



The Business Growth Specialists

Making Sales Effective

5 practical steps to making the most of the sales resources in your business.

Like most things in business, success begins with you. Sales is a critical element to the success of your business and whilst managing a sales team can be a frustrating activity, whether you like it or not, your sales team is more important than ever and you need to drive them to achieve the company goals and objectives.

The sales team is your front line and through it, your customers will evaluate and position your company, irrespective of your marketing investments in advertising and promotion. Therefore, managing the sales effort and most importantly your sales team's effort is directly linked to the ongoing success of your business.

Here are 5 ways to get the most for your business from your sales team.

Step 1 – Communicate goals clearly

Begin with the end in mind; it is essential to have defined and agreed sales goals for the company, state, market, product, account, and rep' depending on the structure of your business. It is important that the sales team know what the business priorities, expectations and goals are. Each Sales Team Member should be more than aware of what their respective budget is and how their performance will be measured. Where applicable they should be informed as to how their budget fits into the wider company budget.

Sales people are results driven and therefore they need to be told what the goals are and empowered to achieve the desired results. Performance can be measured using a number varying tools so this would include Sales Reports, Monthly Reviews, Call Cycle Planning, and Customer Relationship Management tools or programs. As social creatures, regular contact between the company and sales personnel along with dialogue between sales team members should be encouraged but within a defined protocol.

As a minimum, a quarterly team meeting is required as this is the time to reward the successes and detail the next set of sales initiatives. The team meeting is important to ensure there is NO opportunity for misunderstanding and everyone knows what the company is expecting.

Step 2 – Measure and Correct

Reviewing performance and updating information based on current results will allow the business to implement initiatives to maximise results. So it is with sales management. You need to track sales results, continually review what is going on and take corrective action when and where necessary. It is important for a company to have a series of Knowledge Management tools that can readily help you to assess the contribution of the sales resources and channel.

A simple yet effective tool is a Daily Sales Report (DSR) that clearly summarises the performance of each sales resource or channel and shows the performance on a MTD and YTD basis.

(if you would like a copy of our FREE Daily Sales Report Tool, please contact us: +612 9484 5050)

Step 3 – Keep everyone going in the right direction

Too often we encounter companies where management enforce business practices and targets but “continually shift or change” what the desired targets actually are. This practice often causes frustration across the business and generally ends up costing the business valuable sales resources and profit.

If there is a plan and EVERYONE commits to achieving the agreed goals, it is important to measure results with proper performance measures, sales budget and profit budget. Being consistent means that everyone knows where they stand and also how to better support each other across the business.

This will require you to communicate well within the company – listening as well as talking. Good managers always ensure that they acknowledge and comment on the Market Intelligence supplied by the Sales Team, this will help to ensure maximum focus and awareness of the demands and complexities of the market.

Step 4 – Invest in sales skills

All Businesses need to be sales driven organisations, and at times this is not their core skill, orientation or focus. However all businesses need to

continually build their sales skills across a number of areas for the effective control and performance of the sales team.

Useful sales skills training would include:

- Communication;
- Negotiation;
- Motivating;
- Time and Territory management;
- Conflict resolution; and
- Reporting

Undertake a skills audit on all people associated with sales (including yourself). This will create a simple skills rating system for the business which will help to identify gaps that need to be addressed. For example, most sales people are generally poor planners and reporters. If this is the case, identify work processes and practices that can help them to do their job more effectively whilst still allowing you to get the relevant information required to achieve the sales targets.

Step 5 – Reward success

Sales people like to succeed and to be rewarded. Reward schemes need to be set up front and tied in to the sales team budget. Performance criteria need to be clear and remain unchanged through the defined period. You want your sales people to sell as much as possible and they want to earn as much as possible, therefore incentivising them correctly is essential.