

Revenue Engine™ Situations

**What makes the
difference between
sales training
success or disaster?**

Dealing with the critical situations that impede or enable growth.

**Do companies have
a revenue problem
here in America?**

What about you?

According to highly respected
researchers:

- Less than 50% of salespeople make quota
- Only 13% of companies feel that their sales skills exceed expectations
- The average tenure of a VP of Sales is 19 months.
- 60% of new salespeople turn over in their 1st year
- 80% of marketing collateral is considered useless by sales people.
- Win rates are at or near all-time lows
- Quota attainment is about as low as it's been in 10 years

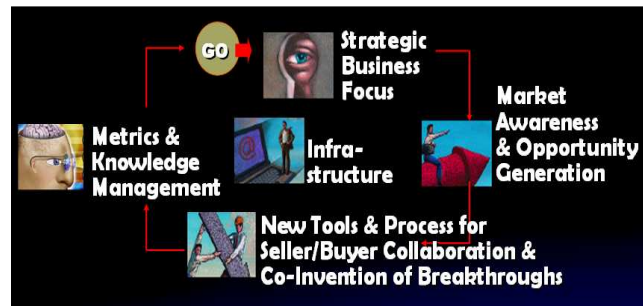
If you're an executive thinking about getting sales training for your team, ask two sets of questions:

1. Ask yourself:

Are my sales people problem-solving new business hunters or product-oriented order-takers? If it's the latter, you must make the "rescue or replace" decision. A sales training company can help.

If you have the right people, ask "do we have a sales training problem? Or, does my company and its products, services, or solutions have a strategic focus and value proposition problem?"

- How well do you meet the customers' needs when compared to your competitors? 80% of sales shortfalls are caused by poor strategic focus (the answer to "Why you? What's in it for me"), bad value propositions and questionable company reputations.
- "Is the problem we solve so important that it will be budgeted? Or are we always #6 on the customers' Top 5 list of funded initiatives?"



“How much time are my salespeople spending on actually selling?”

- Research also shows that for many organizations, 80% of a salesperson’s week is spent on CRM System entry, travel, lunches, administration, order processing, planning, and putting out fires caused by others.

2. Ask the companies who provide sales training:

“How do you assess what’s wrong with my sales program?”

Make sure you’re identifying the problem that must be fixed. It may be that all phases of the sales process, and all tactics and tools aren’t broken.

“How many new clients did you work with in the past 12 months?”

Why did they hire you? What were the results they got? Can I talk to them?

“What are the two most important things that differentiate your training, tactics, tools, and process from that of your competitors when applied to my problem?”

- Think about it. Over 1 million people have undergone consultative sales training. Experienced buyers have endured thousands of sales presentations, telesales calls, and proposals...99% of which look or sound the same. They know how to take control of the process and minimize your profitability should you win.
- Can the sales training company immediately define the answers? It’s a disqualifier if they have to think about it. Means they’re not very good salespeople, don’t practice what they preach, and shouldn’t be training your people!

“How many years of front line sales and sales management experience does the individual who will be conducting the training have?” In my industry and solution or close to it?

- If the answer is less than 5 years, and similar to your industry, game over.

What % sales increase did the last two companies your trainer worked with achieve in their first full year, (smoothed for economic conditions)?

“How will we measure our success?”

This involves more than dollars sold. How efficient are we? How good are we at converting leads into prospects? What’s our win%? What would change around here after your initial sales training program?

Will you offer a fee % holdback that we don’t have to pay until the goals you say are achievable are met?

“How is your training best integrated with the marketing effort of my company?”

- Much has been said about the integration of sales and marketing. Believe me. This involves more than generating the right leads and pursuing them. Listen carefully to their answer. If they’re not fluent in the integration of sales and marketing, look further.

The most critical question is:

“How simple, easy to retain, and uncomplicated is your training?”

I’ve studied quite a few sales methodologies. Most are overcomplicated and overstuffed with more steps, tactics, to-do’s, metrics, and sales jiu jitsu than a black belt with a mensa membership could perform.

Most sales training programs are like going to an all-you-can-eat buffet. The trainers say that if you want to run a world class sales program and grow up to be big and strong like them, trainees need to eat every dish (execute all steps of the process, and conduct all actions in each step).

This leads to the sales results cited at the head of this chapter, and the findings of recent research: “Most sales training is forgotten within 120 days.” “Most salespeople and companies believe that success requires continuous learning in the areas they need help in.” And, “sales management wants a reinforcement model that makes sure they keep learning.”

I think (without any supporting research other than personal front line selling and sales management experience in many companies and clients) that sales training isn’t forgotten. Trainers can’t admit that their regimen is overcomplicated, so the lack of retention has to be the trainee’s fault. Salespeople can’t admit that they couldn’t remember it all, and need a reason their numbers are low, so they ask for lots of continuous and expensive training.

Salespeople “forget” most sales training because they believe it’s too complex to learn, too much to remember, and of too little value. And, what is retained is often misapplied in the heat of battle.

This leads to the trainers’ emphasis on “more”...more training, continuous learning, and ongoing reinforcement of a program that was flawed to begin with. The beneficiaries of this approach are the sales trainers. They get an annuity revenue stream from reinforcing existing training while introducing a never-ending stream of new material.

The more effective and absorbable your initial is, the less reinforcement you’ll need to keep momentum high.

The best reinforcement of all is WINNING.

People remember and do more of what works, and less of what doesn’t.