

## **The Process of Great Selling**

The steps you take to win business can make or break your success. In many companies, the sales process is an afterthought – technology companies, in general, are running at lightning speed and no one stops to think about the process. Sales teams have their heads down and they continue to plug away at their contact list day after day hitting the phones, traveling the airways, and pounding the pavement. In the meantime, their sales process goes untracked and performance continues to be unpredictable.

### **- Unleashing Your Sales Process -**

It was automobile manufacturer Henry Ford who said, “Failure is only an option to begin again more intelligently.” Well, even your most conscientious, eager-to-close salespeople can keep trying, but if they don’t have a blue print to guide them through a successful sales strategy, failure often leads to further sales disasters.

Every sales organization has top performers – the selling stars that meet and exceed their numbers every month, every quarter. Wouldn’t it be great if you could bottle the strategies and tactics that your sales stars follow and then unleash this “secret sauce” upon the rest of the sales organization? Every sales rep would be more productive because they’d know exactly how to respond through each stage of the cycle.

### **- The 20-60-20 Pyramid -**

Think of your sales organization as a pyramid cut into three – the top, the middle, and the bottom. At the top, you have the top 20 percent of your sales performers. These are your superstars – they know how to sell. You need these top performers to stay focused on selling because they are probably responsible for more than 50 percent of your company’s revenue. At the bottom of the triangle are your poorest performers, like new hires. Then, in the middle you have mediocre sales performers – they hit their numbers occasionally, but not steadily. The key here is to focus on lifting the middle performers up to the top, creating a much more powerful selling team. In a sense, you want to rebuild the pyramid and fill it with sales reps that consistently hit their numbers, while displacing the lower 20 percent of your poor performers. By identifying the best practices that the top 20 percent follow, and implementing their approach to support, guide, and coach the middle 60 percent, you can significantly enhance performance. Begin by surveying your top sales performers and asking them some basic questions to get a better understanding for their process. Here are some examples:

1. How do you differentiate yourself, the company, and the products/services you are selling?
2. How do you handle objections to close a deal faster?
3. How do you obtain and leverage a relationship with the decision maker?
4. What is your methodology behind follow up calls and information distribution?
5. What types of materials, collateral, or presentations are best received by prospects?

Based on the answers, you can then create a template that your entire sales organization can follow to help increase their efficiency, productivity, and effectiveness. Once you have identified your winning sales processes and best practices, you will have a blueprint for success.

### **- Hitting Forecasted Numbers -**

The objective now is to take the blueprint you’ve identified and ingrain it into the daily routine of your sales team to help guide best practices and track sales performance.

Following the same process gives the entire sales team a common vocabulary and common metrics to achieve success. Developing a tight and repeatable sales process is how you’ll obtain more accurate forecasting. Improved forecasting starts with a process and is sustained with a technology solution that provides workflow capabilities to map your best sales practices.

It’s important that the technology used to automate your sales processes goes deeper than high-level milestones (e.g., suspecting, prospecting, presenting, negotiating, etc.). In those instances, your forecasting is based on your sales rep’s instinct versus the actual completed activities at a particular stage in the process. Instead, the technology should help guide your reps through each activity, which is then used automatically to generate forecasts. And, because your forecast is activity-based, not milestone-based, you can obtain greater granularity in reporting.

Having forecasts derived from the activities within the process ensures that your sales predictions aren't based on guesstimates, but actual activities that have been completed, denied, or stalled. Again, obtaining accuracy in your reporting all starts with having a blueprint for success enabling the majority of your sales team to perform like your sales leaders.

**- Start Selling Productively -**

Today's business environment is extremely competitive. Thousands of technology companies are competing in every market, every day, to sell their products. How do you get better salespeople and better sales? Identify the best practices of your top sales performers, embed and reinforce them into every sales rep's daily routine, leverage the process to generate accurate forecasts and empower the team to hit revenue targets. And most importantly, don't forget the process...it's the key to great selling.

Typically, only 20 percent of a company's entire sales team is considered to be top performers. Salesnet's workflow technology guides the rest of the team towards increased success and a higher percentage of top performers.

Salesnet. Better Salespeople. Better Sales.