

7 things salespeople should never stop doing

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Selling for a living is tough. There are many highs and frequent lows. Constant pressure to reach sales targets, customer and prospects that are more demanding, and changes in the marketplace all make sales a tough career.

If you are serious about maintaining a long-term career in sales, there are seven things you should never stop doing. If by chance, you haven't started doing some of these, I suggest that you start...the sooner, the better.

1. **Prospect.** If you do nothing else but prospect for new business every day the chances are you will always be busy and seldom, if ever, experience peaks and valleys in your sales.
2. **Improve your skill.** Professionals in many industries require regular upgrading skills. Selling is no different. The marketplace has changed and what worked five years ago is no longer relevant. Make the time and invest in regular self-improvement programs (workshops, conferences, books, audio programs, etc).
3. **Listen more than you talk.** People who listen more, learn more. The more you learn the more effectively you can position your solution or offering. Enough said.
4. **Establish clear objectives.** Whether it's a face-to-face meeting or telephone call, you need to have a clear objective of what you want to accomplish. Closing the sale is NOT an objective.
5. **Create plans (yearly, quarterly, monthly and weekly).** I know very few salespeople who actually create a business plan for the entire year. What sales do you want to achieve? How will you reach those targets? What daily, weekly and monthly activities do you need to execute to achieve your goals?
6. **Study your products.** How much time do you spend studying and learning your products? Do you know the key differences between similar products? Do you know how each product will actually benefit a customer?
7. **Network.** Effective sales networking means attending the events that your key prospects attend, not the events you enjoy going to. A friend of mine deals with high-ranking executives so he attends high-profile fundraising dinners. The cost of entry can be expensive but the return can be excellent.