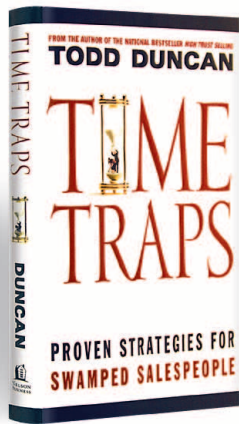


SOUNDVIEW Executive Book Summaries®

FILE: SUCCESS/CAREER
TECHNIQUES

By Todd Duncan

Proven Strategies for Swamped Salespeople

TIME TRAPS

THE SUMMARY IN BRIEF

Time traps can rob you of your success. As much as 75 percent of the time you spend at work or in your sales career is probably a waste of time. There is a difference between being busy and being productive. At the heart of the many challenges you face — in your sales career, your health, your spirituality and your most important relationships — is how you spend your time.

If you're a salesperson, or any other harried worker, then you have to understand that the solution isn't that you don't have enough time to do your work. The solution is realizing how to best use your time.

In this summary, sales expert Todd Duncan explains all the traps that steal your time, and shows why you should abandon the pointless pursuit of time management and, instead, adopt a far more actionable approach: task management. He explains that by focusing your time better you can make more money and have more free time — at the same time.

The summary also asks you to rethink your values as a person while making the case that your work isn't your life: Life is why you work.

In Time Traps, Duncan challenges you to invest your time in the areas that will truly deliver dividends: your health, your financial fitness, your relationships, your knowledge and your purpose.

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What You'll Learn In This Summary

- ✓ How to extricate yourself from the biggest time traps in order to become more productive.
 - **The Yes Trap:** You lose time by saying "yes" too much.
 - **The Control Trap:** In order to save time, you must delegate responsibility.
 - **The Technology Trap:** As you may have noticed, e-mail, cell phones and computers don't always translate into more productivity.
 - **The Quota Trap:** Quotas can create more problems than they solve.
 - **The Failure Trap:** Learn not to be afraid of failure.
 - **The Party Trap:** Don't let success get to your head.
- ✓ How to rethink what you think is important. After all, if you gained more free time and wealth, what would you do with it?

TIME TRAPS

by Todd Duncan

— THE COMPLETE SUMMARY

Chasing the Wind

The concept of time management is flawed. As a worker, you can't manage or tame or control time any more than you can lasso the wind and tie it to a fence post. You can only manage your thoughts and actions.

We have the know-how and capacity to make time matter. The problem lies in the obstacles that keep us from doing it more often. These obstacles are the *time traps*, and the lives of salespeople are full of them.

Traps exist to steal your energy and time. Education and avoidance are your best defenses against the time traps.

Since we measure the value of time by how we spend it, task management is the real solution to our overly busy lives. It's the only way to get yourself out of the swamped state in which you find yourself so often.

The Toughest Challenge in Sales

Selling is a profession where time can be a very frustrating thing. Time is the most pervasive and repetitive problem salespeople face. Details vary, but the struggle is constant. Salespeople incorrectly accept this as their lot in life: to never have enough hours in the day to accomplish what they want. But they are wrong. There are immediate and specific actions that you can take in order to shift your business and life into a place where most of your time is well spent — a world of time freedom. ■

The Identity Trap

When your time is monopolized by your work — and/or recovering from work — the only thing that forms your identity is work. You are known to yourself and to others solely by what you sell, how you sell and how well you sell. You become lost in your job.

Work has permeated so much of our identity in American culture that we consistently work more hours per year than any other country — leapfrogging the notorious workhorse Japan in 2000 by 37 hours a year.

There are negative consequences to that which include guilt, restlessness, growing frustration, an urge to justify their schedules and fear or regret. The all-work identity simply doesn't feel right and was never meant to. Author Joe Robinson described it as the “workplace

without end.” Salespeople, in order to keep this one-dimensional identity viable, trade multilateral satisfaction for unilateral success, trade family fitness for financial potential and trade childhood dreams for corporate visions. When you think about it, those really aren't good choices.

