

How to Boost Revenues with Inside Sales Enablement

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1. **Training: Setting the Foundation**

If you want reps with the skills and confidence to do their jobs well, sales training is essential. That includes providing them with education on your markets, customers and, of course, products. Also, share with them the best practices for sales that you've developed over the years. And let's not forget soft skills and sales methodology training. Even though you may have a seasoned inside sales team, it does not mean that they cannot benefit from good old fashion soft skills training or by learning new sales techniques.

Since your inside salespeople are likely in a central location, it's easier to

schedule training sessions with them. This proximity allows you to offer education a small piece at a time, so it's easy to digest. You can also use online learning management systems that enable you to build courses quickly and present your information in a visually appealing and consistent way.

2. Coaching: Reinforcing and Building on Knowledge

There's only so much an individual can absorb and retain at once. Once they're on the job, of course, they will start to use and reinforce their newfound knowledge. If you want to move them along the learning curve rapidly, however, you should provide individual feedback on an ongoing basis. So listen to some of your reps' calls and find out where they might be tripping up and missing opportunities. As soon as possible, talk with the rep and offer suggestions. They'll likely appreciate your interest in their success.

The best approach is to provide coaching advice a couple of times a week, just a little at a time. For example, you might spend five minutes with a rep explaining how they could have better presented a product's benefits in a recent call. Because you are applying your coaching moment to a phone call the salesperson just completed, your advice is more likely to sink in.

Another way to help enhance your reps' skills is to encourage them to review their calls. Doing so allows them to hear for themselves issues that they could have handled better. For instance, a rep may discover that he or she did not listen carefully enough to the prospect's concerns, thus missing an opportunity to guide the prospect to a beneficial solution.

3. A Sales Process Proven to Succeed

If you want your revenue to be predictable, you need to design a sales process, from the first contact to a closed deal, that's efficient and repeatable. It maps out everything you have to do — from generating and qualifying leads to building trust and closing the sale. It's likely that the first process you develop will not be the winning one. Therefore, use all the data available, from your marketing automation and customer relationship management (CRM) solution, to optimize your sales process. In the end, you should be able to view your sales pipeline and understand the metrics well enough to predict revenues in the upcoming months.

4. Provide Tools to Make Selling Easier

I've mentioned a few tools in this article but it is worth laying out which ones are most important for getting the job done. In addition to marketing automation and CRM, you should take advantage of market intelligence software, business directories, virtual conference solutions, online learning management systems and automatic dialers. These tools enable your reps to spend their time engaging successfully with prospects and customers rather than handling administrative tasks.

5. The Right Content

Your reps should not be responsible for all the communications. Often it's better if they can provide content that prospects and customers can consume on their own time, such as blogs, e-books and webinars. This material should be thoughtfully designed so that it bounces the typical questions that buyers ask when seeking a solution.

In addition to having content they can share with customers, salespeople should also have information they can use in their one-to-one communications. For instance, while I don't recommend scripts for consultative selling, talking points can be useful for structuring conversations. Other helpful information includes credibility-boosting statistics, answers to frequently asked questions, guidelines on overcoming objections, competitive comparisons and sales email templates they can customize during personal outreach.

The recipe for predictable and successful selling includes many ingredients. While you may not be able to add each of them today, you can address them over time. Perhaps you start with your sales process and then invest in the tools you need to make it as efficient as possible. Part of that process is determining and creating the content that supports it. Once these items are in place, you can train and coach your reps to implement the sales process successfully.

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