at the interruptions you face on a regular basis.

During what segments of the day do you experience the most interruptions? What sort of interruptions do you receive most frequently, and from whom? As salespeople this new technology world we live in is both a blessing and a curse. Because of smart phones, the Internet, and social media we are more accessible than ever. It also means we experience more interruptions than ever. Interruptions can be good, like a new prospect. They can bed and cause us to lose focus.

For time management success you have to deal with the interruptions effectively:

- 1) There should be a time in your day where you shut out the interruptions completely. This strategy will enable you to focus and get your 20% done that produces 80% of the results.

- 2) Each interruption is automatically 5-minutes of time. By the time you get back to the level of intensity and focus you were at before the interruption is 5-minutes. That is true if it is a quick email response or 30-second phone call that breaks through.
- 3) Focus on “appointment only”. Agents always talk about they are “by referral only”. I love referrals as much as anyone and they are the backbone of a service-based business. The real value is operating by appointment only. Where you are directive in your time management strategy to meet with people and you focus on setting appointments in everything you do...even down to phone calls.

Step 2: Identifying the top tasks that support your goals



Some folks in real estate sales tend to follow the squeeze-it-in philosophy: They cram in everything they possibly can – and then some. These people almost always end up miserable because they try to do so much that they don’t take care of their basic needs and end up strung out in every possible way. The quality of what they do, as well as the amount of what they do, suffers as a result of their ever-increasing exhaustion. The most profound method to being successful in real estate sales is becoming a workaholic. Don’t let yourself go down that path.

To work efficiently, you need to identify your 80 percent – the results you want to achieve. Break out your list of goals. Take a good look at your top 12 goals and identify the tasks you need to do that align with those goals. If your number-one goal is to provide your kids with an Ivy League education, for example, then your priorities are less likely to center around taking twice-yearly vacations to the Caribbean and more likely to revolve around investing wisely and encouraging your offspring to do well in school (can you say “full-ride scholarship”).

After you identify what you need to do – your vital few – spend a bit more time in self-reflection to double-check that you’ve correctly identified your goals and essential tasks. One of the biggest wastes of time for people is changing direction, priorities, objectives, and goals. Successful salespeople and successful sales managers take the direct route from point A to point B.

In sales the key tasks are certainly lead generation and lead conversion. Without those there are no clients to serve.



Here's what to ask yourself about these key tasks:

- ✓ How much time do you devote to those activities? Twenty percent? Less? More?
- ✓ What are you doing with the remainder of your time?
- ✓ How much return are you getting for the investment on the remainder?

Step 3: Prioritizing your daily objectives

After you identify the tasks and activities that you need to accomplish to achieve your goals, assign a value to those goals so you can decide how to order your daily task list.

To personalize how you prioritize your goals at work, follow these steps:

1. Look at your long-term success goals.

Do you want to advance to a particular production or award level? Do you want to achieve a particular income? Or is your goal to fine-tune your skill set before figuring out where you want to go next?

2. Review your company's priorities.

Having a solid understanding of the company's priorities, goals, objectives, and strategic thrusts guides your own prioritization so you can get the edge on the company's competition. To get a global perspective, review your company's mission statement, review its published corporate values and goals, and see how they pertain to your engagement as an independent sales contractor in the company. Ask your broker for further elaboration on these statements and on his or her priorities so you can make sure yours align with the firm.

A real estate salesperson does so much more than simply service or sales. A real estate salesperson prospects, qualifies, cold-calls, warm-calls, networks, follows up, generates leads, serves customers, asks for referrals,

develops marketing plans, prepares sales presentations, handles objections, role plays and rehearses, researches, trouble-shoots, files, mails, engages in social media communication—and asks for the close.

Yet all this boils down to that most fundamental function: making the sale; boosting the bottom line. Generating revenue. Producing income. The efforts and energies of the real estate salesperson must all flow into the direction of selling. And the more time the real estate salesperson can devote to making sales the more successful in income the real estate salesperson becomes.



Now I know some of you...your skin is crawling. You don't view yourself as a salesperson. You don't want to be a salesperson. You want to be a real estate consultant, marketing consultant or any number of other titles we put on our business card so we can feel better.

I really believe we need to better embrace the understanding that without sales there would be zero income. We are not in the 2003-2006 timeframe where people were frothy to buy homes. We are in a time where there is concern, hesitation, fear, and anxiety on the part of both buyers and sellers. ***Our job is to convince them of our value as a service provider over the other companies and agents.*** Further we have to provide enough value, analysis, and information in a manner that helps them take action in a specific period of time so we ensure a profit for ourselves and family. Isn't that what selling really is in this world?

Top real estate performers use their time more effectively to create leads at a higher rate per hour and invest less time convincing people to buy, to buy through them, they get prospects to list and list with them to take action now. In the world of real estate sales, mastering time management is a critical skill.

