



## **10 Reasons Why You Should Invest In a Results-Orientated Sales Approach**

It's often said that sales people are perfect only twice in our lives: first-when we are born and secondly-when we build our resumes! We accept that as merely good-natured ribbing, but after spending thirty plus years in the sales profession, I agree that we're far from perfect and that we could always use some help. Most of us would also agree that the world and the business environment in which we operate have dramatically changed and will continue to do so. But, yet I wonder why we see so many sales people and sales leaders who aren't achieving consistent results that have failed to change their sales approach?

**Let me offer 10 good reasons why you should invest in a results-orientated sales approach for your sales team:**

### **1. Improve Your Results**

No surprise, right? Our objective should always be to provide tools and measurable tactics to improve organizational results. In today's world, having an outdated "making it up as you go" sales approach will not provide the consistent results you want and need. Ask yourself, does my team have a current and consistent sales approach? Can they articulate what it is?

### **2. Develop Trusted Advisors**

Perhaps this term is over-used, but I would say it's just not really understood by many who claim to be a trusted advisor.

Today people buy because they feel understood, not because they understand. Buyers have access to more information and they tend to conduct research before they engage sales people. Yet many selling organizations spend a lot of time and effort only teaching sales people what they have to offer to the market. In turn, many sales people still go into the market to persuade prospects to understand what their solutions/products can do for them. That "one-way" approach just doesn't work.

An authentic "trusted advisor" with a consultative sales approach will relate to the prospect at their level and seek to understand before they try to offer any kind of solution. They leverage real expertise, are responsive and provide helpful resources to bring value to their customers. Solutions work and trust is built.

Employing a current sales approach will teach your team how to transform from being perceived as a "quota-bearing" sales rep to a real "trusted advisor" by their prospects and clients. How do your customers perceive your sales people? You may want to pick up the phone and actually ask some of your customers what they think.

### **3. Common Language/Approach**

How do your sales managers conduct opportunity reviews? Is the process organized, efficient and beneficial to all who are involved? Does your organization have a common set of terms used to describe progress with opportunities? Do they understand the difference between a sales cycle and a customer buying cycle?

The percentage of sales pursuits that result in no sale is exceptionally high in organizations that don't have a consistent and results-orientated sales approach. Winning only 20% or less of your sales pursuits should not be acceptable. It becomes much easier and more efficient to strategize and close opportunities when everyone understands and uses common terminology to describe the sales approach and the customer buying cycle.

#### **4. Controlling the Sales Cycle**

Too often sales people put themselves in a subservient position with non-qualified prospects beginning with their first interaction. They happily give freely of their time, effort, information, personal and company resources only to receive a simple "yes" or a "no" at the end of an expensive sales cycle. This can be avoided by learning how to control the sales cycle. Reps should invest in opportunities with qualified prospects that will work with them collaboratively and are sincerely interested in solving their business issues.

#### **5. Shorten Sales Cycle**

Good time management is critical to the success any sales professional. Without proper training and a results orientated sales approach, reps invest in sales cycles that are much longer than they need to be. When reps work more efficiently and learn effective qualifying tactics, they gain more time to identify and engage in more new opportunities that result in new revenue.

#### **6. Forecasting and Predictability**

Lacking an effective and consistent sales approach, the forecasting process is challenging and often inaccurate. Reps are frequently over-confident which causes sales managers to spend countless hours reviewing the pipeline in granular detail to determine what is real and what is not. By utilizing a results orientated sales approach that encompasses all aspects of selling, including controlling the sale cycle, sales professionals and managers will gain the knowledge and skills to provide accurate, predictable forecasts. Improved forecasting accuracy also improves internal credibility and garners willing support from other internal resources.

#### **7. Avoid Insanity**

We all know the definition of insanity; doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result. Sales people are probably guiltier of this more than any other profession. WHY? Many times we find organizations that adhere to an outdated, home-grown sales approach or that utilize some semblance of an outside approach adopted years ago, but aren't realizing the results they want. The sales team doesn't know any other way, thus they keep doing the same unproductive things again and again. At the very least upgrading your sales approach to the new millennium will change the way you do things for the better. And I guarantee it will improve your sanity by positively impacting your sales results.

#### **8. Instill Confidence and Satisfaction**

Salespeople need to be confident in their organization's solutions, the company they represent and their personal sales abilities. You build a salesperson's confidence when you provide them superior sales skills through results-orientated sales training. Salespeople also want to work for organizations that continue to invest in them. They often feel like they are on an island with little help. Having a new and effective sales approach, which the team buys into, builds that confidence. It gives them a measurable process and takes the guesswork out of the sales pursuit. Ongoing education and investment leads to improved selling skills and contributes to higher morale and enthusiasm amongst the team, which will increase sales activity.

## **9. Lead generation**

93% of sales professionals have not been formally trained on how to generate their own leads and find new prospects. The lifeblood of any business is adding new clients. Sales people are always expected to build their pipeline, but without offering them training on how to find new prospects it is not surprising to learn that new opportunities are scarce. Lead generation tactics, from learning how to leverage social media to effective referral farming should be part of any sales training program.

## **10. Selling to Decision Makers**

Too often we see sales people spending most of their sales efforts on the wrong people. They tend to sell one or two levels below the decision maker, especially early in the sales cycle. Reps tend to stay in their comfort zones and make the mistake of letting someone else in the organization do their selling for them. With proper training, reps will learn how to effectively start their sales efforts with the decision maker and work their way down instead of starting low and trying to work their way up.

*There are many more valuable reasons to invest in an effective results orientated sales approach in 2015 that will give you the results you need and want.*

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