3 Ways Your Sales Team Can

Stand Out and Sell More in 2022

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FranklinCovey

Does your sales team stand out?

Everyone likes to think that they are different. No one wants to be average. Yet, to clients, salespeople don't often stand out at all, leading to dismal average win rates of 17% globally.[1]



What's going wrong?

It isn't enough to simply be different—you must be strikingly different in ways that actually matter. After six years of intensely focused research involving nearly 3,000 sales professionals from 135 countries, we've discovered three ways top sales performers differentiate from the herd.

Now, you can learn what it takes to be a winner.

[1] Allred, Ken (2021).Buyers' Perceptions of Differentiation in B2B Purchase Decisions—Primary Intelligence Report, March 5, 2021

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1. Build a Championship Sales Mentality

Move sales leaders beyond passive buy-in to active championship.

If you're going to stand out and sell more in 2022, you will invariably have to implement a culture-change initiative. Use the following framework to build a championship sales mentality so that your sales leaders and teams embrace new initiatives in the midst of hitting their numbers.

Create urgency

Guide the sales leaders from wanting change to needing change. Clarify the goal or mission, then examine what needs to change in the organization, with leaders, and with individual contributors. Leverage a "from/to" framework for this discussion: Challenge the leaders to think deeply about what needs to change ("from") and what the ideal state would be ("to") within the organization, themselves, and the sales people.

Create a vision for change

Make sure you've defined a clear vision that's easy to understand, aspirational, achievable, and motivational. For example, "We want to be the sales gold standard of our industry. A destination employer. A trusted advisor. A growth leader."

Communicate the vision

Don't just set a vision, then never talk about it again—discuss it often. Reward actions and behaviors that align with the vision. When you inevitably encounter undesired behaviors, use them as opportunities to re-align to and reinforce the vision.

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Build a Championship Sales Mentality (cont.)

Culture is the collective actions and behaviors of a group of people. It isn't enough to simply sustain the sales culture; it must be deeply anchored in the organization.

Form a powerful coalition

Meaningful change requires the engagement of the right influencers in the organization—and that doesn't necessarily mean the people with fancy titles. When influencers speak, others stop and listen. When decisions are being considered, influencers are consulted. When new ideas are forming, influencers are involved. Find these people and form a coalition.

Remove obstacles

Often when facing a new goal or mission, leaders focus on the enablers of change. This is a good approach, but don't forget obstacles that might get in the way. Constraining obstacles may include naysayers, current business practices and beliefs, or other business issues that divert resources.

Anchor the changes in the culture

This requires thoughtful planning and skillful execution in regards to the engagement and expectations of people, the business processes and practices, and the use of technology. Your people should always demonstrate the internal and customer behaviors that define your culture.

Review your business processes and practices. Are they in alignment with what your culture stands for? If your culture is customer-centric, are your processes and practices the same? Is your use of technology enabling what you value, or is it an obstacle?

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Build a championship sales mentality:
Create short-term wins

Help your team build momentum by achieving some early wins. Instead of setting end-of-quarter or end-of-year goals, set short-term goals and expect to see results immediately.

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2. Predictably Hit Your Sales Target

Quarter after quarter and year after year, regardless of the variables affecting the market.

It all begins with consistency—the key to moving from mediocrity to excellence. Here are four concepts that, if implemented, lead to consistent results and enable sales leaders to predictably hit their targets.

P/PC Balance

Sales leaders always face tension between results and the ability to produce those results. Stephen R. Covey wrote, "Effectiveness lies in the balance, what I call the P/PC Balance. P stands for production of desired results, the golden eggs. PC stands for production capability, the ability or asset that produces the golden eggs."

In sales, the P/PC Balance is about balancing between two extremes:

- **Extreme No. 1:** Focusing only on golden eggs or the sales target (P). In the long-run, you lose your ability to produce results because you never nurture your production capability.

- **Extreme No. 2:** Focusing only on the goose, or sales skills and expertise (PC). Without short-term results, you will not survive (literally or figuratively) to see the long-term payoff.

Focus

After establishing a sales target, sales leaders need to identify how much of it they can achieve through their current momentum, which is often referred to as "lights-out revenue." How much of the sales target is likely to happen by just continuing as is? Often, the answer to this question is shy of the target, leading to a gap. The best sales leaders focus the majority of their energy at this gap.

Identify what individuals will do that is both predictive of closing the gap and influenceable or within their control. We call these lead measures. Then bring increased focus to the lead measures and the weekly activities that advance them.

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Predictably Hit Your Sales Target (cont.)

Average leaders, who coach and teach, can only take you so far. To hit your targets year after year, you need great leaders—ones that create more coaches and teachers. Adopt this mentality towards leadership, and you'll create a culture where everyone contributes as coaches and teachers.

Flash Point

In chemistry, the flash point is the lowest temperature at which vapors will combust when given an ignition source. In business, the flash point is when the interaction between a salesperson and a customer results in a successful outcome (as defined by the customer): a sales "flash," so to speak.

