

HOW MANY SALES CALLS PER DAY SHOULD I MAKE?

No one asks this in seminars anymore. What better metric is there to determine if a salesperson is doing what salespeople are paid to do? Granted, salespeople are paid to make sales, not calls. Although, you cannot make sales if you do not make calls. The old timers in sales were drilled on this.

For example, copier salespeople were taught that 40 cold calls would lead to 10 face-to-face meetings, which would lead to 3 product demonstrations that would result in one sale. For them, it was a numbers game. In my first sales job, we were expected to make 8 sales calls per day. If we showed up in the office between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM, our sales managers thought we were sloughing off.

I discovered a metric years ago that has served me well. I read an article by a top real estate salesperson who said that he routinely talked to three people every day about a new opportunity. This could be an existing customer and a new opportunity or a prospect and a new opportunity. For years, I kept my pipeline full by practicing the three-per-day rule. This meant I had to make more than three calls per day to discover three opportunities. I would not stop calling until I pumped three new opportunities into my pipeline.

I don't know if salespeople even think in these terms today. An old-time sales manager would guide you daily with these comments:

- Why are you in the office? Who's going to buy your stuff in here?
- You don't have to like cold calling to do it.
- A phone call is not the same as an in-person call.
- If email and texting work so well, why do we need you?

Salespeople spend 25% less face-time with customers today than a generation ago. Something other than technology must account for this. If you are an outside salesperson, go outside and make some calls. Wear out some shoe leather. Put some miles on your car. Run out of business cards. Get out of the office, off of the Internet, and put away your cell phone. Press some flesh. Squeeze some hands. Visit your customers in real time.

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