Five activities that should be habits to every sales person.

The first 15 minutes of work every morning.

When you arrive in your office, at your computer in the hotel, or wherever you call "work", you should have the same routine. You shouldn't be investing any time thinking about where to get started. I suggest a 15-minute routine that is strategic, non-urgent, and proactive. Some examples: call or email two current customers just to see how they're doing; read professional development material; or review your pipeline. Whatever it is, make it a habit, and you'll find that you have a lot more energy an hour or two into the day.

Preparation for the three most common types of sales calls you conduct.

I bet that 95% or more of your sales calls fall into one of three categories. For example, the types of calls might be introductory call, product demonstration, and site walk. Develop the process of preparing for each call in the same way. If not, you'll try to reinvent the wheel on every call. I'm not suggesting that you deliver an untailored presentation, but that you create a standard process to customizing each call.

The answer to "what makes you different?"

If the answer to this question doesn't flow out of your mouth like a habit, then you're in trouble. If this isn't a habit right now, then stop reading and figure out how to make it a habit.

All the tedious non-sales stuff that you must do.

I hate these things, all of them … adding info to the CRM, filling out expense reports, populating quarterly business reviews, etc. They drive me nuts, but they have to be done. Once you create a process and make it a habit for each of these grueling affairs, your life will drastically improve – not an exaggeration.

Your daily close-out routine.

At the end of every day, conduct a 30-minute close out of the day and make it the same routine… make it a habit. Examples could be closing out your emails, returning calls, planning the next day's calendar, etc. Doing it is one thing, but making it a habit is another.