There's an obvious problem with an identity founded entirely on work. Not only does an identity wrapped up in work sap your identity, it keeps you from realizing your dreams. In essence, it changes who you are now and who you will become in the future.

Rethinking Your Time

Salespeople who are not swamped by their work usually had a breakthrough point where they gained a new perspective on time. They reached common conclusions about time before they were able to make a change in how they used their time. These six conclusions are the foundation for everything else discussed in this summary:

1. **Life will never settle down until I choose to settle it down.**
2. **Working is not living.**
3. **Time is life first, then money.**
4. **More work usually means less life; less work, more productivity and efficiency, usually means more life.**
5. **How I use my time deeply impacts my self-esteem, my identity and my fulfillment.**

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The author: Todd Duncan is the CEO and founder of the Duncan Group in Atlanta, Ga. He is a motivational speaker specializing in helping people build maps for personal success and significance. His tapes, seminars and books, including *High Trust Selling* and *Killing the Sale*, have helped millions worldwide tap into their potential.

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The Identity Trap

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6. I can't control time, but I can control how I use and respond to time.

To reclaim your identity and set the stage for regaining control in your days, *you must first understand what is currently defining your identity. Who you are and who you are becoming* is foundationally a function of how you are using your waking hours. Most salespeople overlook this in their pursuit of success and become something they never intended to be. What you invest your time in defines who you are.

Time Trap Swamp

The only thing that will get you out of your time trap swamp is changing what you spend your time on. In other words, while you *cannot* manage or tame or recapture time, you *can* manage, prevent and change most of the events that fill it up.

In order to capture your true identity you must accomplish two things:

1. Determine how you are wasting your time.
2. Determine how to spend more time on the things that produce the life you desire.

Your true identity will be shaped and your path to freedom will become clear as you accomplish these objectives. ■

The Organization Trap

The responsibilities a salesperson faces are much like a raging river. There are times when the river flows predictably and you can handle your tasks in an efficient manner. Such days are a rare exception.

On most days your river of responsibilities rages like a flood-high current that threatens to drown you. The more tasks that rain down, the more disorganized and out of control you become. Even if you see obstacles, you rarely have the time or the energy to avoid them. This is a circumstance that most salespeople have to continually work to avoid.

You Have an Excuse ... Sort of

Most salespeople say they are disorganized and lack the time to catch up. As a result, they scramble to get work done every day, but often at the expense of great inefficiencies and gross errors. Once you are in the middle of the river and the current is sweeping you along, stopping to get organized only compounds the problem.

According to one recent study, most salespeople test out in the highly driven or highly relational personality categories. Not surprisingly, these two personality types have the most difficulty when it comes to achieving

organization. Both types have traits that make it difficult to multitask or commit to detail and follow through. As a result, salespeople must make special efforts to get their days under control.

Here are two lessons from the world of a professional river guide that can help you construct a mental foundation for cleaning up your days:

1. Acknowledge the power of the river. Early on in a sales career, it might seem like a fun challenge to take on everything that comes your way. But the longer you sell, the sooner you realize that the pace of a sales career doesn't slow down involuntarily. You must first acknowledge the life-sapping power of your river of responsibilities if you are ever to muster the courage to overcome its unforgiving current.

2. When the river is high and fast, you must scout what's ahead. If you are sick of working so much, now is an ideal time to pull off this raging river we call a sales career, if only for a few moments, and survey the scene to determine how you can make it through in one piece.

Damming Your Workload

When you get out of the chaotic current of your career long enough to give it an honest look, you realize there are only two ways to manage your responsibilities: You can either learn to guide yourself through the rapids and attempt to avoid the obstacles as best as you can or you can build a dam. Most salespeople opt for navigation first, but that's very difficult to do when you're in the middle of a raging river. You can only slow the pace of the river by building a dam.

