

Helping Manufacturers and Distributors Improve Sales Performance & Profitability

Putting Ideas Into Action

Many managers know their salespeople don't spend enough time selling. Some turn to financial incentives and technology to solve this problem. But other managers are going a step further and finding ways to give their salespeople more time to sell.

In November 2006, the results of a 14-month Time Study that confirmed what many salespeople already knew and some managers suspected. On average, salespeople spend just eight percent of their time prospecting and qualifying new customers. Yet they spend 23 percent of their time dealing with problems and mistakes, searching for information and expediting orders.

Overall, they spend 62 percent of their time on "non-revenue-generating" activities and just 38 percent of their time selling.

The study was widely discussed by trade associations and business media, including *Selling Power*, the *Sales and Marketing Management Newsletter* and *The Washington Post*.

They expanded on their study findings in a popular report *5 Common Barriers*. They also used these insights to develop their *Peak Sales Performance Work Session*, which helps companies find ways to improve sales performance.

More Time = More Sales

The study strongly suggests that companies can grow sales by giving salespeople more time to sell. It's a low-cost, low-risk way to quickly get a higher return on investment (ROI) from your salespeople. It's also more cost-effective

than hiring more salespeople – especially when qualified people are hard to find.

And the best part is that it's easy to get started. Even small, inexpensive steps bring results. Several companies have already realized this and have taken action.

Faster, Simpler Quoting

For example, at one mid-sized manufacturer in the filtration industry, salespeople struggled with a time-consuming, inefficient quotation process. To get pricing as quickly as possible, salespeople were sending the same RFPs to three different people in the company. Then they had to follow up with multiple phone calls to keep the process

moving. This cumbersome quotation process squandered time and kept salespeople from achieving their true sales potential.

When the Industrial Performance Group held a *Peak Sales Performance Work Session* with this manufacturer, the company saw how serious this problem was. They retooled their quotation process and put a central contact person in charge of getting pricing to the salespeople. This led to shorter turnaround times and a 20 percent reduction in departmental costs.

The company estimates that this freed up three hours per week for each salesperson. Three hours per week for 40 salespeople means about 6,000 more hours of selling time each year. Would your company's top line go up if you had 6,000 more hours of selling time?

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...United We Stand