Five Ways to Improve Your Sales Team's Performance with a New Way To Work

The tough part of being head of sales is the responsibility for profitable growth, regardless of what's happening in the broader economy. This requires tenacity, alliance-building and orchestration of diverse resources to meet sales goals. If you are responsible for sales performance, you'll recognize these challenges very well:

Driving profitable growth in a challenging economy. With customers keeping a tight hold on their purses, pipelines are tougher to grow. Somehow Sales is expected be the exception to prevailing conditions. Meeting quarterly and annual sales objectives requires teamwork and quick, decisive collaboration to handle challenges and opportunities.

Increase productivity, not headcount. Chances are, your team is already working at the limit. Like everyone else, Sales executives have to increase output while keeping your team lean. Pushing your team to work harder is counter-productive. You have to give them tools to make their efforts yield more.

Maintain visibility and leverage scarce resources. Today's Sales executive is both process leader and traffic cop. From strategy to process to sales support, staying connected with stakeholders and the back-office teams you count on is vital. It's also complicated by a distributed and highly mobile function, out-sourced functions, and a range of tech tools that support your process and your ability to close deals. How do you connect with your resources with more immediacy and faster results?

Enhance customer intimacy. Selling on trust and relationship is the most effective way to avoid heavy discounting. You can't be everywhere at once. So, how do stay accessible and connected to all of your customers with the kind of personal, timely communication that protects and builds relationships?

In most businesses, sales is a dispersed and highly mobile ecosystem. Our research shows close to 80% of us working on such virtual teams. The tools and technologies needed join up these virtual teams are a critical linchpin to your success.

Yet many organizations find themselves in a maddening reality of fragmented or incomplete collaboration solutions, frustrating users and causing missed opportunities. Beyond layers of incompatible technologies, the technologies themselves are often disconnected from the way your team really works – especially your younger colleagues. Today's worker demands a consumer-like experience from the communication tools they use at work.

1. Make it easy to find available resources. Applications that provide a rich Presence display show your staff who's available to help them in the moment, as well as how they can be reached – phone, email, instant messaging, etc. There's no calling around to find someone who can provide information, pricing or decisions. Look for an application that allows your staff to set a Tell-Me-When notice so they get a message when someone critical becomes available. Close as many process gaps as possible in real-time.

2. Work where you need to work. If you have a highly mobile sales and support organization, do all you can to replicate business and communications processes for mobile devices. The more people can do between meetings, at the airport, or in a parking lot, the faster your processes will run and the more business you'll book.

3. Make communications more vibrant. Keeping people engaged isn't simple, especially if there are a lot of demands on their time. You can make it easier and more rewarding to engage by ensuring one-click access to voice, web and video collaboration from any device. We are sensory creatures, and the more robust your communications, the stronger the understanding and connection. Make sure your collaboration tools are easy to add to scheduled or on-the-fly communications.

4. Leverage staff's consumer experience. No doubt, your employees use rich communication applications and devices in their personal life. If your business tools are, by comparison, difficult and foreign, they won't use them. That can limit productivity, kill your chances for a great ROI on tech investments and drive users to off-policy communications vehicles. Look for tools that work like your employees' favorite devices and apps – no manuals, just easy, intuitive, even joyful discovery and use.

5. Engage customers more richly and more often. Optimize customer time by using video and web collaboration to stay connected and manage minor activities. You'll have more quality time when you're face-to-face with customers for complex matters and relationship building. Plus, many customers appreciate the option for a quick call instead of booking conference rooms for hour-long meetings. Video keeps it personal. Web collaboration keeps it content-rich. Calling makes it simple and efficient to touch bases as often as you like.

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Anonymous

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