



## GET BUSY GETTING BUSINESS

by Leigh Wallinger

If you are in sales, or if you are an entrepreneur just starting a business, your livelihood will depend totally on your ability to find and close deals for your Company. This will be your primary task, one which is critical for your own personal success. There are, however, a great number of obstacles and distractions that will arise to deflect you from your primary task, unless you are properly focussed.

Firstly, you must identify and write down the **Key Leverage Actions** associated with your role that will lead to your success. There are usually about 6 such actions that leverage your success. In a sales role, the Key Leverage Actions are:

- Prospecting
- Establishing rapport with prospect
- Identifying needs
- Presenting your solutions
- Handling objections
- Getting commitment from prospect

If you are in sales, the better you become at these 6 actions the more success you will enjoy in your career. Furthermore, the more time you spend doing these actions the more effective you will become at sales.

Failure to perform each of these actions well enough or often enough will hold you back. Dedicate yourself to becoming better and better at each of your Key Leverage Actions over time and plan your time so that you can increase the amount of time you spend on these actions. Take courses, read books, attend conferences, study your competitors and learn from others. Expand your knowledge and apply it when you work on your Key Leverage Actions.

As well as getting better at what counts and doing more of what counts, also become more productive at what counts. This means doing the same amount in less time (or doing more in the same time). Getting faster at what you do will also have a significant impact on your success.

*"The good news is that the faster you move, the more energy you have. The faster you move, the more you get done and the more effective you feel. The faster you move, the more experience you get and the more you learn. The faster you move, the more competent and capable you become at your work." Brian Tracy*

### Determining your Key Leverage Actions

In some cases, it is quite easy to list the few actions that are crucial to your role. For sales staff, the list given above is probably close to the final list.

For managers, the six Key Leverage Actions are:

- Planning
- Organising
- Resourcing
- Work allocation
- Monitoring
- Reporting



If the list is not so obvious, then start with a more generic list. By thinking about each of the actions on your generic list in depth, it will be possible to identify the Key actions relating to your role.

For example, if you are in a customer support role then your first generic list might be:

- Complaint Handling
- Requests for assistance & queries
- Recording problems
- Determining solution
- Communication
- Closure

After some careful analysis, you consider the first two should be combined as there is little distinction between the two when taking into account how the customer is handled. You also realise that you need to focus on the tracking of complaints to ensure your organisation falls within contractual Service Level Agreements. Your final list of Key Leverage Actions are:

- Inbound Contacts
- Recording problems
- Determining solution
- Resolution tracking
- Outbound Contacts
- Closure & Requesting Referrals

The last step has been expanded so that whenever a complaint has been dealt with and the customer is happy with the resolution, the role of customer support is also to ask the now satisfied customer for referrals.

### **Doing more of what counts**

The list of Key Leverage Actions will help you focus on what is important in your role. These represent the major tasks in your job. There are many other tasks that need also to be addressed, and we'll call these the minor tasks. These tasks will include activities such as company administration tasks (eg expense forms, timesheets etc) which often have deadlines but don't directly relate to your Key Leverage Actions list.

Planning is important to ensure these minor tasks do not eat into the time you should be devoting to your Key Leverage Actions, your major tasks. You must avoid falling into the trap of "Majoring on Minors", where you spend most of your time doing actions that are not one of your Key Leverage Actions.

A useful technique is to have the following question in your mind as you select tasks to be completed from your To-Do List. The question is "*What is the best use of my time right now?*" By giving sufficient attention to this question you will automatically start to focus on your Key Leverage Actions – the ones that will help you to meet your objectives and reach your business goals.

### **Be resilient, be persistent and build your own brand**

Things sometimes don't go to plan. This is true for everyone, but especially those who are developing businesses through sales. You have to learn to take knock-backs in your stride and not take them personally. Be true to your word and when you tell someone you will do something, make sure it is done by the time you said. Delivering something late, or being late for a meeting is a sign of poor organisation. If you fail to live up to your word with a prospect, you'll find it hard to convert that prospect into a customer. As Tom Peters might have said, "if you can't WOW them when you're in sales mode, what will their experience be like when they are customers?"



Establish your own brand, as people usually buy from people they like. Your brand must be something that everyone likes – be polite, professional, courteous, helpful and easy to contact. It pays not to be too different but you should strive to be memorable.

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