While it's true that everything a company has—its products, services, innovations, marketing—contributes to that flash point, a poorly handled sales call is guaranteed to result in a fizzle, not a flash. The result is that margins erode, client relationships deteriorate, and the company's reputation in the marketplace suffers.

Top leaders have a structure for planning, preparing, and executing client calls and meetings. They expect team members to role-play and practice giving and receiving coaching from fellow team members.

Transparency

In business, transparency often refers to inspection or compliance. But when building a high-performance sales organization, transparency means gaining a clear focus into the whole operation. This allows you to identify where things are going awry and implement real-time adjustments.

Transparency also enables all members of the team to know what each person is doing to move the needle. This transparency goes from top to bottom and in both directions, with everyone equally accountable.

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We often say, “No involvement, no commitment.” When people have a choice, they feel involved and empowered to use their skills in the most productive ways to address any problems in their performance.



Predictably hit your sales target:
Create Willing Motivation

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3. Create Compelling Contrast

People make decisions based on differences, not similarities.

Contrast shows clients the difference between where they are and where they could be, and follows a formula. It's **R+D+M=SD**. R stands for Relevant. D stands for Distinct and M stands for Memorable. SD stands for Strikingly Different. Master this formula, in your own style, and clients will see how they will be different and better by working with you.

If you can be dialed in to what is most important to the customer, that's the first filter you've got to get through. To illustrate this, imagine you have the following symptoms:

> *A few months ago, you developed a small rash on your arm. You've tried topical creams, but they only stop the itching for a few hours and aren't getting rid of the rash.*
>
> *For the last four weeks, when you wake up in the morning you have a rapid twitch under your right eye. It flutters non-stop for about a half hour and then it goes away… until the next morning. And, for the last two weeks, just before you go to bed, you get severe cramps in both your lower calf muscles. You've tried stretching, heat, ice packs, and you've even stopped using your favorite exercise machine—but the cramps haven't gone away.*

Now, imagine you see an ad on your commute that says, *"Do you have these symptoms as a result of your commute? Small rash on your arm? Rapid twitch under your right eye? Severe cramps in both calves at night? Get rid of these annoying symptoms now! Call today! 1-800-555-METRO"*

Become relevant by focusing on what matters most to the client. Immerse yourself in the likely circumstances that the client is facing. Use their own words, specific to their industry, company, and situation. Pay close attention to the emotions they share and know the difference between symptoms and impact.

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Create Compelling Contrast (cont.)

Relevance is one part of the equation to provide contrast and become strikingly different. From the client's perspective you must also have, do, or provide something different.

Distinct

Being distinct means that the words you're saying, the solutions you're offering, and the way that you're engaging with a client is different and better than what they're doing today. To be distinct, you can draw contrast and highlight your striking difference in three ways:

- The future state you're proposing is different from the client's status quo.
- From the client's perspective, you have, do, or provide something different.
- You engage in a way that's different.

Distinct never exists alone—it requires close association or juxtaposition against something else. The best way to communicate differences is to use "from—to" comparisons that show different and better client outcomes.

Memorable

The third variable of creating compelling contrast pulls together what makes you relevant and distinct into messages that are memorable. This means you take your relevant and distinct differences and share them in powerful short stories that are catchy, clever, and mentally "sticky."

There are two things to always keep in mind as you work to be memorable:

- Be creative: Use visual metaphors or short stories related to everyday life. For example, we worked with a salesperson that was selling a technology transformation project to a client. In presenting her solution, the salesperson used the metaphor of going from a diesel locomotive fleet that can go 80 miles per hour, to a maglev bullet train fleet that can achieve speeds up to 375 miles per hour. All of her messaging aligned with that big idea.
- Be clear and concise: Make your messages easy to share and hard to forget so they are repeatable by your clients when you are not around.

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Create compelling contrast:
Know the difference between symptoms and impact

Symptoms are what the client sees, feels, or hears, that lets them know they have an issue.

Impacts are the negative consequences if nothing is done, or the positive consequences if a desired result can be achieved.

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Help Your Sales Team Stand Out

We watched over 1,600 meetings salespeople had with C-suite executives. Over 70% of the time, clients said, "I was looking forward to the meeting, but I didn't have the conversation I was hoping to have."

Clients want something different, something distinct that will get them where they're trying to go. But they aren't getting what they want. What they get is more of the same, where everybody looks and sounds the same.

Salespeople think they are serving up something different, but it isn't enough to simply be different. You must be different in ways that actually matter to the client.

Since clients aren't getting what they want, how do you plan to close the gap?

At FranklinCovey, we empower sales leaders to evolve sales teams personally and professionally—to enhance performance, achieve sustainable results, and gain the ultimate competitive advantage.

Learn how FranklinCovey can help your organization stand out and sell more in 2022 with our Strikingly Different Selling system

To learn more, email us at info@franklincovey.com, visit franklincovey.com,

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