Through decades of experience as a sales leader, sales coach, motivational speaker, and consultant, I've discovered that few sales professionals understand exactly how to effectively invest their time when faced with the many tasks required of the job. Early in my career, I developed a system for time management that has served me and thousands of my clients well. By sticking with this program, I've achieved and exceeded any sales goal I've ever set for myself. And you can, too.

Breaking your time-investment portfolio into three categories

Just as a good financial planner chooses diverse investments to balance a portfolio, a real estate professional of any sort balances the way he or she invests time in the many job-related tasks required on a daily or weekly basis. And just as the well-balanced investment portfolio differs for individuals at various life stages, time investment varies according to real estate profession.

For the real estate salesperson, that time-investment portfolio divides naturally into three categories of activities that make up a salesperson's job:

- ✓ Direct income-producing activities (DIPA)
- ✓ Indirect income-producing activities (IIPA)
- ✓ Production-supporting activities (PSA)

The money makers: Direct income-producing activities (DIPA)

The most important job of a real estate salesperson is to create customers and keep customers – after all, it's through these customers that you generate income. To keep customers, you have to understand their expectations of service and performance and then ultimately deliver on that while communicating at regular intervals, checking the customers' results, and gauging how satisfied they are with the service, then asking for referrals to help you create more customers and clients.

Any and all activities that lead to producing revenue for your real estate sales business are considered *direct income producing activities*, which I refer to as DIPA. What, exactly, can DIPA tasks consist of? Here are some of the biggies:

- ✓ Prospecting
- ✓ Calling on past clients to make more sales
- ✓ Seeking leads from your sphere of influence
- ✓ Cold calling: Not the best source but it is a potential source
- ✓ Warm calling: This would be a targeted, high probable list (expireds or FSBO's)

- ✓ Networking
- ✓ Following up leads
- ✓ Qualifying prospects
- ✓ Making listing presentations
- ✓ Conducting buyer consultations
- ✓ Showing property to qualified buyers
- ✓ Closing orders

The secret to success in sales is maximizing your DIPA time. The activities that comprise DIPA have a higher value than anything else you do during the day. The most successful real estate salespeople make a conscious decision to invest more time in DIPA as soon as they understand the value and power of action directly linked to dollars.

How much time you can invest in DIPA depends on how effective you are in your time management and personal discipline. It also depends on the support system behind you to service your customers and clients. At a minimum, you want to invest 60 percent of your time in DIPA daily. Certainly, more is better and increases sales more quickly. Also, you want at least half of that time to be in the prospecting and lead follow-up categories of DIPA.

As a sales professional, speaker, and coach, I've discovered three actions that lead directly to leveraging your real estate career and increasing your income: personal development, role-playing, and evaluating personal progress. I've yet to meet a real estate salesperson who didn't achieve top level when he or she consistently applied these three DIPA actions over time. The best news of all is that you can dive into these actions from day one of your real estate sales career and never stop.

The prep work: Indirect income-producing activities (IIPA)

As a real estate salesperson, you keep busy with a lot of actions that, while they don't directly bring in income the way prospecting, following up on leads, or a listing presentation does, are essential because these activities, Indirect income-producing activities, which I call IIPA, include the following:

- ✓ Developing programs to generate leads
- ✓ Creating marketing strategies
- ✓ Developing promotional pieces, such as brochures and mailings
- ✓ Encouraging brand-building and product awareness among the public
- ✓ Tracking, monitoring, and reviewing sales results
- ✓ Social media strategies to marketing and sales

Although critical, IIPA shouldn't be time-consuming—keep these tasks to an hour or so (or 10 to 15 percent) of your day.

Many real estate salespeople have a harder time finding the right balance of IIPA time. The reason is we find it challenging to balance the marketing side of sales: creating new marketing strategies or perfecting sales processes or sales systems.

I think social media is fabulous as long as you have the correct time mix. The explosion of social media has dramatically influenced the hours upward in the IIPA area. According to NAR, less than 5% of all sales last year were connected either directly or indirectly with social media. Then why spend 30%, 50% or 80% of your time on it? We are spending more time indirectly trying to create our income. This pathway leads to lower results than the DIPA route in the short and medium run.

You might overtake the income created by DIPA in the long run because of your increased reach and increased audience as a real estate salesperson. Do you have other income coming for you to take a more long-term pathway to income and sales?

My caution is, be sure to have a reasonable mix between your IIPA and DIPA. If you don't you will generally have large swings in closings and income over a few months.

Although important to your overall results, marketing efforts can consume more of a bit in your schedule than is warranted. Overinvesting time in IIPA can throw off your DIPA attention and, as a result, lower your sales. If you see evidence of this, here's the solution: Pick up the time you invest in lead generation and lead conversion immediately.

