

ANTHONY CHAINE

MASTER
YOUR
SALES
DESTINY



THE EXACT SALES INTELLIGENCE
THAT CAN GET YOU
AHEAD IN BUSINESS

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INTRODUCTION



As a sales leader, I have been privileged to work with great organizations, where I've acquired abundant experience building and developing many sales divisions. Throughout my career, I worked and served many talented passionate sales leaders, as well as many poor leaders.

I have operated my sales career on several occasions without the presence or supervision of a direct sales leader. I have worked for several Fortunes 500 companies, and also worked as a business consultant and entrepreneur.

I've learned that great leaders prepare you for the challenges of tomorrow and educate you on how to withstand the unyielding pressure of the sales profession while meeting your sales objectives.

I will show you in the following chapters how you can operate as your own sales manager to control your career and destiny. I will lay out a path on how you can set your career in motion, while coaching and training yourself and others to become future sales leaders.

Multiple studies have shown that people quit their jobs because of terrible sales managers or operate without a manager's assistance or direction. In writing this book, I have taken many of my examples from my own practice, research, and consulting experiences.

I hope I will further advance your confidence and understanding that you are the master of your own sales destiny. You are already equipped with the right level of intelligence, talent, and resourcefulness you need to be extremely successful in sales. This book was written to serve as a guide to help you self-manage your activity and efforts to achieve exponential success.

CHAPTER 1

YOUR NEW JOB ROLE



“Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven’t found it yet, keep looking, and don’t settle. As with all matters of the heart, you’ll know when you find it.” — Steve Jobs

Most sales organizations rely on their salespeople to create revenue in quantity large enough to sustain and grow the business. The best salespeople are the individuals who are self-driven and genuinely enthusiastic in helping their customers resolve problems and achieve a specific outcome. Great salespeople are always seeking ways to self-develop and improve to generate significant contribution and become top performers.

The best sales managers are avid learners, always seeking new knowledge and methods to train, educate, and develop their team members to reach excellence. These leaders achieve

these objectives by building a competitive edge, exploring and experimenting with new ideas, and harnessing marketing capability to create unique value that aids their customers in their buying decision-making process.

As a sales professional, having the add-on value of a sales manager is exceptionally beneficial. The sales manager plays multiple roles, ranging from creating a healthy sales culture, addressing underperformances, facilitating communication with cross-functional teams, pushing deals stuck in the sales process, removing obstacles, and assisting with closing complex deals.

Having a good sales manager is a bonus that one should treasure. During my twenty-year sales career, I have witnessed multiple perennial President Club goers relying heavily on their sales managers to get things done on their behalf; many become too dependent on their sales manager to move deals, address issues with underwriting, or find solutions to the lingering problems in addition to eliminating obstacles.

Despite the fact that most sales managers despise acting as personal secretaries for these demanding top producers, many accept the additional workload because of their dependency on these big-producing salespeople.

I witnessed a situation where as much as 75 percent of the sales manager's time was spent on a couple of high-demand, big-producing salespeople managing a few large corporate accounts.

This left little time to assist the broader constituency of the team. That's incredibly wrong, but it's common in most sales organizations. Sales managers are often led by fear rather than logic when keeping up with their job priorities.

Your success as a sales professional depends on your ability to persuade your customers on the value of buying from you and your company rather than from a competitor.

People are buying you first. Your education, attitude, professionalism, and genuine care matter, in addition to your products, price, and competitive advantages. Your success in sales, however, depends primarily on your mindset, skillset, and toolset. You are the bridge that connects your customers with your products, services, and company.

People's Buying Myths

- **People buy from people they like!** It's partly a true statement. Customers buy business solutions that resolve their current problems. Liking you is undoubtedly a bonus.
- **People hate to be sold!** True. Customers love to buy, but don't like to be pushed. Consultative selling, coupled with genuine care, gets extraordinary results.
- **Likeability is everything!** Not really. Customers will buy from you at a higher margin and more frequently if you are trustworthy, professional, reliable, can connect at an emotional level, and can resolve the business issue.

Expertise is the winning edge

You are the key to your customer's growth and the solution to some of the problems that hinder their prosperity. Your ability to connect with people, build lasting relationships, retain your existing clients' portfolio and expand it over time by cementing trusted relationships will not only dictate your income but define the heights of your professional career.

