

# Plan For The Unplanned

## **An article by Keith Rosen about planning for the unplanned activities throughout your day.**

There's essentially three reasons why we find it so challenging to adhere to our schedule or complete our to-do list:

1. Not being realistic with our timeline and as a result, have too many activities scheduled into our day.
2. Not engaging in right activities that support our goals or objectives.
3. Not planning for the unplanned. Also known as, "Externalities."

These externalities or things that we don't necessarily plan for often go unnoticed and fly under our radar screen when attempting to map out our week. They have tendency to eat up our days.

These externalities can also take on the form of errands or household chores, the kids' carpool, time on the phone, traffic, a doctor's appointment, a project or proposal that you're now responsible for which has a rapidly approaching deadline, a conversation with a co-worker, television, web surfing, meetings, emails, solitaire, etc.

Many of these things come along and blindsides us because they're outside of our direct line of vision. Then we wonder why we're often unable to finish everything that's on our plate for the day.

Now, since we don't have a crystal ball to inform us about the imminent things that would unknowingly consume part of our day, imagine if you were actually able to plan for these things; these same tasks that often go left unplanned.

### **Tip From The Coach:**

Distractions Are Events That You are Not Planning For. Plan For Them.

One of my clients was a bit resistant to this idea. She shared with me that, once a new client hires her company and procures her services, the unplanned begins happening immediately.irate customers calling in and people wanting things addressed and handled immediately.

This client happens to be in the emergency restoration business. So, the only time she does get a call is when people have experienced a major or minor disaster in their building or in their home, such as a fire or a flood. As you can imagine, it's probably hard to plan exactly when she would be receiving these calls.

When the calls came in, you can imagine how the customers would sound. Harried, upset, fearful, angry or uncertain of what could happen or would be happening. And every time my client received a call like this, she would react surprised, as if it was the first time she's ever experienced it! "I can't believe this is happening again," would be a typical reaction.

When I asked her how long this has been going on, she said for fifteen years, ever since she started her business.

This would be similar to a doctor who works in the ER and is continually shocked at the number and degree of emergencies that come through the door. As such, this doctor reacts accordingly by saying, “What, another emergency?”

The solution for this client was apparent. Instead of resisting the truth she began to embrace the truth, and the truth was this is her business! She is in the business of providing not only solutions to her customer’s restoration nightmares but providing support, guidance and reassurance that it will all work out okay.

Instead of being continually shocked at how her customers’ react when calling her, by embracing this as part of her business and accepting the truth, she was able to more effectively plan for it. She began to make the shift from being highly reactive to responsive and service oriented by anticipating these situations rather than being shocked when they occur.

**Tip From The Coach:**

Embrace Consistent Inconsistency.

If you feel that there’s no predictability or consistency throughout your days, consider this paradox. The fact that your days are unpredictable actually creates a certain degree of predictability.



**Keith Rosen, MCC - The Executive Sales Coach**

Keith Rosen is the preferred, authentic coach that top executives and sales professionals in many of the world's leading companies call first. As a prominent, engaging speaker, Master Coach and well-known author of many books and articles, Keith is one of the foremost authorities on assisting people in achieving positive, measurable change in their attitude, in their behavior and in their results. Keith's articles can be found in Selling Power Magazine and has appeared in feature stories in The New York Times, The Washington Times, Inc. Magazine, Sales and Marketing Management's Ultimate Motivation Guide with Stephen Covey and The Wall Street Journal. For his work as a pioneer in the coaching profession, Inc. magazine and Fast Company named Keith one of the five most respected and influential executive coaches in the country.