Incorporating IIPA into your day

After you've worked your schedule around your direct income-producing time, it's time to fit indirect income-producing activities (IIPA) into your day. Because they aren't linked as closely to bottom line measures, IIPA tasks shouldn't take up as much of your energy, but in no way should you overlook them, either. Your goal is to budget time for them but keep them from eating into those most lucrative of activities.

Using IIPA time to review sales results

By figuring out what works—and what doesn't—you can channel your efforts into activities that multiply your income. Examining how many leads a particular marketing piece generates, tracking the conversion rate of leads to sales, and plotting average order and average commission all fall under IIPA. Look at your analytics for your website, leads generated and conversion rates. This is important time for your success.

The time you spend gathering data and analyzing it doesn't earn you money directly, it does increase your income indirectly, by showing you what works and which IIPA efforts you might need to tweak or marketing strategies or systems need adjustment.

For example, say your tracking reveals that from 20 leads, you only convert one of those to a sale. The barrier is likely between the leads and the sales presentation or listing presentation or buyer consultation. I'm simplifying (you may have problems at the presentation level or at other stages, too), but the point is that by analyzing each step of the sales process, you can zero in on your strengths and areas of further work. Here's what you may discover from results tracking:

✓ **You are pursuing low-quality leads.** This may be true, but most of the time, it's not the case. Check with the other real estate salespeople in your company—if they're achieving low results from these leads, the problem probably is with the quality of the leads. However, if others in the company are booking five appointments to your one appointment, look elsewhere for the problem.

✓ **Your lead follow-up strategy is off.** Take a look at your lead-qualifying tactics. You may not be doing an effective job of determining the time frame, motivation, and urgency of your prospects. You may not be assessing the level of competition or the level of commitment. The result is you end up spending a lot of time pursuing individuals who should've been eliminated during your lead investigation process.

✓ **You failed to grab the prospect's interest.** From the first moment of contact, you have seven seconds to hook a prospect. You need to hit that prospect between the eyes with your value proposition. What benefits you are offering with real estate service. Consumers view many real estate agents as the same so how are you better and different?

Keeping IIPA in check

To keep IIPA in check while staying on top of everything, I suggest these three tactics:

✓ **Relegate IIPA to the afternoon.** Unless you don't fully engage in the day until noon, you want to set aside the morning for your most important income-producing activities. IIPA functions typically don't require the same level of energy as DIPA. And because they aren't as critical as DIPA, holding off on IIPA ensures that you wrestle the most important activities first, before something comes along to derail your day.

✓ **Keep IIPA to an hour a day.** Marketing, evaluating others' sales performance if you have a team, your sales performance, analyzing your lead follow-up, scheduling the next day's setup, and reviewing call sheets are all effective uses of IIPA time, provided you don't spend hours daily doing them.

✓ **Use the end of the day to prepare for tomorrow.** One of the best uses of IIPA time is preparing your sales calls, sales strategy, opening statements, and call objectives for the next day. Investing a mere 30 minutes today means you're able to instantly click into DIPA tomorrow. You'll be less likely to stall, evade, and avoid the calls if your call sheets or call logs are on your desk. *Most of us struggle with some level of creative avoidance when it comes to picking up the phone.*

Even if you do most of your prospecting and lead follow-up out of your computer customer relationship management (CRM) program, I still encourage you to at least print out a hard copy of your calls on paper during your IIPA time today before you leave. Engaging in creative avoidance is harder when you see all these names on a page rather than on a computer screen.

Administrative stuff: Production-supporting activities (PSA)

Numerous tasks support the direct and indirect income-producing activities. You know, all the administrative details (processing, copying, mailing, stamping, faxing, filing, inspections, uploading to your Internet site and other processes) that are an unavoidable part of the job. Anything we do after we take a listing or culminate a sale would be in the PSA category. These tasks don't generate revenue or even indirectly lead to income, but you have to do them as part of quality service for your clients.

For example, calling on a prospect is clearly a DIPA action, and then developing a sales presentation for the prospect is an IIPA project. But the actual arranging the presentation, doing the CMA before the presentation is a production-supporting activity, or PSA. Some of you might have administrative staff to manage these tasks, but even among the most fully staffed real estate teams, the lead agent or real estate agents themselves have to handle some of the PSA tasks.

Your goal is to reduce the time you invest in PSA to the smallest amount possible. ***Are you controlling your time so well that you are investing 10 to 15 percent—or less—in this area?***

Although DIPA can be worth thousands of dollars an hour, PSA time is probably valued at \$10 to \$20 per hour, depending on the market rate for good administrative help. The time you devote to the big-money activities is diminished, and you earn much less than you could.

