

## Only Time Will 'Sell'

*REALTORS® who learn to maximize their time are more productive and more successful.*

By Bob Corcoran

*"I wasted time, and now doth time waste me."*

—William Shakespeare

**T**wo thousand three-hundred hours. If you're a typical REALTOR®, that's how many hours you'll work this year, according to the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®. That's a lot of time for agents to get sidetracked and end up on a journey down an unproductive, frustrating and rocky road.

Has it happened to you? It happens to us all. But knowing — and embracing — dollar-productive activities can keep you on the smooth, freshly paved freeway to more profits, more efficiency and more fulfillment in your real estate career.

First, you should know that there are only four tasks that will actually make a REALTOR® money: listing, prospecting, selling and negotiating.

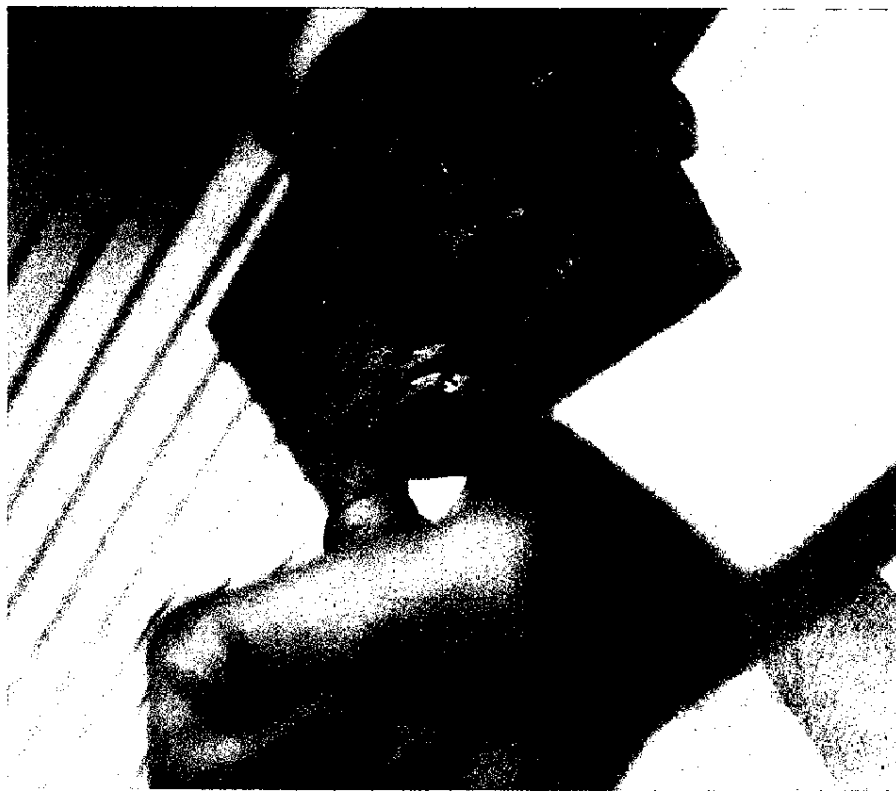
When you became a REALTOR®, these are the activities you signed up for. The rest can result in time spinning down the toilet.

How many of your 2,300 hours are you flushing? Has that flushing sound become commonplace in your day-to-day work? Putting up signs — *Flush!* Making copies — *Flush!* Setting up meetings — *Flush!*

These are precious minutes — time that could be spent fattening your bank account and doing what you do best as a professional. So how can you stay focused on the four tasks that make the most productive use of the time you have? Here are three easy ways:

### 1. Inventory Your Time

First, you have to know where the problem is before you can fix it. Make an inventory of your time, and be sure to write out everything you're doing now to find the source of those flushing sounds.



When I first started working with one of my clients, Char MacCallum, CRS, of Char MacCallum Real Estate Team in Olathe, Kan., we broke down all her activities and assigned a dollar figure to each one.

Then, since it was more profitable to hire someone to check listings or put up signs, we hired an assistant to complete these tasks at a pay rate much lower than MacCallum's.

### 2. Build a Team

As you can gather from what MacCallum did, a strong team can be fundamental. If nothing else, hiring just one assistant is often one of the best moves an agent can make. Unfortunately, and much to their detriment, many REALTORS® try to do it all by themselves.

One of the top producers in the country says he used to try to do it all.

