

# The Making of a Master: No. 5 in a series

## Patience, planning key to selling, but you must remain flexible

*The Tekweek series, "The Making of a Master," recognizing a few members of the Tek sales force who have achieved the highest distinction, concludes with this interview with Steve Zick, Seattle. Out of 91 Masters last year, Steve was one of four to be named Executive Master, an honor for those who attain the Master title three times.*

**S**teve Zick (Senior Sales Engineer, Logic Analyzers Division) has worked primarily with one customer in his ten years at Tek. That customer is the Boeing Co., Seattle.

Steve began with Tek in the Seattle Field Office in 1976 selling Test and Measurement instruments. When Tek divisionalized in 1981, he went with the Design Automation Group.

Before Tek, Steve held sales positions with Hewlett Packard, Computer Automation and Modcomp Corp. For four years beginning in 1960, he was a TV studio technician, first at KELO-TV, Sioux Falls, S.D., then at WLWT-TV, Indianapolis.

Steve is a graduate of Purdue University (BSEE, 1966) and Southern Illinois University (MBA, 1982).

### **Steve, how did you happen to get into selling?**

As a student at Purdue, I attended an IEEE meeting when Leo Chamberlin of General Radio (later ROLM) talked about sales engineering. To me it sounded like an interesting way to make a living. Incidentally, Leo wrote some of the materials and articles that Tek uses in sales training courses.

### **What do you like about your job?**

I like the variety of people and applications I encounter each day. Working with new companies and products, I enjoy seeing their ideas become products and successes. The autonomy of selling is enjoyable.

### **What do you dislike about your job?**



**Steve Zick, Senior Sales Engineer, Seattle Field Office**

The administrative overhead and paperwork, although this has really been kept to a minimum since joining DAG. Sometimes you feel you have to be in two or three places at once, but most customers are very understanding.

### **How do you approach your job each day?**

I lay out my key activities and calls a week in advance, striving for geographic efficiency. These plans often need changing, so sometimes I need to be flex-

ible on a day's notice. I try to plan major activities around the customer's budget and buy cycle. This includes new product shows and intros, product mailings and follow-up calls.

### **What's your secret in being a successful salesperson?**

You have to have a lot of patience, and take a long-term view of account coverage. I'm thankful that Boeing has been very successful the past ten years.

### **What advice would you give a college student considering a career in sales?**

If that student enjoys people and variety, selling can be a fun and financially rewarding career. I'm pleased that Tek created the professional sales path (multi-level selling) a few years ago.

### **Is there any help or advice you can give to other Tek salespeople who would like to achieve Masters status?**

Take good care of your accounts and put extra effort into your current or emerging large accounts. Typically, five accounts generate 80 per cent of an SE's revenue.

### **How difficult do you find the competition vs. a few years ago?**

The competition now is different, except for Hewlett Packard, which will always be present. We seem most vulnerable to low cost producers and new foreign companies.

### **Finally, is there anything you'd like to say to the Tektronix workforce?**

Thank you to the many folks in all parts of the Tek organization who have helped expedite an order, find a demo, etc. When these things happen, Tek is a marvelous company. □