As a sales professional, you are your own sales manager. You are responsible for meeting or exceeding your quota and meeting customers' needs while following the company business strategy. This enormous responsibility will require your total focus, adaptability, issue resolution, and ability to navigate through complex internal and external hurdles to get things done efficiently.

Also, it would help if you had a total understanding of your industry's market dynamics and competing forces.

PROACTIVE LEARNING

Write exactly how you will use what you learned to handle challenges, grow your customer base, and create new revenue.

What abilities do you need to hone to connect with your customers at a deeper level, and to achieve your personal and professional goals?

CHAPTER 2

YOU ARE ACCOUNTABLE FOR YOUR PERFORMANCE



“Accountability separates the wishers in life from the action-takers who care enough about their future to account for their daily actions.”— John DiLemme

Having a great sales manager is a bonus. However, it would help if you held yourself accountable for your performance, production, actions, learning, and self-development.

The sales industry has experienced several dramatic changes in the last forty years, primarily because of the advance of technology, communication, telemarketing, and the advent of the internet.

Salespeople today have access to robust data, including artificial intelligence, big data, and robotics. These new technologies can generate rapid analytical detailed reports that allows one to have a good understanding of customers’ buying

powers, past online purchases, and psychological tendencies. These tools are powerful as they enable salespeople to customize their messages and communicate more effectively with their targeted customers.

Technological advance, no matter how sophisticated, still require a human touch, because sales at its very core is nothing more than one person representing an organization selling a product or services to resolve another customer's problem.

From a customer perspective, it all comes down to the following basics:

1. Who are you? Who do you represent?
2. How credible is your value proposition?
3. Do you understand thoroughly the issue that I have?
4. Can you resolve my problem cost-effectively?
5. Are you and your company reliable and trustworthy in the long run?

The salesperson's ability to make each customer feel that their concerns and needs can be addressed professionally with attention and care can make a huge difference in the customer's buying decisions.

People reject robotic, scripted calls, but embrace personal, honest calls with salespeople who genuinely care about their well-being, privacy, and safety.

Your sales manager perspective or your viewpoint if you're acting as your own sales manager.

1. Are you selling the company's entire product line?
2. Are you investing time selling the right product based on the customer's needs, or are you selling products based on your comfort level or based on your compensation structure advantage point?
3. Are you expanding and retaining your key accounts?
4. Are you winning a larger market share?
5. Are you adding a healthy number of new net customers?
6. Are you winning back lost customers?
7. Are you perceived as a growth partner or just another vendor?
8. Do you have the right skills, knowledge, and tools to achieve your goals?

Review the above questions and be brutally honest with yourself. The above items will allow you to discover the areas where you need to focus more on improving your overall performances.

People may buy your business solution to meet a specific need, but in the process, they are purchasing your expertise and your loyalty. You are the face of the company and the trusted brand that facilitates the connection. Trust, authenticity, and care is the secret to long-term business relationships.

The company processes, systems, business solutions, and innovative technologies are powerful tools, but the most potent element is you.

Selling on Value

Selling has everything to do with the added value that you share with your customer to help them attain their strategic business goals.

As a sales professional, you are responsible for every aspect of your work. You are responsible for achieving your business goals (quota attainment, orders, revenue generation, sales, gross margin), and retaining and growing your client base with a sound go-to-market strategy.

To succeed, you will need a good dose of self-discipline, self-motivation, resourcefulness, and abundant grit. You will also need to work on your self-development daily to improve the quality of your results as a sales professional.

As a sales professional, you should be:

- Open to having your assumptions and beliefs changed as you evolve in your career.
- Open to challenging other people's assumptions and ideas to understand their perspectives to grow as an individual.
- Willing to take the initiative beyond your comfort zone, to learn to grow, and expand your knowledge.

- Eager to assume additional responsibilities and volunteer in projects that can expand your mental horizons and expose you to new possibilities.
- Holding yourself accountable for your results, progress, and shortcomings. Your performance is your own doing, and you are entirely in control of its outcome.
- Continuously learning and expanding your knowledge. It would help if you also volunteered to share your expertise by educating your junior peers.
- Viewing growth and expansion as your duty and obligation.
- Ensuring the quality of your delivery and promises.

