



MAKING THE MOST OF TIME IN SALES

A Mercuri International White Paper

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No matter what type of sales management you are working in, efficiency matters. Making the most of limited time and still doing a good job is the key to getting ahead!

If you listen to many Sales Managers – no matter what their specific task, their cultural background or their geographic location – limited time is often articulated such as “too much work,” “too many different things to do,” “not enough, or not the right tools,” “not enough team members to reach our sales goals,” “not enough competent people who efficiently do their work,” “difficulties in getting the right commitment from sales reps,” “non-reachable goals,” and so on.

Some more brave Sales Managers even try to put the problem in the context of self-limitations they have already identified: “I have difficulties in delegating,” “I don’t set the right priorities,” “I go into too many details,” “I’m not structured enough,” “I waste too much time on little things,” or “I don’t do what I should to make my team reach the goals,” for example.

In other words, the reasons for time limitations on key missions may be as diverse as Sales Managers themselves. But whatever the reason, efficiency is the goal for working smarter and freeing up time to dedicate to new professional (and personal) initiatives.

Five rules of efficient time management for Sales Managers

Checking the implementation of some key rules can help:

- PARKINSON: the more time you get to do a task, the more time you need to complete it
 - **Allocate a ‘time budget’ and a deadline to realise the task**
- MURPHY: each task needs more time than foreseen. How much time is needed for each task in reality?
 - **Add a ‘security time margin’**
- CARLSON: completing several similar tasks at the same time is more efficient than doing them at different times
 - **Group your similar tasks in the same time budget as far as possible**
- PARETO: 20% of our activity gives 80% of our results but secondary activities often take up 80% of our time
 - **Prioritise your to-do-list**
- EISENHOWER: separate what is urgent from what is important (“What is important is seldom urgent, and what is urgent is seldom important.” Quote attributed to President Dwight D Eisenhower)
 - **Use the Eisenhower matrix**

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making the most of time in sales. *CONT.*

What to do next

Think about the fundamental key points of Sales Management. List them, set priorities and plan them.

That means:

1. List all your tasks (without sinking into the “tyranny of the to-do-list” that makes you list more than act).
2. Give them a time budget, or state of urgency, and importance.
3. Define the priority tasks and eliminate the non-priorities.
4. Define the tasks that should be planned.
5. Define the urgent tasks that can be delegated.
6. Plan the key actions with your team (collective and individual actions).
7. Start with your individual prioritized actions.

But don't forget to check the efficiency of your tools (at least shared calendars and a well functioning CRM).

Fortunately, with the number of tools on the market today, it has never been easier to benefit from online resources that help increase productivity. These include time-tracking tools like Quickbase, with intuitive easy to understand and simple to use interfaces, making tracking your time less of a chore and more of a business priority.

You can also use tools like this to track how much time you're spending on unimportant tasks, becoming more efficient overall. Some tools, like Bitrix24, even combine a social intranet system with CRM tools that include contact tracking, sales funnel management, messaging, activity planning and calendars, all of which enable your team to quickly manage important pieces of information from within a central program.

Lastly, to achieve efficiency, good solutions must be followed up with sustainable implementation. If you need help with this, don't hesitate to contact us.

Eisenhower Matrix