The Blueprint of Your Dam

You have to put boundaries on your business, or you won't have balance in your life. Since you cannot manage your time, the only way to organize your day is by managing your daily tasks. Task management — not time management — is the foundation of organization. The only way to free yourself from the traps that steal your time is to manage the things that occupy your time: *tasks*.

Four phases make up the construction of your dam. Each phase represents different boundaries that you must build in order to slow down the rapid pace of the tasks that fill up your river of responsibilities. The four phases are: accumulation, admission, action and assessment.

● **Accumulation.** In this phase you must learn to stop all *unnecessary* tasks before they require your attention and sap your time. The primary goal of this phase is to stop all distractions and interruptions from entering your work stream.

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The Organization Trap

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● **Admission.** Learn how to *admit* legitimate tasks into your schedule in the most efficient manner possible. Once you've stopped unnecessary tasks from sapping your time, you must then set up boundaries to help you prioritize and schedule tasks that still require your attention. Decipher the difference between *necessary* and *productive* tasks and then set up boundaries that will allow you to maximize your time each day for what is most productive.

● **Action.** Begin to carry out the tasks that are either *necessary* or *productive*, based on the boundaries you have set. Learn to increase your overall productivity. Upon completion of the Action Phase, you will have constructed your entire dam.

● **Assessment.** When you get to this phase, you will have a solid system of boundaries — a dam — in place that will provide you at least four hours a day to sell. The Assessment Phase helps you avoid obstacles and teaches you how to remain focused on the tasks that are not only the most productive in your business but also the most productive in your life.

Damming Tasks

The Accumulation Phase and the Admission Phase are the foundation of your dam and represent steps you will take to either eliminate or regulate tasks from entering your river of responsibilities. Placing boundaries in these two phases, before you take action, is the key to organization.

There are five things you can do to construct boundaries that regulate or eliminate the most common unnecessary tasks that clutter your days:

1. Don't give your personal digits to your customers. Personal digits are your personal cell phone number, home phone number and your personal e-mail address. While you want to serve your customers well, if you don't put limits on when they can contact you, then you will never be able to get out of your personal time swamp. Ask yourself this: Would I rather be known as easily accessible or worth waiting for?

2. Don't give your work digits to friends. This may seem radical as well, but it is quite necessary if you intend to gain control of your time. Keep in mind that your friends and family will find a way to reach you during an emergency. The plan here is to avoid all the nonemergency calls and e-mails from friends that make up 99.9 percent of what you're getting.

3. Turn off the e-mail alert and instant message functions on your computer. You shouldn't need to be told this, but many salespeople have one or both of these functions turned on. Your strategy should be to set

a certain time for when you can check and receive your e-mails.

4. Don't answer the phone unless it is someone you are expecting. As a salesperson, you very rarely make money on unexpected phone calls. Unless you're in retail or you're expecting the call, the ringer shouldn't even be on. That sounds antisocial, especially if you work in a bigger office, but unless it's a prospect, you shouldn't be on the phone.

5. Don't check your personal e-mail during work hours. Although most people ignore company rules that prohibit this, it still adds to your personal river of responsibilities. If you can succeed at either not looking at your e-mail while you work or setting up specific times when you can respond to either e-mails or instant messaging, then you will probably be able to save several hours a week.

Work Without Interruptions

There are scores of endless unnecessary tasks that can saturate our days, including surfing the Web, needless meetings, reading the paper, snacking, checking sports scores, etc. You'll be surprised by how much time is freed up by simply constructing boundaries that keep such tasks from ever entering your river of responsibilities — beginning with the five most prevalent. ■

The Yes Trap

Most salespeople say yes too often. As a result they end up starting more work than they can finish, and the tasks they do complete are often riddled with errors or inconsistencies.

We are evolving into a nation of yes-people for whom no task is too much to ask and every task is commenced with "Consider it done." Salespeople are the leaders of this movement.