Decreasing your PSA time

The goal of any real estate salesperson is to get those administrative production-support activities (PSA) down to well under two hours a day, freeing up more time for prospecting, lead generation, calling, lead follow-up, and other direct income-producing activities (DIPA). Awareness is the first step toward the proper alignment of DIPA to PSA.

Armed with the understanding that spending time on PSA saps your DIPA energies, you may be tempted to set a zero tolerance policy for PSA. The truth is you will never be able to avoid PSA actions completely, even if you employ an army of administrative help. Here's the conundrum: ***The more you invest in DIPA, the more PSA actions you generate. The two are interconnected.*** You make prospecting calls (DIPA), and a prospect wants a brochure, marketing material, information on the marketplace or properties, or even a listing presentation (PSA). Or you make a sale to a buyer (DIPA), and you now have to book a lot of servicing to do. So frustrating though it may be, generating more PSA work because you're increasing your sales volume and

units is a good thing. Your goal is simply to keep the PSA in check, making sure that you keep your ***DIPA-to-PSA ratio at a minimum 4:1 ratio.***

PSA functions surrounding real estate sales tend to be recurring, requiring weekly or even daily attention. Here are several ways to keep these supporting tasks on a firm leash:

- ✓ **Streamline the process.** Determine whether you can create a system to make a PSA process faster, possibly eliminating some unnecessary steps. It takes almost as much time to assemble one marketing material package and brochure as it does ten; invest the time to create the ten and have nine ready to go out the door. Systems are key to reducing PSA time.
- ✓ **Create templates.** Don't craft a sales or lead follow-up letter or email from scratch each time. You can take a basic format and customize it for individual use.
- ✓ **Batch your work.** Make your PSA calls one after another. Bunch together the PSA actions as much as possible so you can move quickly from one similar call or action to another. Call all your sellers to update them, for example, at the same time weekly or bi-weekly. Have a scheduled meeting with your lender, Title Company, or attorney to review all transactions in process.
- ✓ **Eliminate the step.** Sometimes examining the process reveals that you don't need to do a particular task at all.
- ✓ **Delegate.** Is administrative help somewhere in your company? Can you find someone to lend a hand? Get a virtual assistant for a few hours a week. Can internship programs find some eager business students who want to learn the business from the ground up? A talk with your broker or sales manager might help.
- ✓ **Hire help.** If you can't get more support within your company, are you willing to pay a few bucks for it? Maybe you could hire a college or high school student, a stay-at-home parent, or a part-timer who just wants a low-pressure opportunity to earn a little money. For many of the PSA tasks that are not proprietary, the work can be done off-site. Again, a virtual assistant might be an option.

Remember: If you don't have an assistant, you are one. What I mean is this: If you don't have someone you can delegate the mailing, faxing, research, typing, low-level customer service, and a host of other actions to, you become the administrative assistant – and you earn your income commensurately.

✓ **Turn PSA work into DIPA work by asking for a referral.** When you have to do PSA work, you can often take the opportunity to get in a little DIPA action at the same time. For instance, customer service follow-up calls are part of your PSA. Checking to confirm that the prospect or client has received expected materials or information is a routine task that doesn't relate directly to income-generation. But don't stop there—get some extra mileage from this PSA effort by turning your customer service call into a prospecting call: Ask for a referral. Updating sellers and buyers can turn into a DIPA with a simple referral ask.

It's never too early in a sales relationship to begin building a referral base. A truly qualified referral request, however, takes a little time and attention. Be ready to invest at least five minutes in conversation to avoid appearing like a



hit-and-run referral driver. You might use a great segue statement like this: "I have a very important question to ask you." This statement forces a pause, builds anticipation, and sets the tone for a meaningful conversation. And it requests permission to explore client or prospect contacts. You may even use a script like this to help you:

"I'm delighted that I've been able to serve you. I was wondering about others you might know who would also benefit from my service. Could we explore for a few minutes other individuals you believe I might be able to serve?"

The right balance in your DIPA, IIPA and PSA of your time will really enable you to explode your income. You might want to re-read this segment a few times and craft your implementation strategy after you have done so. I have never coached an agent who didn't explode their income when we got their mix correct!

Tracking your time to see where you stand

It's hard to know exactly how much time you spend on DIPA, IIPA, and PSA functions unless you've tracked your activities over a period of time to determine an average. Taking stock is important, and it supports an undeniable truth in real estate sales: When performance is measured, performance improves.

Recording your activities

By tracking your time usage, you're guaranteed to increase your time effectiveness. I have included a form we use at Real Estate Champions to help our clients record and report how they use their time in half-hour increments. Most people have between 16 and 20 half-hour increments to invest at work daily. Here's how to use this form to help you make the most of those increments:

- ✓ Keep the form with you and fill it out as you go. Don't wait until the end of the day to complete it—you're bound to forget something.
- ✓ Track yourself for at least a week—longer is better. This allows for daily anomalies and helps create more of an average workflow.

