



COMBINED BUSINESS SOLUTIONS LIMITED
delivering corporate value

Why don't sales people perform?

Why Don't Salespeople Perform?

One of the main reasons salespeople are often seen to be underperforming is that their companies don't have an internal system or process for creating continuous improvement. Let's look at how an organisation can really work at developing its salespeople.

New hires are trained in salesmanship skills

All new hires in sales are put through a training programme that teaches them not just about the company and its products but also about the 'right way' to work in selling. Here are some of the topics that this programme would cover:

- . • How to make a sales call
- . • How to create and maintain a customer relationship
- . • How to prospect for new business
- . • How to get an appointment with a prospect
- . • How to get information about a prospect's business
- . • How to keep records of their sales activities
- . • How to follow-up with customers

This is a basic course in salesmanship and you may expect that many new hires in the selling department would already know all about these things. But there is a 'company (our) way' of doing them and that should be taught at the onset.

Salespeople are told their key performance indicators and monitored on them

From day one until they retire or leave for other reasons, every salesperson needs to be kept informed of their rate of progress, and so does management. This begins by setting out the key performance indicators the salesperson will be assessed against and the benchmarks they will be expected to perform to at the time they begin with the company. Which key performance indicators are used will vary from one firm to another, but can include such things as revenue per customer, number of prospects contacted in a period, conversion rate of prospects to customers, and so forth.

The progress of every salesperson should be constantly monitored so that both they and management have a good awareness of how they're performing. Any problem areas can be quickly detected and corrective measures applied if monitoring is carried out effectively. Another important thing is to keep looking out for management talent among your sales team. Leaders are best found on the battlefield and not sourced from those who stay on the sidelines.

Training and education are provided ongoing

Most salespeople are driven to achievement, and that means they appreciate anything that will make them better at their work. Regular skill improvement programmes that will hone their selling talents may take away some of their face-to-face time with customers, but it can also make them much better at turning contacts into customers in the longer run.

There are several good training programmes available that can be used, but a word of warning - avoid the 'motivational' materials out there and only use the content that is going to have real and lasting value to your sales team. Review everything yourself to be sure it's got that kind of worth; trying to get your salespeople interested in something that won't actually improve their skills and knowledge is a waste of time.

Salespeople are encouraged to network

Schedule regular get-togethers of the sales team and encourage them to share positive experiences with their colleagues. They're much more likely to listen to a fellow salesperson first-hand than they are to read a newsletter recapturing a stranger's sales exploits. Networking can be combined with training and developmental sessions, and if properly structured will raise morale and enable the 'older and wiser' salespeople to transmit their knowledge to the salespeople on their way up.

Outstanding performance is rewarded

Salespeople who achieve significant accomplishments must be rewarded and their success given some recognition in-house. It may take some kind of incentive to stimulate them to reach for their best, but that's an investment that has to be made. Compensation systems and strategies for recognition of success must be part of the overall structure of the organisation.

Don't believe that a good salesperson is necessarily just born that way. There's an awful lot that can be done to improve the selling skills of anybody, and it's critical to ensure that your sales team are given the opportunity to learn them along with the motivation to employ them.



Want to find out more? Looking for effective sales training?

Call today on 01743 249992, or

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