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# The Secrets Of Time Management

Consultant, educator and salesman Dave Kahle has been a regular contributor to the pages of *Agency Sales* magazine for several years. Over that period he's addressed a number of concerns and provided guidance on a number of subjects that independent manufacturers' representatives face on a daily basis. Over the course of his career, he has published more than 400 articles and authored three books and 32 multimedia-training programs.

Now in his latest book, he takes dead aim at the critical need for salespeople to solve their time management problems. Kahle's *10 Secrets of Time Management for Salespeople* provides help for the unique and overwhelming challenges faced by today's salesperson. Learning to manage time more effectively results in greater productivity and more satisfaction at work and at home. His 10 secrets are based on his years of observation of thousands of salespeople as well as his own experi-

ences in sales. The 10 chapters of the book cover these topics:

- Get grounded — "Being grounded means that you are securely fastened to some deeply held, basic commitments that give shape and focus to all that you do as a salesperson. Being grounded means that there is something that keeps you in check, that gives direction and purpose to your job-related efforts."
- Think about it before you do it — "There are certain disciplines for salespeople that will bring about good results when they are practiced regularly. Thinking about it before you do it is one such discipline." Among the tactics the author suggests that can help in this area are annual, quarterly, monthly and weekly planning sessions. In addition, he cites the value of daily preparation, pre-call preparation and post-call reflection."
- Think right — "There are a few thinking processes that are essential for you to master if you are



Dave Kahle

going to be an effective time manager. They are analyzing, planning, prioritizing, imaging, reflecting."

- Prioritize your customers and prospects — "Too often, salespeople spend time with customers who like them, or who are easy to see, or who have become friends. These are nice, and certainly there is a place in every sales territory for those kinds of customers, but if those customers aren't high-potential, then investing time in them isn't smart."
- Stay on top of the flow — Here the author emphasizes the need to avoid being distracted by daily concerns and problems. He urges six strategies to employ in this area:
  - Constantly reprioritize.
  - Stay close to the money.
  - Prepare to make good use of

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- uncontrollable downtime.
- Don't always immediately react.
  - Qualify and prioritize every opportunity.
  - Learn to say no.
    - Clean out the gunk — Kahle defines gunk as “any practice that detracts from the time you spend with customers. In other words, unnecessary things that you do instead of meeting with customers. Usually, these are mindless habits that waste time — things you do routinely and rarely think about.”
    - Create systems — “Good systems bring you two powerful time

management benefits. First, systems reduce the amount of time you spend on a task. Second, they allow you to wring the greatest value from that task.”

- Stick to an effective sales process — “A well-defined, effective sales process provides you a way to think about each customer and prospect, and put your efforts into a context. Sales calls aren't made just to make them. Rather, you see every sales call as a step forward in the process. You have a specific objective in mind for each sales call, and an overall strategy for every account and every opportunity within each account.”

- Nurture helpful relationships — “Creating relationships that result in people gladly working to assist you can be one of your most powerful time-management strategies.”

- Stay balanced — “If you are going to be an effective time manager, you need to balance the driving forces with the limiting forces in your life. You need to live within the zone of dynamic tension between those two pressures so that you can be your most effective all the time.”

*10 Secrets of Time Management for Salespeople*, by Dave Kahle. Career Press. 219 pp. \$14.99. □