Repeat this time-tracking process at least every six months. Over time, habits and behaviors may creep into your routine to diminish your effectiveness. A routine check-up keeps you on track.

The indirect income-producing activities are more subtle, and the definition of IIPA is more fluid than the definitions of DIPA and PSA. As a real estate agent, what you consider to be IIPA may be different from what I do. There's no question that prospecting or lead follow-up is a DIPA action; and there's no question that faxing, mailing, licking, and sticking are PSA actions. However, the middle ground is more open to interpretation. The ambiguity can lead to a misrepresentation of your time.

My best coaching advice is to free yourself to decide which sales-creating actions fit in each category. Really define your DIPA, IIPA, and PSA actions and create a list for each category so there's no guesswork and faking yourself out when your time allocation is off.

Activity Tracking By the Half Hour

7:00-7:30	_____	DIPA	IIPA	PSA
7:30-8:00	_____	DIPA	IIPA	PSA
8:00-8:30	_____	DIPA	IIPA	PSA
8:30-9:00	_____	DIPA	IIPA	PSA
9:00-9:30	_____	DIPA	IIPA	PSA
9:30-10:00	_____	DIPA	IIPA	PSA
10:00-10:30	_____	DIPA	IIPA	PSA
10:30-11:00	_____	DIPA	IIPA	PSA
11:00-11:30	_____	DIPA	IIPA	PSA
11:30-12:00	_____	DIPA	IIPA	PSA
12:00-12:30	_____	DIPA	IIPA	PSA
12:30-1:00	_____	DIPA	IIPA	PSA
1:00-1:30	_____	DIPA	IIPA	PSA
1:30-2:00	_____	DIPA	IIPA	PSA
2:00-2:30	_____	DIPA	IIPA	PSA
2:30-3:00	_____	DIPA	IIPA	PSA
3:00-3:30	_____	DIPA	IIPA	PSA
3:30-4:00	_____	DIPA	IIPA	PSA
4:00-4:30	_____	DIPA	IIPA	PSA
4:30-5:00	_____	DIPA	IIPA	PSA
5:30-6:00	_____	DIPA	IIPA	PSA
6:30-7:00	_____	DIPA	IIPA	PSA
7:30-8:00	_____	DIPA	IIPA	PSA
8:30-9:00	_____	DIPA	IIPA	PSA

DIPA Payoff Hours _____

IIPA Payoff Hours _____

PSA Payoff Hours _____

Total Hours _____

Evaluating your time-tracking sheets

The most successful real estate salespeople are brutally honest with themselves and confront their strengths and weaknesses. They're able to look at their performance in an objective, real, honest, and constructive fashion. To get the most out of your personal evaluation, you should assess where you currently are with your time management before you plan how to allocate your time, noting where you're doing well and where you have room for improvement. Use your time-tracking sheets to identify how much time you spend in each category and when you perform tasks of a certain type.

Looking back at your day

How often do you exclaim at the end of the day, "Where did the time go?" When you feel as though you've gotten nothing of significance done in the last eight hours on the job, go back and review the mix of PSA, IIPA, and DIPA. Then pinpoint the problems, plan for the next day, and nail down a schedule that ensures maximum productivity and keeps you on the path toward success. Ask yourself the following questions to identify what to change for tomorrow.

- ✓ When did you invest in DIPA in your day? Did you put off tackling your DIPA tasks until your day was derailed by interruptions?
- ✓ Were you so engrossed in IIPA tracking that you spent more time than you intended in analyzing the results?
- ✓ How did you break down DIPA time in terms of prospecting, lead follow-up, and sales presentations?
- ✓ Did you lose momentum by jumping back and forth between prospecting, lead follow-up or other actions?

Keep a level head as you evaluate your productivity by accepting that although today is gone, tomorrow is a new opportunity to get it right.

Reflecting on your week, month, quarter, and year

At the end of each week, wrap up with an evaluation of how you did, asking yourself the following questions. This shouldn't take any longer than 30 minutes.

- ✓ How much time did you spend in each category? Is your time investment a little off-balance?



- ✓ How many contacts, leads, appointments, listings taken and buyer sales did you complete? Were those numbers better or less than your goals for the week?

When you're comfortable that you have a good handle on what happened this week, then evaluate what needs to happen next week:

- ✓ What needs to change next week to close any gaps?
- ✓ Which areas of DIPA do you need to focus on?
- ✓ How much DIPA time do you need to hit or exceed your sales goals?
- ✓ How can you increase the hours you invest in DIPA and who or what can help you do so? What are the barriers to increasing DIPA time?

