

How to Master Stress in Sales

Being measured on a daily basis and accountable for every client interaction can create stress. As salespeople we are responsible for generating the revenue that keeps the company financially viable. One of my past employers took this so seriously plaques were on most walls of the office with the statement *'The Company Exists Because of its Salesmen.* Yes, it is politically incorrect but it was some time ago.

Stress is created through our response to a given situation. For example the pressure of having to achieve a high sales figure within a short period of time. The side effects of stress can be physical, mental or emotional and not limited to: heart palpitations, overeating, excessive alcohol consumption, sleepless nights and mood swings. Stress can ultimately lead to burnout and if left unaddressed failure in your sales career.

Stress in itself isn't all bad though it's a common perception. In fact if it wasn't for a certain amount of stress you would not get out of bed in the morning.

There are two types of stress. One won't harm you the other in time certainly will.

Negative Stress

This is what most people talk about when referring to stress. Generally it's doing the things you don't want to do but need to. For example you have to contact an angry client who is threatening to close their account. Being in a state of constant *'fight or flight'* will impact on every aspect of your health and relationships.

Positive Stress

This is created when there is a sense of excitement at an impending event or outcome. It could be after many months of work you land a new account that your colleagues said you never would. The intense excitement is created by your natural internal happy drug your endorphins.

How to Take Negative Stress Head on

1. Notice your thoughts and the situations that ignite negative stress? Once you know who your enemy is you can do something about it.

2. You cannot control other people's behaviour and you may have limited control over the sales environment but do you have 100% control over your thoughts and actions. If your ego is creating additional obstacles change it. For example "*I have never done this before so I don't like my chances of success*" to "*I have prepared the information and the facts I need and can refer to it as and when necessary*".

3. Visualise thinking in water tight compartments. This means don't let the volume of activities and tight time lines overwhelm you. Divide activities into bite size pieces and focus on one at a time. It will significantly reduce your level of stress.

4. Exercise regularly. You don't have to be a gym to keep fit. If you have a dog take it for a walk early in the morning or late evening? Do some sit ups or push ups before you get dressed in the morning. As you become fitter you will not only feel good about yourself but it will also have a positive impact on your capacity to think clearer.

5. Eat the right foods most of the time. This means protein such as fish or chicken, fresh fruit and vegetables. Make sure you drink water throughout the day to keep well hydrated. Limit coffee to two a day and give yourself at least 2 days per week alcohol free.

6. Take time out to relax. This could be time with family and friends, read a book or meditate. Find what works for you to rejuvenate your spirit, mind and body.

7. Surround yourself with positive people and avoid the negative ones. The latter are the half empty glass types. They tend to interject conversations with a "*yes but...*" followed by a negative comment.

Turning stress in sales to your advantage isn't always going to be easy but try one or two actions as outlined and build from there. it will be worth it.

If you would like to discuss this topic or any other relating to sales or sales management then contact Kurt Newman direct on +61 412 252 236 or email on kurt@salesconsultants.com.au.



Kurt Newman is a recognised sales expert, successful author and respected coach and mentor who has guided many well-known companies to improved profitability and countless sales professionals to greater success. Following an outstanding, award-winning and record-making career in sales that spanned three decades and covered all major market segments, Kurt is now focussed on passing his expertise on to others through his work with Sales Consultants and community-based initiatives.