

“How to Overcome the Mortgage Industry’s Silent Killer.....Call Reluctance”

By Bill Sparkman, The Coach

As a recovering procrastinator, I can speak on this topic from experience. I could have made it to the Hall of Fame for putting things off. But I did learn a lot about what it takes to produce the results you say you want from your life and your business. In this article I’m going to share with you what I learned about call reluctance specifically. I’ll tell you what I believe it is, why we do it and most importantly, a step by step system to manage it. I don’t know if you will ever overcome it completely, but with the right tools it may be easier to deal with. People leave the mortgage business every day that know exactly what to do. It’s the doing it that is more difficult so I want to make it easier to do the “steps” than to not do them.

Let’s start with the “what”. We may have to begin by re-defining the problem. I think that call reluctance is really just prospecting reluctance. I know plenty of under-achievers that spend the majority of their day working on low value activities. By the way, I consider prospecting a “high value activity”. These are underachievers tend to major in minor things. They actually spend most of their time getting ready. They become professional procrastinators. Everyone procrastinates, period. High-achievers do not eliminate high-value activities like prospecting from their daily activities. They work on high priorities first. They are very creative and selective about what they put off. Income producing activities are a high priority. For under-achievers, prospecting or making sales calls are a low activity. Then they call me for coaching asking for help in the area of “sales call reluctance” like they have some kind of disease. Why people continue to experience call reluctance is even more curious. Come to find out part of their problem is that they have no plan or structure for their daily activities. They really have no systems in place for generating quality leads. For some there is no urgency, they just lack motivation and name it “call reluctance”. There are others who just can’t tolerate the word “no” so they develop a way not to experience rejection – they just don’t ask! They must blame their lack of production on something so WHALA! – another case of the dreaded “call reluctance”.

Now let’s look at the cure. 5 simple steps to managing call or prospecting reluctance:

- 1) **Set Yourself on Fire** – lack of motivation could be the number one competitor for anyone in sales. You can’t light a fire with a wet match. Get excited! Why you are in the business is more important than what to do or how to do it. A lack of motivation will always be the first sign of call reluctance. Enthusiasm and passion for what you are doing creates positive actions. Check your own “motivation monitor” to see if that may be a place to start.
- 2) **Work on High Priorities First** – Start with creating a step-by-step written plan of what you want and how you are going to get it. Daily milestones are important (i.e. Leave home, leave the office, send 5 thank you notes). Keep it simple enough so that you will do it. You will never get caught up, so stop thinking you will. Just be very selective to the actions you put off.

- 3) **Be Accountable** – Self audit your actions every day. Keep track of where you are spending your time. Which activities are you postponing on a regular basis? If you can't hold yourself accountable, hire a coach.
- 4) **Create more Prospecting Opportunities** - Diversify your prospecting. Burnout comes from being bored no matter in what area of your life. Focus your efforts on your strengths. Life is too short to perfect your weaknesses. The one area you can't be reluctant in is asking for what you want. You will always experience a drop in your business when your prospecting drops off. The more you ask, the more “no's” you will hear and the more “no's” you hear gets you closer to getting what you want. Even small children know they have to ask their parents at least 7 times for something before you get it.
- 5) **Perfect your Sales Skills** – The key word here is sell! If you are reluctant to make sales calls there will never be a sale. The average loan originator only closes 1 out of 10 opportunities. That will affect your confidence as well as your income. Your income will ultimately be defined by not only how many times you ask, but also your conversion rate. I am always less concerned about how many sales calls you've made versus how many applications you've taken.

So, stop tolerating not having what you want. When you do, you will have taken the first step in overcoming “call reluctance”. Practice these 5 steps and remember, to achieve better results you have to get better!

Keep Your Eye on the Ball!
Bill Sparkman, The Coach

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