Repeat this process at the end of the month, quarter, and year, asking yourself how far behind you are for the month, quarter, or year to date. Your monthly reviews may take an hour; a quarterly evaluation, perhaps a few hours. And at the end of the year, you may want to set aside a day or two to replay the whole year. Your yearly reviews differ in scope from your weekly and monthly recaps because you're looking for big-picture trends rather than daily or even hourly work routines.

Several years ago, my annual self-evaluation uncovered that if I don't take an extended break from work at about the ninth week, my effectiveness drops dramatically. I need at least a five-day break to recharge my batteries. If I don't put that break in my schedule, my intensity, focus, concentration, and results drop dramatically with each subsequent week. I discovered there was a rhythm to my work. If I didn't follow that rhythm I was in trouble. I would have not discovered this without the weekly, monthly, quarterly, and annual evaluations. ***What is the rhythm of your work?***

Planning your day around DIPA

Your first step in improving your time management is to decide to make DIPA a priority, to commit to it, to just do it! Stuff happens, and this is no greater a truth than in the world of real estate sales. With problem transactions, emergencies, and short sale deals, we really have our time management plate full. If you don't place your direct income-producing activities in your schedule, chances are that stuff will come along to commandeer your time—and the DIPA won't get done. ***If you fail to plan out the where, when, and how of your***

DIPA for the week or day, you can plan to fail. You also can't expect to execute.

Set out to increase your DIPA hours daily. Most real estate salespeople invest less than 20 percent of their workday in DIPA when they should be investing in excess of 60 percent of their time in DIPA every day.

Scheduling your DIPA time

To make sure you focus on the most essential direct income-producing activities, be sure to separate out the most important and devote a specific amount of time to each. Of the many DIPA functions that you regularly undertake, a handful are critical to perform regularly, if not on a daily basis. To stay focused, set aside time specifically for each function. Don't lump everything together in a single "DIPA" time slot.

As you schedule time for your direct income-producing activities, consider these tips:

- ✓ **Batch like activities together.** Don't make two prospecting calls, do a couple of lead follow-up calls, and then go back to more prospecting. This disintegrates into multi-tasking, which is inefficient. You will also gain momentum in your activities because you are linking them together. You will warm up, improve, and get into a rhythm for the day. If you book an appointment from your prospecting you will gain confidence so you can build on that confidence with more and better calls.
- ✓ **Set aside at least one hour at a time.** Give yourself enough time to build momentum for greatest productivity.
- ✓ **Schedule a break between activities.** Giving yourself 15 minutes to stretch your legs, take a quick walk, return some calls, or even get a cup of coffee enables you to clear your mind and transfer your thinking to a new prospect, lead follow-up call, or other action.

Picking a time for DIPA and using that slot wisely

Because DIPA tasks are the most important, you want to put those actions in the part of your day when you have the most energy, intensity, and focus. When are you better, sharper, or thinking most clearly during your day? When do you have the most energy and greatest focus? For most people, this period of high productivity is typically in the morning.

Aligning your most productive time periods with your most important DIPA tasks is critical to your success on a daily basis. Whether you're an up-at-daybreak person like me or more like my wife, Joan—whose engine is misfiring until her second latte kicks in some time between 9:00 and 10:00 a.m.—you want to determine your personal prime time sooner rather than later.

The best way to arrive at your alignment is through personal observation. Monitor yourself for a few weeks. You might even journal through your day, finding the sweet spot where you're most productive. You can also seek out the opinion of those who know you well. Ask your spouse or significant other, your co-workers or your sales manager. You could even ask a parent, someone who's followed your biorhythms from your birth.

If you discover that your best time of day is the afternoon or evening, be especially diligent in protecting that high-powered period. As your day progresses, you encounter more opportunities for stuff to happen and derail your plans for an afternoon of DIPA. I'm not saying you can't do it, but just be aware that if you book your direct income-producing activities later in the day, you must be extra wary of distractions, glitches, interruptions, and other trip-ups.

Most of the push back I get from agents about morning lead generation and lead follow-up calls is the percentage of people that are home. I will grant the argument that more people are home in the evening. I agree with you; you will probably find more people at home at night than during the day. What you have to accept is that unless your high productive energy time is in the evening, the odds of you consistently engaging in the lead generation and lead follow-up in the evening is not likely. In fact, I would tell you it would be less than 25%.

If you won't make the calls because you are too tired, stressed out, wiped out from your day, it doesn't matter that people are home a greater percentage because most agents won't make the calls. Do your calls when you are most likely to consistently do it!

Giving priority to lead generation...or prospecting



Too many real estate salespeople and even some sales trainers lump in lead follow-up with prospecting or what I am calling lead generation. Big mistake! These two actions are very different. ***Prospecting is the act of generating leads. Lead follow-up is keeping in contact with the leads in order to convert the leads into appointments or customers.*** During lead follow-up, you can dump some leads because their desire, need, ability, or authority isn't high enough or definable enough for you to serve them.

