

10 Tips to Sales Success Maximise Sales from Sales People

This is a preliminary tool that will assist company management appreciate the advanced fundamentals that are required to achieve absolute sales force performance.

The following 10 points are often the root of an underperforming sales force and subsequently the overall business.

1. Manage Minutes & Moments – Not Months

Too many organisations have old habits that whilst appropriate 30 years ago, offer little value now. A common problem occurs when companies wait until the end of a month (usually 5-10 days after the month ends) to review sales. At this point they typically discuss initiatives that will be implemented the following month...too late.

At this point they have lost the opportunity to affect the sales result by in many cases 60 days. Imagine what would happen to a business, if a process not only identified the threat each day and then provided a solution to minimise impact with 24 hrs.

Your business would become fluid and dynamic to the market, resulting in absolute speed and market realisation. Software such as that operated by SalesReps captures marketing intelligence for every customer interaction, which is graded instantly in terms of impact to business and importance, then reviewed by management every single day. The results see negative issues ranked highest being addressed before they can effective sales and positive issues expanded to maximise sales. Business not just Sales today is about becoming Faster, Smarter and More Effective.

2. It has to about Volume & Value

Within every sales team there will be a benchmarker across “volume” based activities (e.g. number of visits, number of sales

etc.) and “value” based activities (e.g. average \$value per hour, average \$value per sale etc.). Establish benchmarkers as “winners” within your team by applauding their benchmarking every single day.

More importantly use these benchmarks as targets for other reps to realise. Even the value benchmarker more often than not needs more volume and vice versa. KPI's are important when efficiency is key and new sales staff are appointed, but the only true measure of success, is what can be achieved by others and it is this that should be the target – even if that sees the target change every day.

This will add a dynamic and fluid element to your sales force culture and alleviate stagnant and lengthy sales targets that quite often seem out of reach.

3. Build a Competitive Communications Platform

As discussed in point 2, it is imperative that each sales person is striving each and every day to exceed their peer's performance.

Using the full range of technology to promote individual successes, initiatives, strategies and absolute financial success will drive the competitive spirit.

Daily SMSs instantly communicating sales success, initiatives, threats etc. will provide the hourly, daily “pick-me-up” that is required to stimulate activity. Daily communicating the volume and value figures via email at days end for each sales rep across the team, will drive home daily winners and losers. This can simply be a worksheet that shows the averages achieved by each of the sales staff across volume and value criteria, with the leader in value and volume ranked 1st and the lowest performer at the bottom of the worksheet.

Tactical conference calls (as opposed to simply regular weekly or monthly) adds immediacy and importance to actions. These can be used to highlight the successes of an individual sales person by having the individual present the event, as well as used to address threats to sales.

Tactical Conference calls in most cases have more impact on sales and planned/regular conference calls which are seen as a chore to all parties.

Remember if it feels wrong it probably is wrong. So act NOW.

4. Information is either Powerful or Suffocating

Change can only be made when information is turned into knowledge. To do this you need to ensure that the information that makes a difference to your business is all that you capture.

The information that offers no opportunity to effect change will simply slow your business down. Ensure that you only request information that you will review.

As soon as you find yourself ignoring information from your sales staff, come up with a new idea or way to capture what you need.

Once you start to neglect the information coming out of the sales force, the information they capture will lose its relevance, the staff will identify a lack of interest from management and the very fabric of the sales team will fall apart. This will result in churn of sales staff and sales will not be optimised.

5. Remove the Scepticism

Sales people writing weekly reports that justify their lives, while management read such reports with total scepticism. It is a common problem and the solution is simple - *no weekly reports*.

Simply introduce software used with handheld smartphones that capture market data and mindset data at the conclusion of every customer interaction.

By creating reporting fields that relate to your business needs you will capture only information of value which can be ranked by the sales person as positive or negative and 1- 3 in terms of importance.

Review this information daily so as to instigate actions to maximises sales and importantly remove the opportunity for sales staff to justify their actions and for management to find report reading of little value.

6. Reasons to Visit

Sales people by their very nature look for an easy sale. So give it to them.

Create product offers and set visitation objectives (3 as a minimum) each and every week. If you can provide solid reasons to visit a customer, which you can monitor from an outcome

perspective daily, the sales rep will understand that a visit is not a visit, unless it has a commercial outcome.

The key is monitoring, measuring and managing the opportunity from a leadership/mentor perspective.

Sales staff need close monitoring if they are to operate effectively. It is very rare that simply self-motivation will achieve an absolute outcome. The days of sales management functions being weekly and monthly have long gone.

7. Concise and Accurate Call Planning

Giving a sales person a database and telling them to visit customers will never achieve an absolute outcome.

Grading customers by value and opportunity, then grading postcodes by customer value will form the basis for a call cycle plan that sees the sales person strategically and without variation, service the right customers at the right time.

Sales staff need to know by simply turning on their smart phone, who they will visit next, what were the key issues last time they saw them and what are their objectives now.

A sales person that is a good administrator of time and function is as close to an oxymoron as it gets.

By instigating such processes you will flatten out the peaks and troughs so often found in a sales team's performance.

8. Change is the Only Constant

Never believe that what you are doing now will work tomorrow.

You need to appreciate that everyday someone enters the market, undertakes a new marketing approach, employs new people, develops new products and finds a new way.

This doesn't mean you need to continually create new ideas, but it does mean that these ideas need to be presenting in new and creative ways. Creating such ideas needs to be a collective effort that involves the sales team. Simply delivering ideas to the sales team from Marketing or Management, will see more barriers thrown up than endorsements. If you have a large sales team select 2 or 3 of sales staff a quarter to be a part of the market/product/ management WIPs.

9. Sales come from Effective Sales Management

Is your sales manager actually a sales manager? Whilst they may have a great track record in sales, what experience do they have in managing people?

In the end it is all about managing and motivating people to get the most from them. In 90% of cases the person with solid communication, administrative, organisations skills and creativity is the best for this role.

If a business appreciates the shortfalls of management and the manager appreciates their weaknesses, then initiatives can be happily put in place to address such crucial gaps. How management communicate is key to how sales staff respond. Establishing a peer review processes in respect to communication, can make this change happen seamlessly.

10. Motivation is Key

The weekly “kick in the pants” will do little other than drive staff to seek.com.au to find there next job.

You need a culture that identifies issues, immediately responds to those issues, and helps to develop solutions to address those issues. Then continue to monitor, manage results and celebrate the successes.

Before sales staff are addressed put yourselves in the sales team's shoes and ask; How would you like to be treated?

Remember Culture starts at the top and without a true belief and direction from senior management, cultures and subsequently business will never change.

At SalesReps everything we do is about achieving absolute sales success. We hope this document will help you with business growth and if we can be of any further assistance across “**Anything Sales**” simply contact our Commercial Manager **Dean Smallman** on **(03) 9413 6041** or **deans@salesreps.com.au**