In sales it is easy to fall into the Yes Trap. If you serve customers you are granting requests. This translates into taking on many tasks in order to gain rapport and close sales. This kind of mind-set forces you to become an "ideal worker" who becomes a hostage to his or her job. It's the kind of world where parents can't make a living and be an effective parent at the same time.

Scaling Back Without Losing Sales

There are only two ways to scale back your busy workload and free up more time: (1) sacrifice sales, or (2) say no more often.

According to one survey, the average American salesperson sells for only 90 minutes a day. Another study reveals that salespeople spend 80 percent of their time doing tasks that simply don't affect their bottom lines.

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The Yes Trap

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More than likely you are spending three-fourths of your time each day on tasks that don't affect your bottom line. A salesperson's inability to spend the majority of his or her time carrying out the most productive, bottom-line tasks is the Yes Trap, and it is rooted in a salesperson's inability to say no.

The Value of Saying No

To best exploit your time, you have to figure out what you're spending most of your time on. There are three categories of tasks that we carry out on any given day: unnecessary tasks, necessary tasks and productive tasks.

- **Unnecessary tasks.** These are activities that prohibit your business from moving forward, and therefore waste your time. These kinds of tasks include e-mailing friends, answering random phone calls, chatting with co-workers, instant messaging, making personal phone calls, Web surfing and playing computer games. These are the tasks you need to stop.

- **Necessary tasks.** These tasks might move your efforts in a positive way, but at a less productive pace than other activities. These activities are a good use of your time, but for strategic direction only. They include goal setting and planning, qualifying prospects, dealing with necessary paperwork, observation and evaluation. These are tasks for which you need to regulate your time investment.

- **Productive tasks.** These activities represent the work that most effectively moves your business in a positive direction and are the best use of your time. They are often actions that reflect the discoveries you have made completing *necessary* tasks. The top two activities in this category are strategic prospecting and selling. No other tasks add more to your bottom line.

Necessary Tasks

The goal with necessary tasks is to spend high-quality time on them but not a high quantity of time. The following are the main tasks in this category and the boundaries we must construct for them:

- **Paperwork:** Paperwork can become a major time killer if there are no boundaries in place. Don't spend more than 30 minutes every other hour on paperwork. Delegate your *necessary* paperwork to an assistant or team member. If you don't have an assistant, a good tactic is to block out at least 30 minutes every other hour for doing paperwork.

- **Planning and Goal Setting.** Spend one or two days planning once a year. If you isolate yourself during your annual planning sessions and are careful to set realistic, value-centered goals, you will not have to spend time amending your plan throughout the year.

- **Surveying Customers.** Don't let this build up.

Design a strategic survey that elicits the information you desire from your customers, and then ask for their feedback before you close the sale so that errors are quickly pinpointed and addressed. One restaurant does this between the time you finish your entree and before dessert and coffee are served. These surveys provide great material for evaluating your progress during your observation and evaluation time.

- **Observing and Evaluating.** Spend one hour on the last workday of every month observing and evaluating your progress against the goals you've recorded in your planning session. Record your observations and necessary improvements and file them each month.

- **Communication.** Most voice mail and e-mail messages can wait. Don't continuously respond to calls and e-mails. Pick two to four specific times a day to answer e-mails or particular phone calls. One salesperson spent 25 hours a week listening to and returning calls and e-mails. After she put in some boundaries, her business boomed by nearly 200 percent because she had more time to be productive. ■

For additional information on a sample feedback survey form, go to: <http://my.summary.com>

The Control Trap

What begins as an ambitious act of taking ownership often ends up as an unexpected burden that weighs us down, a lid that keeps us from rising higher in our endeavors and realizing our potential. It's a frequent mistake in the sales profession because sales professionals are self-starters. But we can take it too far. And when we do, we end up trapped by the very things we try to control.