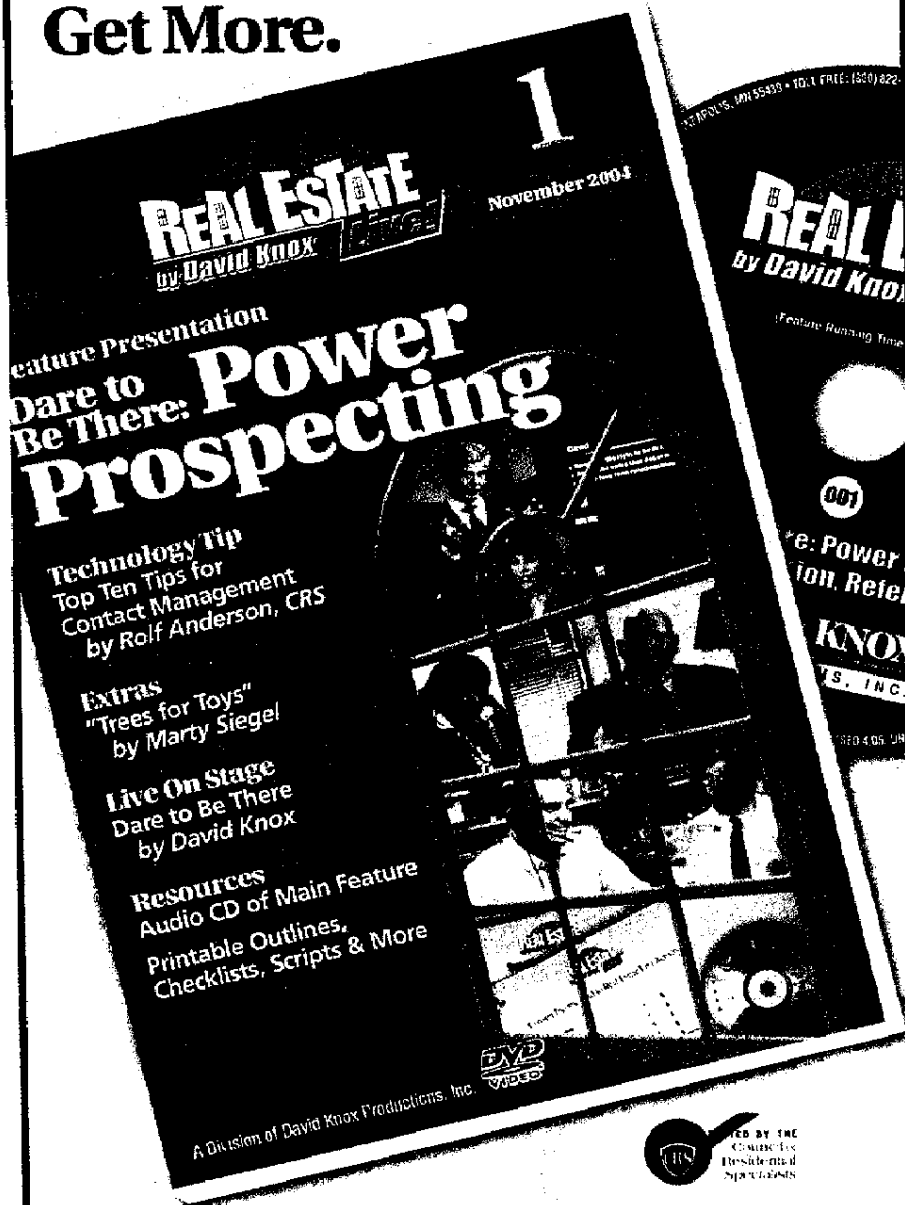
Zac Pasmanick, CRS, of RE/MAX Greater Atlanta, quips that he was "the CEO, CFO, GM, VP, chief brand creator, global marketing director, dynamic Web developer, internal quality inspector, logistics coordinator, rainmaker, accountant, chief cook and dish washer."

We worked together to designate areas of responsibility, establish a chain of command, clarify his role as the CEO, and hire a first-rate team. Now Pasmanick meets weekly with his team to review what he needs to know — numbers, reports, completed projects and the like.

"Sometimes I fall back into micro-managing, but now I have a management team that tells me, 'That's not your job,'" Pasmanick says.

His recommendation to agents: "Adopt a positive, proactive mind-set. Don't wallow in problems; focus on solutions." That's sound advice.

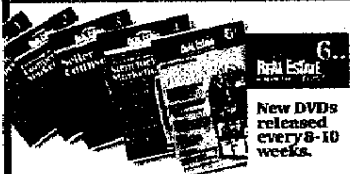
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### 3. Have a Plan

If you don't have a plan, you're begging to be swept away in the frenzied current of minutia and chaos. A plan helps you take charge as a proactive REALTOR®, not a reactive one.

The number one time waster comes in the form of this reactive-laden question, which agents utter all too often: "When would you like to meet?"

REALTORS® need to learn how to run their businesses like a doctor's office, with appointments that fit their schedule. You can accomplish this easily by setting up specific times in your weekly plan when you can meet your clients. Agents need to learn how to say, "I can meet at these times."

MacCallium says she used to find herself reacting to the day instead of planning for the day. "I'd get stuck in reactive mode, dealing with paper jams and phone calls instead of working a plan that would increase my profitability," she says.

So we developed a plan that spelled out systems and tools that helped her gain control of not only her time but also her team's time. She implemented systems with detailed checklists that covered everything that happened in her business — from how the phone would be answered to how Internet-based leads should be handled. Now her business is on autopilot and she's in control.

Twenty-three hundred hours. Can you imagine how much more successful you could be if you spent each and every one of those hours doing what you, as a professional, do best — list, prospect, sell and negotiate? The possibility is right there inside you. And the time is now. ■

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