

Managing the Stress of Sales

Here are 27 things you can do that can help you manage and reduce the stress associated with selling.

1. **Exercise.** Hands down, this is one of the most effective ways to reduce and manage stress. From a 30 minute walk to a full-blown workout at the gym, exercise helps your body release the tension and stress that builds up during the day.
2. **Eat properly.** Proper diet can play a major factor in helping you manage stress. Avoid fatty, greasy foods and eat your daily 'quota' of fruits and vegetables. It may sound unappealing but combined with proper exercise this will significantly reduce your stress levels.
3. **Read motivational material.** You can read autobiographies, success literature, self-development books, blogs and other materials that inspire you. Like this blog!
4. **Read fiction.** Although fiction will not cure your problems, it can give you a break and get your mind off work issues.
5. **Drink lots of water (2 liters/day).** Water does the body good and helps flush out the toxins caused by stress. Keep a water bottle close by at all times and drink from it regularly throughout the day. You will be surprised how more energy this simple strategy will give you.
6. **Listen to motivational audio programs.** I used to drive 50K every year and the back seat of my car was always stacked with motivational and inspiration tapes. Download your favourite podcasts and get a boost of motivation in between appointments and when you're exercising.
7. **Network with positive people.** Energy is contagious so associate and network regularly (at least once a week) with people who have a positive mental attitude.
8. **Engage in at least one or two hobbies.** Hobbies are a great way to de-stress and forget about work for a while. Hobbies are also pleasurable past times (or at least they should be!) which means you invest time doing something enjoyable.
9. **Allow ample travel time.** Traffic in most urban centers is congested and slow-moving. Avoid the stress of traffic delays and allow ample time to get from one appointment to the next. This also includes air travel.
10. **Improve or develop your skills and abilities.** This can help you improve your results, which in turn, can reduce your stress.
11. **Laugh.** As Reader's Digest says, "Laughter is the best medicine." Adults only laugh a fraction of the times that children do; take a lesson from kids and look for things that make you chuckle or laugh.
12. **Avoid water cooler talk.** Complaining about the economy, the company, the competition, etc., is a full-time job for some people. Don't get sucked into this negative behavior.
13. **Network with people outside your industry.** An intelligent conversation with someone unfamiliar with your business can give you a fresh perspective and insights into your sales challenges.

14. **Focus on the future rather than the past.** You can't change the past but you can influence future results so instead of focusing on what you could have done, concentrate on what you can do moving forward.
15. **Limit exposure to the news.** You need to know what's happening in world events and the local business climate; however, avoid tuning into the news more than you absolutely need to. It's a negative drain on your mental resources.
16. **Listen to classical or jazz music between sales calls.** These genres are much more relaxing than most other types of music.
17. **Play the air guitar between calls.** Turn up a great rock song and play the air guitar. It's completely pointless but it can be a ton of fun and it will make you smile. Improve the effectiveness by singing too (in the privacy of your car, of course!).
18. **Network with goal-oriented people.** Goal-oriented people seem to bring out the best in others. And when several like-minded people get together, lots of great ideas seem to develop.
19. **Socialize regularly with great friends.** Good friends are the next most important thing to family so carve out time to hang out with them.
20. **Focus** on what you can control instead of things that are beyond your control.
21. **Take your vacations.** Contrary to popular belief it is NOT a badge of honor to say that you're too busy to take your allotted vacation time. Even staying at home and relaxing can be a good way to recharge.
22. **Unplug in the evenings and on weekends.** Too many people are tied to their Smartphone 24/7. Unplug from this constant connection and give yourself permission to NOT be on call or standby at all hours of the day.
23. **Stop checking email.** Get into the habit of checking at scheduled times during the day. It is extremely rare that a customer or client issue won't wait for a couple of hours.
24. **Meditate.** A great way to calm your mind and your body and something you can do almost anywhere.
25. Take a yoga class. My wife swears by her yoga classes and says she feels completely energized afterwards.
26. **Avoid naysayers.** Negative people suck the life and energy from you. Listening to their problems will only make you feel tired and worn out.
27. **Don't procrastinate in making tough calls.** No one likes to be the bearer of bad news but your stress level increases the longer you put off making those tough calls.

When you take action to reduce your stress level you will not only increase your sales but you may also live longer which gives you the opportunity to enjoy the fruits of your labour.