



SMART Tips, April 2004: The \$10,000 Hour.

Are your sales people worth \$10,000 an hour? You might be surprised to find that they are. Selling time isn't a cost. It's an investment. If your sales time isn't worth a lot of money, you're doing something wrong.

Tip #1: Sales targets determine the value of sales time. A sales person with a \$1 million revenue target and about 900 hours a year to devote to selling activities has an hourly investment value of \$1,111. Raise the target to \$5 million, lower the hours available to 500, and you've got a \$10,000 hour. What's the real figure for your people?

Tip #2: There's less time to sell than you think. Take away weekends, vacations, travel, training, and administration, and that leaves only 113 days of selling time in a year for the average salesperson. It's less for major-account executives.

Tip #3: They've got to sleep sometimes. Don't think you can cheat by asking sales people to work longer hours, offload legitimate administrative tasks, ignore training, or forego planning, analysis and review. Most sales teams don't spend enough time planning.

Tip #4: Unused assets become liabilities. A sales person who misuses selling time is throwing money away. When sales people focus on marginal opportunities, unprofitable projects, or unproductive activities, their selling time becomes a liability.

Tip #5: Sales people need great support. Give sales people an urgent appreciation of the value of their selling time. Give them good metrics, profiles, and other tools. Guide them toward profitable customers, projects and activities, and provide accurate data to assess ongoing performance.

Want to get the best return on your investment of sales time? Get strategic about the way you sell. Bring *Selling the SMART Way®* to your business.