Combining prospecting and lead follow-up in one category is a mistake because most real estate salespeople then take action only on the lead follow-up portion. The reason is it's easier, more comfortable, for us. When you're not creating new leads, your production and sales are only as good as the leads you have already. What happens if the leads are really low quality? What happens to your listing volume and buyer volume earnings? Everything in terms of production, sales, and personal income is negatively affected.

I recommend investing at least 25 percent of your day—or about two hours—to lead generation. That is if you are trying to grow your business. If you are in a maintain mode you can do less. You should also work to make that time consistent each day, meaning no bingeing on lead generation. Schedule the two hours each day and sew them in the schedule. Don't get to the end of the week, find out you're behind, and try to do marathon session to catch up.

Part of your lead generation investment is on *qualifying* prospects—determining their motivation, time frame, expectations, and experience; and which other real estate companies may be competing for their business. You also want to know how they're going to make the decision to purchase or list. The questions you ask, whether on the phone or in person, help you use your time in the most efficient manner by eliminating prospects who don't exhibit the characteristics of a motivated buyer or seller. The process also helps you craft the most on-target message to those prospects who qualify as customers. Here are three core elements to qualifying a prospect:

✓ **How much?** What's the size of the potential listing or sale? What can you expect in future business or referrals? In the scope of your current clients, where does this prospect fit?

✓ **How soon?** What's the time frame to buy or list? If the prospect is six months away from the final decision, a lot can happen to derail the sale. You also have to invest six months of calls, e-mail, question answering, and presentations. However, if the prospect views you as a last-minute entry to serving them, the prospect may perceive you as too risky because you haven't built a service and value connection. Some of selling is being there at the right time.

✓ **At what cost?** What's the cost in terms of your time, effort, energy, and emotion to create a listing or a sale? Some customers take large volumes of time for little return. You need to determine the costs and ask whether the listing or sale is really worth it.

Leaving time for following up on leads

Lead follow-up is the process of converting your leads into clients—or at least into appointments. During lead follow-up, you can dump some leads when you determine they don't really meet the client profile or it's clear that they are not in a position to buy or list at this time.

You should be spending less time on lead follow-up than on prospecting. Shoot for a 2:1 ratio at a minimum, or an estimated one hour per day. If you invert this ratio, you may run out of leads sooner than you anticipate—and find yourself playing lead generation catch-up.

If you have an overabundance of leads, then swing the percentages to lead follow-up for a few days, a week at the most. Just don't remain there too long, or you'll find your new leads dwindling.

Blocking out time for listing presentations and buyer consultations

Most listings are completed in the listing presentation, where you're pressing flesh. This is the most obvious component of the DIPA time you invest. It's also the segment of the sales process where you're closest to converting the listing, getting contracts signed, and setting up solid inventory so you can leverage your business.

Pre-schedule listing presentation in your time-blocked schedule. As a real estate salesperson, I knew how long a listing presentation took to conduct, so I typically had preplanned slots to do them. When I was prospecting, I'd use alternate-choice closes to garner appointments, such as "Would Wednesday at 1:15 p.m. or Thursday at 3:15 p.m. work better for you?" It kept me focused on booking appointments, and it increased my effective use of time through better organization of my schedule. It also helped me avoid the poor techniques that most real estate salespeople employ, which is asking, "When do you want to get together?" That phrase exclaims you aren't busy, you need the deal and it turns over total control of your time management strategy to someone else.

Planning for personal development time

The books you read, seminars you attend, CDs you listen to, and videos you watch can all have a dramatic and positive influence your level of real estate sales success. When you invest your time into these learning activities, you can count on a healthy return. Although formal classes and classroom study are good ways to continue your quest for knowledge, you can squeeze in lots of learning opportunities without giving up vast amounts of time. Here's how:

- ✓ **Sign up for seminars.** Check with your Board or Broker to see what is coming to your area.

- ✓ **Turn your car into an audio university.** Make the most of your commute. Turn off your favorite top 40 station or talk radio show and stick in a training CD or a download to your MP3 or iPod instead. Use the time to expand your knowledge about your industry, your career, or human psychology. With the amount of time you spend in your car over the course of a year, you could theoretically put in enough hours to earn a college degree. If you want quality education and training for your auto university check out our website at www.realestatechampions.com. I have a number of best selling series that will impact your bottom line.

- ✓ **Sign up for online events.** The new world of training is online. We do a tremendous amount of training, coaching and education in our Live Virtual Classroom, for example. These intimate programs really help agents increase their income and reduce their investment of time. They are highly cost effective because you don't have to travel to an onsite event. You can do them from your home or office. They are extremely interactive personal coaching and training experiences.