Letting Go

There are four basic reasons we maintain control even when it hurts our chances for success. They are:

1. **Ego — No one can do it better than me.**
2. **Insecurity — If someone does it better than me, I will look bad.**
3. **Naiveté — I'm fine by myself; I don't need anyone else.**
4. **Temperament — Working with others is too complicated.**

Success in any endeavor is a result of focused time. In order for you to realize your true potential, you have to focus on two tasks the most: building trust with the right prospects and adding value to your existing customers. One is too small a number to achieve greatness

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The Control Trap

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in sales.

There are three steps you need to take in order to delegate essential tasks and grow your business:

- **Answer the 100 percent question.** Your goal should be to spend the entire day, every day you work, on your top two productive tasks.
- **Assume a CEO mind-set.** This means looking at your sales job as if you were the owner of a company and then determining what decisions need to be made to grow and to ensure future stability. A CEO invests time in the fertile ground of productive customer relationships and productive business relationships.

- **Delegate in increments.** Salespeople must accept that they have two choices: work more hours or let sales and customer service slide. Yet there is a third option: Seek help from other people.

Delegation Steps

Here are four delegation steps you should utilize:

1. **Hire yourself.** You've already done this by blocking off four hours to work on your most productive tasks. This can make a tremendous difference, but it is only a start.
2. **Utilize the help your company provides.** You should get your manager involved. Your company might already have the means in place to help you complete your necessary tasks.
3. **Hire a part-time assistant.** Think of this as an investment that could improve your productivity, perhaps even doubling it or tripling it.
4. **Begin building a team.** A salesman named Harry used to hoard all the responsibilities for himself. After attending a seminar, Harry sat down and decided what jobs he could delegate to his staff. Today, Harry's team runs the company. Harry's income has increased by four times ever since he freed himself to concentrate on what's most productive for the company.

Team Building

When you are ready to build a team, keep in mind that a team needs a purpose to keep everyone excited. Just like professional sports teams, work teams also need an opportunity to gel. A team also needs a coach to empower them. Finally, a team needs intimacy, honesty and accountability to unite them.

You have to take the first step to make these approaches work. Don't quit halfway. Rewards will kick in. If you have a dream and don't have a team, your dream will die. But with a team, your dream will fly. ■

For additional information on a 30 percent increase in your income, go to: <http://my.summary.com>

The Technology Trap

The Technology Trap is made up of many things: the computer, the laptop, the Internet, the PDA, the cell phone, e-mail, etc. The many time-saving devices we laud as efficient may be stealing the very thing they were designed to save.

Technology Traps are everywhere, and we fall into them every day. They not only keep us constantly connected to our jobs, making us slaves to others' schedules; they cut deeply into our time. Too often, technology is a hindrance instead of a help.

Regain Control of Technology

Nevertheless, technology can be a good thing — as long as you know how to keep it from impeding your progress. Here are five ways to accomplish this:

1. **Shorten the leash.** If you're a firefighter, a doctor or police officer you probably need a cell phone on you at all times. That's not the case for the salesperson. In fact, it's probably detrimental. Phones and beepers simply cause too many interruptions.
2. **Substitute, don't stockpile.** Don't hoard your old technology. If you have to buy a new piece of equipment, get rid of your old one; don't try to use both. Try to use only what saves you time and discard or give away the rest.
3. **Ask directions.** Don't try to figure out every function on your cell phone or PDA on your own. That can waste hours. Ask someone for help so you can figure out what you need right away and get started. We make the assumption that technology can save us time, but the truth is that technology can only save us time if we know how to use it.
4. **Test your tools' efficiency.** Four years ago, the author bought the nicest laptop he could find. Three months later, he discovered he wasn't using half of what the laptop offered and it turned out to be a 10-pound burden he was forced to carry around. After awhile, he bought a smaller laptop and gave away the heavy laptop to a friend who used it as his home office machine.

Evaluate the efficiency of your technological tools. Be honest about what you discover. Don't keep something that just looks good but that gives you all kinds of trouble or has many useless functions. It's wasting your time. Research and test out the tool you feel will give you the biggest boost in time. Don't rule out the old-fashioned way. Technology is not always more efficient than you.

