

## Lessons Learned from the Inside

“Keeping you head above water” is a legitimate concern.  
- The Customer Connector

Many of you already know that I have taken a much more active role with one of my clients and am the Director of Sales for PDmB, Inc. My time is currently divided between directing the sales efforts of one of the world leaders in inspection software and working with all types of other clients that want sales results from people that are not naturally inclined to sell.

Over the past couple of months I have been able to directly compare what activities produce results as someone “on the inside looking out” and “on the outside looking in” and believe that:

- “Keeping your head above water” is a legitimate concern.
- “Treading water” will not bring results.

As a trainer and consultant, it is my business to assess performance issues, come up with creative ideas, design and deliver training sessions and discuss results. However, upon recently taking the role of Director of Sales, I am constantly reminded how easy it can be for employees to get caught up in trying to do too much without really executing anything.

Like many of you, my team and I are faced with several deadlines and a four mile long list of prospects that need to be contacted. It takes us a considerable amount of time to develop presentations and proposals that clearly demonstrate we understand the needs of our potential customers. Every day it is a challenge to keep our heads above water even though we know that without choosing our activities carefully we will simply tread water and go nowhere.

To keep things moving in the right direction we do our best to refocus our efforts on a scheduled basis. I encourage you to do the activities outlined below to help your team focus on the activities that produce results.

**Activity One** – This activity might seem basic but it rarely gets done. If someone that works for you is struggling to “keep their head above water” and is having problems producing results, have them make a prioritized list of all the things they could be doing at work. Help them see the value or lack of value in where they could be spending their time and let them re-prioritize their list. Show them how some activities help bring in business and others do not.

Let them know that the few things at the top are the things that need to get done and that the things at the bottom might just have to quietly disappear. Revisit the list regularly until everyone is working toward the same goals. Do your best to remove the obstacles that stand in the way of your people and continue to measure execution.

**Activity Two** – We all know that it takes more than a paycheck to motivate most people to do more than simply tread water. Make a personal list of what individually motivates all of your direct reports. If you do not honestly know what motivates them, spend some time getting to know them well enough to complete your list.

Use this information the next time you want to drive results. Do not think that everyone is driven by the same thing and mix up the ways you motivate your people to focus.

**In Summary** – At least 80% of the people want to do the right thing but many struggle with identification of the activities that have a bottom line impact. It is your job as a leader in your company to help individuals execute to the best of their ability, stop treading water and exceed the measurable goals you have established for you and your organization.

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