



## What is a win for you



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When it seemed like maybe a sale wasn't going to happen, but you decided to stick it out. Those small steps are the true wins.

When you're in sales, especially sales with a longer cycle, it's easy to get discouraged. There are days where you might think you've accomplished nothing, because you didn't get the "win" of closing on a deal. It's understandable. Closing a deal gets you paid; and, if you're like most salespeople there's a rush of excitement that comes with the closing.

It is, however, a mistake to rely on the rush of a closing as your only win. Think of sales like a marathon. The closing is the moment you cross the finish line. It feels great, but those last

few steps are not what made the race. Sure, steps 50-245 may not be as glamorous as those last few over the line. You may have had a rush of excitement at the end that carried you across the line, but what really counted was back on step 500 where you felt like quitting. When it seemed like maybe a sale wasn't going to happen, but you decided to stick it out. Those small steps are the true wins.

Your true wins are easier to control than closings. They may not be as glamorous on the surface, but they definitely count. In fact, they count even more, because without them you'll never have a chance to win. Crossing the finish line/closing the sale is always the end result, but to get there more often you need to truly understand what a win is in your sales process. Your "win" is unique as it should be based on personal goals, your skill set, and your sales process, but it's easy to discover. True wins include being able to answer:

- How many people does it take to find one lead?
- How many leads does it take to get an appointment?
- How many appointments does it take to close a sale?

If you focus on these smaller, but easier to influence wins, two things will happen:

1. **Your days will get easier and more enjoyable.** There will still be days you feel discouraged and frustrated, but taking a few more steps is a lot easier if you believe in the process. If you rely on a closing for a "win" you're often setting yourself up to feel like a failure. And the worst part is the failure isn't even real. Many sales processes have a long cycle. You won't get a closing every day, but you can "win" every day if you follow

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your sales process.

2. **You'll see results.** Your closings won't be as sporadic or random. You'll be able to control the peaks and valleys. When you're laser focused on closings it's easy to push off the activities that truly make a difference. It's easier to stop making calls. To take time off. To stop getting the true wins. If you're always watching and focusing on the small wins your pipeline will remain robust and you'll begin to wonder why people think sales is so difficult, because selling doesn't feel so hard when you're counting the true wins.

It's important to realize that not every day is the exact same when it comes to winning. Just like in a race, pace is vital. A successful salesperson understands that they are in control of their wins. It's up to you to create a balance that works best for you. That balance doesn't have to be the same day in and out. That balance comes from knowing what a "win" is each and every day. You achieve this through "**intentional imbalance.**"

## Putting Intentional Imbalance into Action



Previously, we discussed that a successful salesperson knows what a win looks like each and every day. They know what activities they need to have throughout a month, a week, and every single day in order to hit their personal goals. They don't leave closings up to chance. And they know that not every day will be the same.

In an ideal world maybe you can achieve balance, where every day is mapped out with X hours of prospecting calls, X hours of sales meetings, etc. In many ways though, balance is a myth. You always have to adjust to things that you can't control such as conferences, when clients are available to meet, trainings, networking events, and even personal time off. This constant adjustment leads to a freedom and flexibility of scheduling that often comes with having a sales position. Many even enjoy the freedom and flexibility of their schedule, but when that flexibility is not properly managed it is a curse that causes you to get behind in wins. Managing your schedule can be done with "intentional imbalance."

For instance, if you know that tomorrow you have a mandatory training meeting that will take up your morning and two client meetings in the afternoon, you have to change the pace of your

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week and days. Taking a whole morning for training means you probably won't have the same amount of activity tomorrow. And that's okay, IF you have a plan for it. The worst thing you can do as a salesperson is get behind in "wins" without a plan for catching up. The best thing that you can do is plan for imbalance. It's okay for your day to be imbalanced, if your week is balanced to reach your personal wins. In this case, if your training morning was on Monday and you know that you won't reach your wins for Monday, you will increase the amount of time you dedicate to wins Tuesday-Friday. This way you have your wins for the week. And if you're going to have an imbalanced week then by all means balance it out within the month.

Intentional Imbalance doesn't happen by accident. It happens by planning your time. It's not glamorous. It may not sound fun, but it should be a fundamental part of your position. Not many people LIKE to talk about time management. It's a topic that's been beaten to death, but only because it is foundational to success.

**How you spend your time is a direct indicator of how successful you will be.** It's easy to be busy; it's more difficult to ensure that you are investing your time in what truly matters, the wins. Yet it remains a topic that many like to avoid, which is why we want to keep this simple. A simple approach for time management is:

- Schedule a recurring planning time each week. The day of the week doesn't matter, because you'll be looking a few weeks ahead each week. What does matter is that it becomes a recurring event on your schedule. It has to become a habit; it has to be intentional.
- Plan for and only use 20-30 minutes at the most. Don't make this into a long drawn out ordeal.
- Focus on what a "win" looks like for that time period
- The window of time you'll be planning depends on your sales cycle, but 4 weeks is a good starting point.
- Use the following agenda for your planning.

### Your Agenda for Planning Intentional Imbalance

- Pull up a rolling 4 week view of your calendar. Make note of anything that would throw off your wins:
  - Conferences, Vacations, Holidays, Training, etc.
- Plan out your wins for the month by working backwards. Know:
  - Your personal goal (number of closings)

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- How many appointments you need to reach those closings
- How many leads you need to talk to in order to set that many appointments
- How many people you need on your list to get that many leads
- Look at each week and start to plan your path.
  - Is there a week that will be limited due to other activities?
    - If so, does your sales activity need to increase before or after?
  - For closings, appointments, leads, and people to contact
    - What do you already have in the pipeline or scheduled?
    - Where are the gaps? - these are the wins you need to plan out

Before we take a look at planning your schedule, let's address one of the biggest myths and reasons salespeople start to get jumpy when it comes to scheduling.