Role-playing: Getting ready for prime time

I put a great deal of emphasis on the importance of role-play in preparing for appointments and listing presentations and buyer consultations. These dress-rehearsals are much more than a fun and frivolous exercise; they're a critical step in increasing a positive outcome from a direct income-producing experience. If you invest your time into role-playing and perfect your scripts and delivery skills, you're bound to grow your sales results.

The time to practice isn't when your commission check is on the line! Here are some tips for working in some practice through role-playing:

- ✓ **Set a time and place to role-play and put it in your schedule.** Don't book appointments in your role-playing time – protect role-playing as if it were an appointment itself. Role-playing is usually the first thing real estate salespeople cut when they get busy.
- ✓ **Start with your appointment-setting techniques.** These are the most important because if you can't get in front of the prospect to make a presentation, it doesn't matter how good your presentation is to that buyer or seller.
- ✓ **Enlist a partner.** To really role-play well, you need a partner. Why not practice on someone other than a live buyer or seller? You can find another real estate salesperson in the office or you can ask someone who has a vested interest in your career.

Early in my sales career, my wife, Joan, listened to literally thousands of my listing presentations, objection-handling scripts and dialogues, and trial and final closes. In fact, to this day she could probably outsell most of the real estate salespeople because she knows the scripts and can deliver them!

- ✓ **Have your partner offer various responses (without setting out to antagonize you).** The objective of role-playing is to develop good skills and gain confidence. You want to practice making the sale. You want stalls, objections, and problems brought forth from your role-playing partner. The other person just doesn't have permission to be a jerk.

Evaluating your sales presentation performance

The time you invest in evaluating your personal performance absolutely earns an IIPA rating. What you do with your time, how you invest it, how you make decisions, how you use your skills, how you work to improve - all

these actions influence your personal productivity, I really believe most salespeople don't invest enough time in evaluation, limiting their improvement.

If you have aspirations to improve and increase your income, you have to be willing to critique your performance. Ask yourself the following questions:

- ✓ How is your opening statement? Does it create a high level of connection and interest?
- ✓ Did you harvest viable leads?
- ✓ How effective is your lead follow-up sequence?
- ✓ How well do you deliver your listing presentation or buyer consultation?
- ✓ Do you give yourself high marks in confidence, conviction, enthusiasm, and assertiveness?
- ✓ Do you listen or speak more than your prospect?
- ✓ How well do you present benefits aligned with the needs of prospects?
- ✓ What's the conversion rate of leads to listing presentations or buyer consultations? What's the conversion rate from leads to closed sales? What the choke point to improvement in this area?

Also do sub-level evaluations for a listing presentation and buyer consultation in the area of objection handling and closing. These two areas really separate the top-level real estate salespeople from the middle of the pack.

- ✓ How well do you know the objection scripts furnished by your company? Do you practice them weekly?
- ✓ Can you deliver them under pressure in a listing presentation or buyer consultation with eloquence?
- ✓ At the end of an objection that a prospect raises, can you shift to closing?
- ✓ In closing, do you ask for the order in closing more than four times?

Honest personal evaluation takes guts. Focusing on your problems, mistakes, and faults isn't fun. Although many real estate salespeople may rank prospecting as their least-favorite activity, I suspect that personal evaluation is

really the most difficult task. But if you never look in the mirror, you may never glimpse those ugly truths and correct them so you can achieve the success you deserve.

I know I have hit you with a lot in this quick e-book. I wanted to give you specific tools and strategies to really impact your income in the next 12-months. In the end your time management skills and strategies are life management systems and strategies. How you apply what I have shared will determine the quality of your life. ***Time management is really life management.***

One important final piece of advice...don't get discouraged if it doesn't go perfectly for you in your time management. Don't wallow in a lack of instantaneous results. My professional view is the skill of time management is like a muscle; a muscle that needs to be trained and worked. You won't go out tomorrow and run a marathon or bench press 300 pounds. You have to work up to that level of fitness and strength. You will have to spend months of running longer distances to prepare well for a marathon. This is also true with your time management skills. We over estimate what we can accomplish in a day or a week but underestimate what we can do in 6 months or a year or more. Don't be caught by the trap of frustration. You are there to make measurable progress in reasonable time!

Finally, if I or my team at Real Estate Champions can be of service to you, please don't hesitate to call on us...we are here to serve. You can reach us via phone at 541-383-8833. Our website is www.realestatechampions.com. You can also follow me through facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/dirk.zeller1> or through my blog at www.dirkzeller.com. Real Estate Champions has a facebook page as well at <http://www.facebook.com/RealEstateChampions> or connect with me via Twitter at <http://twitter.com/REChampions>.

To your success,



Dirk Zeller
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Real Estate Champions