

## **Time for Sales!**

### **Time Management: The Accordion Effect<sup>1</sup>**

By Suzi Pomerantz

*"We have far more control over our energy than we ordinarily realize. The number of hours in a day is fixed, but the quantity and quality of energy available to us is not. It is our most precious resource. The more we take responsibility for the energy we bring to the world, the more empowered and productive we become."<sup>1</sup> -- Loehr and Schwartz*

The biggest complaint I hear from coaches, consultants, and self-employed professionals is that you simply don't have time to add sales or networking or marketing activities into your busy life. You know you should, but you are overwhelmed as it is. It's like exercise. You know you should do it, but for some reason that extra hour of sleep seems more important, or you just don't see how you could possibly fit one more thing into your already packed day.

Before we get into the subject of time and how to manage it, I have to tell you about a dynamic law called The Accordion Effect. The Accordion Effect applies to money as well as time, and both are important to any discussion of sales. The bellows of an accordion expand and contract in order to push the air through to make music. Time and money work the same way. Both expand and contract, come and go. Just as we know with certainty that the ocean tide will go out and it will come back in, both money and time follow the same energetic laws. They ebb and flow. Knowing this will give us access to a sense of continuity or even security.

If we apply this dynamic law to money, it means that money comes and money goes, and the good news is that it will always do this. Why is this good news? Because when applied to sales, it means that you can trust that money will always, eventually, come to you -- and this concept allows you to give up the desperation and fear and attachment to "making the sale" or to seal the deal. It gives you the freedom to approach sales as a game. Like chess, once you know each piece and how it moves, you can begin to learn various strategies for success in the game.

With sales, once you know the ten steps and the mindsets that support them, you can customize the game so that you will use your knowledge of how the numbers work to freeing yourself up to play. With money, once you know the dynamic laws of how it operates, you can let go of the belief systems that keep you stuck in a scarcity mentality. Likewise, with time, if you know that time can

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<sup>1</sup> The Power of Full Engagement, by Jim Loehr and Tony Schwartz. The Free Press, New York. 2003. p.5.

expand and contract like the accordion, then you can free yourself from the restraints of not having time to take the ten steps for business development delineated in my book (among other things). You have already had personal experiences of time expanding and contracting. For example, have you ever been waiting for something you eagerly want and felt that one hour seemed like an eternity? Similarly, when having fun or focused on something intently, you can find yourself in a zone where time (that same one hour) will seem like just a few minutes. Yet we can all agree that one hour is always sixty minutes and each minute is always sixty seconds, and that remains constant.

The application of this Accordion Effect is that it gives you some access to control or freedom, whichever motivates you. If time expands and contracts, that means you have the ability to cause it to do so, because the expansion and contraction of time exists primarily in your perception of it. You can control your perception, particularly in a busy, fast-paced world, by not giving in to the temptation of thinking you don't have time. You can impact your very real sense of not having time. You can practice intentionally causing time to expand. Try it next time you find yourself saying "I'm too busy" or "I don't have time for that". If you have a commitment to any particular goal or result, you can overcome your timelessness by creating time. In other words, one way to manufacture time for yourself is to practice the mental shifts described above, to reframe time for yourself not as an immutable constant in life, but as something that can move and breathe, expand and contract, and be manipulated to create space for the music of life. When you experience time as compressed, breathe air into it by slowing down, practicing yoga or meditation, taking a walk, recharging your soul in whatever way you choose, and then returning to the tasks at hand.

It seems counterintuitive, but the act of taking your time when you seem to have none is exactly what allows time to expand. "Time management is not an end in itself," say Jim Loehr and Tony Schwartz. "Rather it serves the higher goal of effective energy management. Because we have a limited number of hours in a day, we must not only make intelligent choices about how to use them but must also insure that we have the energy available to invest in our highest priorities. Too often, we devote our time to activities that don't advance our mission, depleting our energy reserves in the process."<sup>2</sup>

Understanding The Accordion Effect frees you from all sorts of limitations, ultimately providing the doorway to accessing power. The ability to focus on following recommended practices, step by step, while letting go of the results, letting go of expectations, letting go of judgments and assessments of yourself and your performance, and letting go of the outcomes, while at the same time

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<sup>2</sup> The Power of Full Engagement, by Jim Loehr and Tony Schwartz. The Free Press, New York, 2003. p. 106.

having a clear focus on what is beyond the desired outcomes – this is the formula to get what you want in sales, and in life. It is never just about the money. There is a purpose behind what you want money for. Holding a clear vision of what you want as the ultimate end result of what money can provide for you...that is the goal to strive for unflappably. There is an opposing push and pull, just like in the accordion, that will help you to achieve your goals. Focus on doing the practices, without attachment to any particular result, trusting that the process works, and relaxing into the game will guarantee a different operational space for you...one that is absent of fear and anxiety...one that is playful and productive. Part of grounding your mindset in abundance involves expanding your inner capacity to accept and attract what you want. There are numerous practices in every spiritual and religious doctrine in the world that you can employ to open to joy and tap into trust. Figure out what practices will give you access to that place of effortless flow, and then go apply your ten steps in the sales process.

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#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Suzi Pomerantz, MT., MCC. is an award-winning master executive coach, facilitator, and author with over 15 years of experience working with leaders and teams in over 125 organizations internationally, including seven companies on the Fortune 100 list. Suzi authored 20 publications about coaching, ethics, and business development, including her book *Seal the Deal: The Essential Mindsets for Growing Your Professional Services Business* (HRD Press, 2006). ([www.sealthedealbook.com](http://www.sealthedealbook.com)). Suzi is the CEO of Innovative Leadership International LLC ([www.innovativeleader.com](http://www.innovativeleader.com)), Vice President of the Board of Directors of the International Consortium for Coaching in Organizations and a founding member of the Editorial Board of the International Journal of Coaching in Organizations. Suzi's strength lies in helping leaders and organizations find clarity within chaos.