### **The myth is, "I can't control..."**

- When leads will say yes
- When clients want to meet
- When people will get back to me
- When....

There is a lot of truth to this. It's why the words, "Intentional Imbalance" becomes vital to your mentality as a sales person. There are a lot of elements that you can't control, but you are always in control of your activity (wins). When we discuss scheduling, we're not asking you to set something in stone. Things can and most definitely will come up throughout the week or even during the day that will disrupt the schedule, join us next week to see how to manage intentional imbalance in your calendar.

### **Color Coding Your Wins**



Instead, the way of thinking has to change to...

We've been discussing creating sales "wins" through activity and intentional imbalance. For every sales person it's important to know what your wins are and understand the intentional imbalance your schedule needs to have to meet those wins. Yet, we know that for many sales people scheduling their time to create true wins is difficult.

The number one disruption to a sales person's time management

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seems to be face-to-face activity. If a client or lead calls and asks for your time, you're probably going to make it happen. It's not surprising as most sales people enjoy the human interaction side of their job. It's what you excel at, it's fun, and it leads to you getting paid. Saying "yes" to a face-to-face appointment clearly isn't negative, but that doesn't mean it can't have negative side effects. Especially if you think about the small "wins." If you say yes, it means whatever you planned to do won't get done. Again, the easy out is to rationalize this and think, "Yes, but I'm making a sale."

We have two words: Peaks and Valleys. If you keep disregarding your time, you'll end up with few closings, an empty pipeline, and an uphill battle to finish the race and hit your goal.

The good news is, we're not fans of "either/or" thinking. We are fans of "**and**" thinking. It's not: "I have to either meet with this client" OR "spend time prospecting."

**Instead, the way of thinking has to change to:**

"I have to meet with this client AND I need to accomplish my win today by prospecting."

There is a simple way of managing your schedule so that your plan doesn't go to waste, and you're also free to be flexible to meet the demands of your clients and leads. This happens by making a small adjustment in how you see and monitor your time. It's not about hours or closings. Productivity is a must, but we can all be busy without creating a win. Instead, you must make a switch to monitor your time in relationship to what your win needs to be that day.

Every day there are certain activities that are set in stone such as: face-to-face meetings, personal meetings, and internal meetings. There are other vital activities which may never be set in stone, such as: prospecting, networking, and even follow up. It doesn't always matter when these get done and there is flexibility in scheduling the activities, but they must get done. The problem becomes, many of these items that are flexible are the exact activities that will create your true wins. If they don't get done, you won't reach your wins or goals. They are the activities that are easy to push off to tomorrow, to next week, to "when you have time," and thus you start to get behind on your wins.

The small adjustment most salespeople can make to improve their results, is to understand what they need to reschedule. This allows you to switch from "either/or" thinking to "and" thinking. We suggest a simple color coding on your calendar to help keep your wins a part of your calendar.



- **In red**, you might schedule any meetings or activities that you absolutely can't reschedule unless it's an emergency (a true emergency where calling 911 is involved). Or things you must attend, but don't have control to reschedule: conferences, training, and even networking events.
- **In blue**, you schedule the small wins. The activities that you have to complete to achieve a win (prospect calls, number of contacts, etc.). The rule with anything scheduled in blue is simple; it can be moved within the week, but it can't just get skipped or cancelled unless you've hit your win for the week.
- **In pink**, you schedule anything that can be skipped, cancelled, or scheduled over. It's VITAL that these cannot be any activities that are considered a "win." The trick here is to know what is truly pink. Some items such as follow up might be a "pink" this week, but "blue" next week as they can no longer be pushed off.

The rules to this time management system are also simple, but HAVE to be upheld in order to get results. They are as follows:

1. Color coding is always followed and whatever goes on your calendar has a color.
2. You must understand what a "win" is each day. And know how to tell if a week is a "win."
3. Pre-planning is a must. If you're planning this by ear you'll get to Friday and be disappointed that you're too far behind to catch up and a whole week will be gone without reaching your wins.
4. Make a commitment to yourself.
  - You will not go home until the wins are reached.
  - You will work Saturday if you miss your weekly goal.
  - You will take Friday afternoon off if you meet your wins by Friday morning.

Color coding your wins when you plan your week makes it easier for you to practice intentional imbalance. If a prospect requests a meeting and you agree on a time that already has a blue activity on it, you know what to do. Schedule the meeting and move the blue activity somewhere else in your calendar. It's important to not just cancel the blue activity, but intentionally move it to another time in your calendar (unless you have accomplished your wins).

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With this mindset, it becomes much easier to react in a way that is beneficial to your wins.

Just remember, with intentional imbalance and color coding, your focus is always on creating wins. It's not about being stuck or limited. Instead, it's about freeing you up to get the best possible results with the least amount of work.

## **Making the Switch**

**Quote:** "Plans are nothing; planning is everything." - Dwight D. Eisenhower

**Our thoughts:** Intentional imbalance is always about your wins. It's about knowing what they are so when you reach them you can turn your attention to the next win. It sounds a bit odd, but the real reason you plan your schedule is so that you can react to the elements that are outside of your control and still be in control. Yes, sometimes you have to completely rearrange the schedule that you've planned and in a moment's notice. This is where most people struggle. They go for the big "wins" or they take more time off than they can afford and those wins fall to the side. That's how sales people get behind. It's where the discouragement and disappointment sets into their mindset. By not having a plan, they make it that much harder to actually achieve their wins.

Your challenge is to make a small switch in how you think about your sales activities. It's the wins. It's an intentional imbalance. It's using color coding to easily move your plan around. It's deciding that you're going to do something different to reach the results that you need. And it should start today.

**Question:** What's stopping you from achieving a win, every day?