5. **Go backward to go forward.** Sometimes technology isn't better. It's just prettier. If you can accomplish something more efficiently without a tool, don't get a gadget because everyone else has one. If you can use a pencil and paper to do something, do it. It will save you time and money. ■

The Quota Trap

Most salespeople trade their time far too cheaply. This is primarily the result of one thing: the quota.

Years ago, the traveling salesman was a respected individual. Quotas were used more as goals than requirements, but they weren't necessary. Steady competition, personal dignity and family responsibility set the standards that inspired traveling salesmen to trade their time well and succeed.

Nowadays, with competition, greed and the fear of job loss, quotas can be used like whips on our backs, driving us to produce a certain quantity of sales but fooling us into ignoring the quality of our time. As a result, selling standards hit the dirt. In fact, the pressure of quotas can force salespeople to act dishonestly. One recent survey revealed that 47 percent of sales managers suspect their salespeople lie during sales transactions. High quotas can actually force salespeople to serve their customers less instead of more.

The Quota Quandary

Since quotas tempt salespeople toward speedy (and even seedy) selling tactics, they often make salespeople counterproductive over the long run. For example:

- Quotas may speed your pace, but they decrease your focus.
- Quotas may increase your action, but they decrease your assessment.
- Quotas may increase your exposure, but they decrease your effectiveness.
- Quotas may increase your short-term turnover, but they decrease your long-term trust.
- Quotas may increase your short-term production, but they decrease your long-term profitability.

Quotas fool you into thinking that *quantity* of sales is the most important factor in success. Your true value as a salesperson isn't in the number of small sales that you stack up, but the investment you receive from your time. Some sales managers hire reps who are less money-driven and more relationship oriented.

Your goal as a salesperson, once you've eliminated the time wasters and the extraneous technology, is to use your newfound time as efficiently as you possibly can. Ideally, you should trade your time for only high-value customers. If you work the most with these customers, then you will get the most out of your efforts.

Trading Time for Top Customers

There are four general categories that describe all customers that apply to all industries. To begin trading your time for the highest return, you must understand who the best customers are — because not everyone is worth your time:

1. High-Maintenance/Low-Profit. These are the nightmare customers. You end up spending too much time on them and they usually don't buy very much, or they lower your profit to pennies. It is in your best interest to avoid trading your time with such customers. Don't waste your time: It's more valuable than that.

2. High-Maintenance/High-Profit. Customers fitting this description can produce a lot of business, but they are very difficult to serve. These customers expect more than you can give them and they don't relent until they get what they want. Avoid this kind of customer. Instead, invest time in the next two types of customers.

3. Low-Maintenance/Low-Profit. These customers probably won't produce great profits, but they are likely to produce greater profits over time as your relationship grows. They are easier to serve because they're more professional. This makes them a wise investment. The goal with these customers is to move them over time into the final category.

4. Low-Maintenance/High-Profit. Invest the majority of your time with these customers. They will trade you the most business for the smallest investment of your time. You will have to groom these kinds of customers, but once you have their business, your goal is to hold onto them for life. That's where your time trade-off becomes a highly lucrative deal.

Getting the Full Value for Your Time

Once you understand who is worth your time and then begin to pursue only those types of customers, there are four strategies you need to maintain in order to maximize the value of your prospecting time:

1. Prequalify prospects before you pursue them.

You need to determine whether the people you call on are fit for an investment of your time before you call on them. To begin a list of qualified prospects, ask the question, *whom do I know who knows who I need to know?* Remember that current customers and friends are often the best resource for new prospects.

2. Never call on a prospect unexpectedly. You're not going to be able to sell to anyone who doesn't expect your call or who isn't excited to talk to you. Try these three approaches to warm up prospects before calling on them: Send a value-added letter that evokes a sense of curiosity and makes you memorable, have a common friend or a colleague introduce you over the phone or in person, or have a common friend or colleague arrange a meeting.

