

Guaranteed Results: No Different Than Weight Loss

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We get bombarded these days with infomercials about guaranteed weight loss. The reality is they are all true – but there is fine print. The fine print is that you have to exhibit the same exact behaviors no matter what program you engage in. You have to exercise and you have to eat well. At its core you have to burn more calories than you take in. If you follow that, you will lose weight. We all have the potential to follow these rules and enjoy the results. The reality is many people who sign up for these programs fail, but the few who do follow the rules get to enjoy the results.

It is no different in sales. There is a path to guaranteed results and there is fine print. If you follow the rules, you will enjoy the results. You have the option to be one of the people who exhibits the behaviors in the fine print and gets the exact result you set out to accomplish. The starting place is the same in sales as it is in weight loss. You have to have a goal in mind of what you are trying to accomplish. Without a very specific goal in mind it becomes difficult for anyone to maintain the energy and focus needed to stick with the program.

In Napoleon Hill’s classic: *“Think and Grow Rich”* he tells the story of Henry Ford and the V8 engine. At multiple points and after much effort on the part of his engineers he was continually told it was “Impossible”. Today, we know the outcome, and as Hill describes in his book,

Ford operated on one of the foundational principles of success:

“Henry Ford was a success because he understood and applied the principles of success. One of these is desire: knowing what one wants.”

Any salesperson who is not very clear on what they want to earn has put reaching their full potential at serious risk. The great majority of the coaching I get involved in has to do with people who have *potential* to be at the top, but have become complacent and forgotten what they are actually capable of accomplishing. Look at the income earned by the top 5-10 people inside your organization. If that is something that you would like to accomplish, all you must do is turn that into a meaningful personal goal and apply the laws of sales to get there. Simply saying: “Sure I would like to make \$150,000”, is not enough. You must also ask additional questions like, “why is that figure meaningful to you?” or “How will it change your life?” Engage in some visualization. Ask yourself: “If I made \$50,000 more next year, how would that change my life?” If you can find meaning in your answer, half the battle has been won. Ask: “What will keep me at my desk to make those next 5 phone calls that in the past I would have blown off and gone home to the TV.” I can’t begin to express how important that step has been in changing the lives of so many sales people I have coached or helped other managers to coach. Don’t allow yourself to get complacent; if you do you are making a conscious choice to limit your earning potential.

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There are four basic components that affect your personal income equation. The first is the sales environment, the second your effectiveness, then your sales contact numbers and lastly your compensation plan.

Those who maximize their earnings are executing two principles of success: “knowing what they want” and “exhibiting the daily behaviors proven to get them there.”

Four Components That Affect Personal Income

People who lose weight typically have very specific goals they are trying to accomplish. Salespeople who maximize their earning potential usually have very specific goals they have set out to accomplish.

The beauty of our profession is that there are objective laws at work that put our earning potential completely within our control. Read that again, *your earning potential is directly within your control.* If you want to make \$175,000 - you can, execute against the laws. If you want to make \$200,000 - you can, execute against the laws. It begins with knowing exactly how much money you want to make and Why that number is important to you. The next step involves figuring out how that income can be controlled.

There are four basic components that affect your personal income equation. The first is the sales environment, the second your effectiveness, then your sales contact numbers and lastly your compensation plan. The goal is to find out what activity I have control over and how much will that activity pay me every time I do it. This will require some reflection on your past results. If you take two full quarters of sales results and divide it by your contacts you now know how much each contact pays you personally based on your own compensation plan (something I call VPC - Value Per Contact). Let me talk for a minute about the importance of using two full quarters of data.

The first reason for using two full quarters of data is that you will account for changes in your sales environment. A good example of this is financial services. As the market came down in 2008 and early 2009

what would you think happened to VPC in general? It went down of course! The sales environment got more difficult, so if you wanted to keep your income consistent you were going to have to make more sales calls, it was that simple. Having said that, many financial service reps complained they made less money in 2009. That was a conscious decision because they ignored a basic law: As VPC goes down, contacts have to go up.

A second reason to use two full quarters of data is that you will capture increases in the effectiveness of your sales technique. If you are more effective in your contacts you can make less calls and keep your income consistent or you can keep your contacts the same and make more money. Either way, the point is that *you have control* and the decision is a deliberate one to completely control your income. In most sales positions you decide how much you are going to make. If you don't reach your goal, you made a choice not to do the things needed to hit that goal. Ultimately, you were in control if you leveraged the science of this profession.

There are times when reps tell me that this VPC thing does not work. That's not possible, if you are putting good data in (factoring in the environment and your individual effectiveness) it's nothing more than a scientific equation. You have to use good data in order for the system to work for you. But if you do, then your income is completely within your control and that is no different than weight loss.

The point is to get clear on what you want to make, why it's important to you and then leverage the greatest asset of this profession, science. Everyone in sales has signed up for the “program”. Those who maximize their earnings are executing **two principles of success: “knowing what they want” and “exhibiting the daily behaviors proven to get them there.”**