



# THE BENCHMARK

KEVIN KEHOE

The author, owner-manager of 3PG Consulting, is a 25-year industry veteran. Reach him at kevinkehoe@me.com.

## How to be a grinder

**H**ow do you sell more work? Relationships certainly help. Luck is a good thing, too. But it's good habits consistently executed that create results. This is true of almost everything in life. Develop and practice good habits and good things usually follow—like great relationships and a fair bit of luck.

The first habit of successful salesmen is to keep the sales pitch simple (see my last column at [buff.ly/1hYh68M](http://buff.ly/1hYh68M)). The second habit is to be a grinder. This sounds awful, doesn't it? Yet of all the habits it may be the most essential. Selling is a process of rejection, rejection ... victory! It's long stretches of routine punctuated by moments of glory. In other words, it can be a grind. If your work plan does not take this into account, it's hard to achieve excellent results.

My favorite commercial landscape maintenance salesman in the industry is a grinder. He does *the math*, makes *a plan*, executes the plan and takes very little of the rejection personally. He doesn't rely on his good looks, boyish charm, relationships or luck. He gets up every day, makes his cold calls, keeps in touch with his referral sources, shows up for appointments, makes his presentations and asks for the order. If he gets it, he smiles. When he doesn't get it, he goes on to the next opportunity. Here's how he grinds it out.

### The math

My goal is to sell	<b>\$1,000,000</b>	annualized new contract sales.
My close rate is	<b>20%</b>	I win one for every four I lose.
My bid requirement is	<b>\$5,000,000</b>	Sales goal/close rate
My target job size is	<b>\$30,000</b>	This is a \$2,500 per month job.
My qualification rate is	<b>50%</b>	I turn this % of my leads into a bid.
I need this many leads/prospects	<b>333</b>	Bids/job size/qualification rate
I need to touch each prospect	<b>12</b>	times to get an answer (yes or no).
I need to have this many touches	<b>4,000</b>	Prospects * touches
I have	<b>46</b>	"real" selling weeks to do it.
I need to make this many touches	<b>87</b>	every week. I need a plan for every week.

*Touch = Phone call, email, qualification meeting or presentation meeting.*

### The plan

Vince Lombardi said the Green Bay Packers had only eight basic plays. There were many options on each of these plays, he said, but these options only became apparent as the play unfolded in real time. The key was to execute the basics flawlessly and take advantage of the opportunities the other guy provided you to run to daylight.

That's what it means to be a grinder: Execute the basics flawlessly and take advantage of the opportunities that arise naturally. Now, go do the math and make a plan.

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
MORNING	Prospect	Prospect	Present	Prospect	Present
AFTERNOON	Propose	Present	Present	Network	Propose
EVENING		Network		Network	

#### » WEB EXTRA

For an editable spreadsheet of "the math" explained here, visit [LandscapeManagement.net/downloads](http://LandscapeManagement.net/downloads). Plus, read Kehoe's November 2013 column outlining the "6 habits of successful salespeople" at [LandscapeManagement.net/6habits](http://LandscapeManagement.net/6habits).