3. Cut ties with time-consuming customers. This includes high-maintenance customers. Cut ties professionally and with integrity. You can even write them a business version of a Dear John letter. It is not easy to terminate an unproductive sales relationship, but if

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The Quota Trap

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you're serious about maximizing your time then you need to free up your time for your best customers. Fewer deep relationships are more valuable and less time-consuming than many shallow ones.

4. Transition relationships into partnerships. The greatest time you can trade is not in constantly seeking new business but in deepening your current customer relationships. Do this by figuring out who your best customers are. Then divide your time among your most valuable customers. Set up an annual contact plan for the customers you determine to be the most valuable.

The values of these actions are threefold:

- You will have fewer customers but more income.
- You will be more productive in less time.
- Quotas will never scare you. ■

For additional information on a sample script for cutting customer ties, go to: <http://my.summary.com>

The Failure Trap

Those who are brave enough to face their failures understand that to be successful, you have to risk failure. The risk taker pursues dreams, aspires for greater success, is courageous, thinks about succeeding, is a pioneer, is resilient and is tenacious. The risk maker pacifies dreams, aspires for greater security, is cautious, thinks about not failing, is a plodder, is resistant and is timid.

The risk taker risks because he or she understands it is the only way to create greater productivity. The risk maker makes risks by avoiding failure and this remains unproductive and increases the likelihood of regret.

Three Risks Worth Taking

With the right perspective, you won't ever go back to the unproductive salesperson you were. Here are the top three risks worth taking in your sales career:

1. Develop an impossible vision. If you want more time to sell — and live — than you've ever had before, you must stick your neck out. You must dare to have an impossible vision for your business that includes these three parameters: You can't accomplish it alone, it breeds excitement and fear simultaneously, and it requires risk. Take a chance and really dream here.

2. Become accountable to others. This is the best way to maximize your potential. Use your personal leverage, associate leverage and professional leverage to stretch your potential.

3. Set exceedingly high standards so that failing to meet them will not have major consequences. It takes guts. You'll need to stick to your guns in some poten-

Reclaiming Your Heart and Time

"The heart," said Blaise Pascal, "has reasons which reason cannot understand." So don't be surprised if there are moments when what your heart is saying doesn't seem attainable or even practical. The battle between head and heart is lifelong. But you must learn to trust that it's the heart, as Thomas Carlyle said, "that sees before the head can see." It is only your heart, in other words, that holds the answers to the life you truly desire. It is your heart that reveals what makes time matter to you. It is your heart that shows you the way to true time freedom.

tially difficult situations. This particular risk isn't just about having high integrity; it's about leaving your office every day when you tell your family you will. It's about paying attention to your health despite the work you need to get done. It's about maintaining one face to every customer. It's about saying no when you must — even when saying yes is more lucrative. ■

The Party Trap

To truly understand failure, we must have a deeper understanding of what constitutes success. Success should appreciate the value of your time; it should give you more time to spend on the things in your life that you value outside your job. However, if you're caught in the Party Trap like so many professionals, success will actually depreciate the value of your time. Unchanged, this pattern will eventually take back the time it once freed up. Over the long term, the Party Trap will kill you.

Don't use your success just to buy more things. If you decisively invest the time your success creates in the things you value most, sales achievement will truly breed life satisfaction. The five most important investments of your free time should be your health (stop smoking and drink moderately), financial fitness (spend less than you make), relationships (find and be a mentor), knowledge (read and travel more, and take up new hobbies), and a higher purpose (discover why you are here).

True Freedom

Remember: You work to live and don't live to work. The point of getting more benefit from your work is so you can concentrate on the really important parts of your life. Take an honest inventory of your life. Is there a voice deep inside you telling you that there is something more? If it is, then there is still time to do something about it. This is the time to act. This is the time to live. Realize the power you have to change the course of your own history. Your future is not some faraway place. Your future is the result of how you most frequently spend your time. Spend it wisely today and every day hereafter. This alone will lead to freedom. ■