



13 Must-Knows For Sales Leaders

Let's face it, leading a sales team isn't the easiest job in the world. Honestly, it's probably one of the toughest. Every sales team is different, but there are some critical components for successful sales leaders that simply don't change. Read them, understand them, and use them to arm yourself, and your sales team, **to be ready to win more.**

1. Articulate The Sales Process. In Fact, Make It Crystal Clear.

- Define stages in the sales process and map it to customer buying behavior so it's easy to understand the "why"
- Associate activities with each stage—and keep it simple
- Crystalize the leading and lagging indicators of success for each stage
- Arm sales managers with high impact questions that ensure positive adoption and execution
- Clearly recognize the sales manager role as a multiplier for success

2. Identify What Great Looks Like For Each Role. And Use It To Build The Right Team.

- Implement a talent audit of existing team members to assess their capability against prescribed competencies
- Recruit and select new hires according to competencies and propensity to be successful in the role
- Define and implement performance management systems that impact behavior
- Measure and improve productivity by understanding capacity and capability

3. Talent Needs Development. Provide it.

- Deploy onboarding programs for sales managers and sales teams to shorten time-to-productivity
- Provide development tools and manager coaching to overcome knowledge, skills and behavior gaps
- Support development with just-in-time tools that help embed skills and new behaviors
- Define plans to sustain the impact of investments in staff development over time
- Measure the impact of investments in staff development
- Develop plans and paths for progression and transition within the organization

4. Engage Executives. Engage Sales.

- Ensure leaders engage with critical sales initiatives and recognize the importance of impact
- Communicate clear and consistent messages around the rationale for change
- Inspect and drive behavior change throughout the organization
- Hold direct reports accountable for cascading change and creating a waterfall effect throughout the organization

5. Pay Fairly. Reward. Reward. Reward.

- Design compensation plans that attract high calibre sales professionals
- Reward and reinforce the right/desired behaviors

6. Define Marketing. Define Sales. Then Align Them.

- Define the role of Marketing in the nurturing process before sales interaction begins
- Develop Service Level Agreements that clearly define the responsibilities and accountabilities of the Sales and Marketing organizations in lead management
- Align marketing collateral with the key phases of the client buying process

7. Structure Sales the Right Way.

- Define and articulate the organization structure to align with go-to-market strategy
- Evaluate multiple dimensions of executing go-to-market strategy (inside sales, hunters, farmers, channels, industry segmentation, product specialization, etc.)

8. Get Territorial. And Plan Accordingly.

- Assess the current territory plan to understand strengths, gaps, opportunities and threats
- Develop growth strategies and action plans
- Assess capabilities of sales to execute the growth plans
- Coach sales teams to develop and execute business plans for their territories
- Establish a cadence to manage the pipeline as a way to inspect execution of the business plans

9. Create Effective Account Management.

- Identify high potential accounts that warrant significant resource investment
- Help the organization clearly articulate an internal and external client-facing account management plan that fosters collaboration
- Optimize internal resources to maximize the client experience and ensure resource commitment

10. Develop Key Metrics that Matter. And Use Them.

- Identify lagging indications of performance against activity and financial objectives
- Define Key Predictive Indicators that are the basis for in-the-moment qualitative assessments of account relationships and opportunity quality
- Define measures of success in each role

11. Force Forecasting. Master the Pipeline.

- Develop a cadence, methodology and discipline around sales forecasting
- Improve accuracy of forecasting through the consistent use of Key Predictive Indicators
- Inspect the quality and quantity of the pipeline

12. Adopt a CRM Tool. And enforce it.

- Leverage a CRM tool to provide insight into forecasting and sales pipeline
- Engage sales teams to ensure quality data is entered and updated in the CRM consistently
- Enforce accountability and usage of the technology through effective methodology

13. Enable Sales. Enable Them Again.

- Provide tools that are integral to key activities within the sales process, such as playbooks, proposal templates, pitch documents, and best practice resources
- Identify partners who offer best-in-class content management tools for just-in-time delivery of marketing and proposal support materials
- Use technologies that parallel solutions to client expectations and buying styles
- Encourage the use of technologies like CRM application overlays that facilitate transitions from need to solution to scope to pricing to proposal to contract

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