

# **"Zen" Collection Skills ©**

## **(How to do better...what we already do well!)**

### **PROGRAM OUTLINE:**

This program has been developed, improved and refined over several years to be delivered to a more seasoned and experienced accounts receivable team. Team members who may perform well but recognize that the best engines need regular tune ups and there is always room for improvement.

We start with a brief review of some of the basics (the tune-up), but most of the program concentrates on individual improvement to specific challenges for their organization or association. It is our experience that these skills are more effective when 'caught' rather than 'taught' to seasoned receivable personnel.

### **QUALIFICATIONS TO ATTEND PROGRAM:**

The individuals attending this program are expected to have a minimum of three to five years of experience in accounts receivable and have attended a previous program taught by Tim Paulsen (Effective Collection Techniques). The latter is highly recommended but not a requirement.

Successful applicants will complete and submit a one page background and questionnaire along with their registration. Full participation is expected and mandatory - there are individual as well as team assignments.

### **Certificates for Zen Advanced Collection Techniques:**

Participants do not receive a certificate for simply *attending* the program. In order to receive their certificate, participants must:

- a) Complete and submit their assignments.
- b) Receive group (peer) approval for participation.
- c) Receive a passing grade for on-line examination within two weeks of taking the program.

The certificates are mailed to the graduates of the program.

### **REVIEW OF THE BASICS:**

The years after his team won their first Super Bowl, quarterback Joe Montana, considered by many sportswriters as THE MVP, attended a training camp with the rookies. Why was he there? Start early and review the basics.

About 20% of the program involves a review and tune up of some of the basics involved in effective collections which include:

- Standards of professional collections
- Phases of a collection call
- Dealing with the usual and the unusual excuse for non or delayed payment

## **PROGRAM TOPICS:**

### **Defining the role of an effective professional collector:**

Most collection personnel would define their role as simply collecting the money owed to the firm or the organization. This is wrong. Our objective in collections is to keep the Customer!

We will not keep the Customer if they do not pay their account, and we can't keep them from going to the competition if they are not treated in a professional manner.

### **Identifying and taking action on barriers to improved performance:**

If only..., are the two words often heard as a barrier to improved performance. In our program we define the means to recognize and to present methods that improve the individual as well as departmental performance.

### **Advanced negotiating techniques:**

Previous programs (Effective Collection Techniques – recommended earlier) covered in detail the twelve important negotiating techniques for Accounts Receivable. After a brief review – the participants are introduced to and learn how to use six additional advanced techniques to further improve negotiating skills.

### **“Time & Stress”**

It has been said that there may be not be a more deadly combination for poor performance in accounts receivable than that of *Time & Stress*.

- Reduce and control stress will make more effective use of time
- Manage time better as a means to reduce stress

Whether for the individual participant or a team, better management of stress & time will improve collection performance. Based on his popular book “*But, I’ve got no time for a nervous breakdown!*” Tim Paulsen shares the most important techniques to improve

performance.

### **Recognizing powers of influence:**

There are subtle aspects of influence used by our Customers that remain strong, even though used unintentionally. We demonstrate how to recognize them, identify them for what they are, and to use an effective response.

### **How to develop powerful questions:**

Getting the right answers is a matter of asking the right questions and this is much more involved than just putting a question mark at the end of a sentence. The graduates of this program will learn how to obtain the information they need as well as obtain better cooperation from their customers.

### **Improving listening skills:**

Most collection programs (including Effective Collection Techniques), concentrate on one side of a conversation – what we say to our customers. In the advanced Zen program, we cover the *other* side – our customers.

We think we are good listeners in accounts receivable. Most of the time, we are good talkers, waiting for them to finish so we can tell 'em what we were gonna' tell 'em anyway.

### **All I needed to know about collections, I learned at the movies:**

For fun...and for profit, we cover ten effective collection techniques from the silver screen. While some of the selections in this module are better related to a Canadian or U.S. audience, the subject is also tailored as required internationally.

### **Self and Team Development:**

The outline and the implementation of a program designed to obtain improvement of individuals or a department team responsible for accounts receivable. This may range from the screening and hire of collection personnel to the training and maintenance of a

professional team.

**Action Planning:**

From the program and their profile submissions, participants and teams complete and submit an action plan designed to obtain immediate and lasting improvements to their accounts receivable.

**INSTRUCTOR:**

Tim Paulsen has worked as a bill collector (consumer and commercial), credit fraud investigator, collection manager, credit manager and an internal as well as an external management consultant.

He is the author of the very popular "*Paid in Full*" as well as two other books and numerous articles on the subject of Accounts Receivable. Mr. Paulsen is the past-president of the Toronto chapter of C.A.P.S. (Canadian Association of Professional Speakers).

The Principal of T. R. Paulsen & Associates and the founder of the "*International Center for Professional Collections*", Tim has developed and led very highly rated programs and consulted with clients across North America, Africa, Bahamas, China, Ghana, India, Jamaica, Kuwait, Malaysia, Mexico, The Philippines and Singapore.