In addition, as a self-managed sales professional you should hold yourself accountable for the following tasks:

- Exceeding your monthly and yearly goals. Meeting the company goals is often the minimum standard benchmark to keep the job.
- Exceptional performance is often validated when you operate at fifty percent above your goal or higher.
- Building and managing your performance activity to create interest and move the sales stage forward.
- Carefully reviewing your pipeline and current opportunities.
- Prospecting and identifying new net deals added to your pipeline.
- Generating new leads with the right size and value.

- Reviewing your win rate, losses, no-decision-made deals and abandonment frequently.
- Identifying your sales cycle time, the velocity of conversion and stage progress.
- Identifying and involving purchase influencers to move the decision makers forward.
- Creating awareness and establish need.
- Sharing a customized value proposition that creates buyer's initiative and desire.
- Making the sale — that is the reason you are here.

Pre-purchase

- Asking questions to understand the business's needs.
- Qualifying and assessing the customer/prospect business's needs.
- Demonstrating your business solution fit and edge.
- Demonstrating your business solution advantages versus substitute solution. Be transparent; it works.
- Listening empathetically to your customer/prospect concerns. Your job is to solve their problems.

Post-purchase.

- Ensuring proper delivery and seamless installs.
- Handling any issue that may slow down the product implementation and timely launch.
- Providing additional training to ensure staff are comfortable with product usage.

- Continuously adding value by consistently educating your customers. Introduce complementary products and solutions that will improve your customer's business.
- Communicating frequently by adding value and suggesting solutions that will benefit the customer within his industry.

Be Your Own Sales Manager

Your sales manager will hold you responsible for attaining your goals. If you are lucky, you work for a manager who will aid you in your quest to reach your real potential. However, you are responsible for your sales destiny.

You are responsible for seeking knowledge and asking for help to improve your skills, experience, mindset, and strategies. You cannot succeed in sales unless you are coachable yourself. Continuous learning and improvement is a requirement for all future sales leaders.

Your manager or veteran peers can assist you to improve on specific skill, like planning, ability to compete effectively, appointment setting and product positioning. However, your willingness and eagerness to learn is the most important attribute to your career growth.

- You are responsible for your attitude and behavioral issues.

- Work consistently to improve your collaborative skills, as well as your creative and innovative issue resolution skills.
- You have responsibilities towards your company, your customers, and yourself.
- You are 100 percent responsible for all your failures and successes. Take full ownership and responsibility for everything that happens to you.
- Holding yourself accountable for everything that happens to you is vital.
- The attainment of your goal is a mandate regardless of having a sales manager or not.
- Use your company resources effectively, i.e. CRM system, lead generation tools, and marketing tools.

PROACTIVE LEARNING

Write the areas that you need to continuously work on to sell your products, services and ideas.

Write the areas where you are responsible for self-improvement.

CHAPTER 3

GOAL SETTING RESPONSIBILITY



“You should set goals beyond your reach so you always have something to live for.”— Ted Turner

A good sales manager builds professional sales cultures, establishes goals, and manages disciplines and cadence to get every individual to achieve his goals. The sales manager is provided with marching orders from senior management, and he is expected to lead his team to sharp execution.

In case you don't have the support of a good sales manager, it would help if you held yourself accountable by setting your success track.

Your company quotas and key performance indicators (KPI) must be achieved at a minimum for you to make money and keep your job.

Your goals are not optional; they are mandated metrics that need to be met in a monthly, quarterly, and yearly basis.

Breaking down your goals into clear, manageable tasks will give you some level of clarity in your goal attainment.

The Sales Manager Role

Your sales manager's responsibility is to ensure that all team members achieve their respective goals. Most good sales managers set a clear gradual path that will get each team member to accomplish their goals.

The sales manager handles the following:

- Plans, organizes, staffs, directs and controls their subordinates' activities to achieve the company objectives
- Drives the company vision, and coalesces everyone around it.
- Ensures that customer centricity is a way of life, not just a company policy.
- Assists with product-knowledge training, and facilitates sales people's goal attainment.
- Takes an active role in the sales process by tagging proactively along.
- Demonstrates best-selling practices, and encourages adoptions of new sales methods.
- Figures out individual's capabilities, aspirations and makes each of them tick and move forward.
- Motivates, inspires, and ignites each person to perform at their full potential.

- Assists with educating the team on system updates, company processes, new programs, and advanced training to equip the team to win sales battles.
- Explains best practices to maximize one's income and generate higher margins while improving customer retention.

Do You Know Your Goals Intimately?

- What's the revenue you are responsible for generating this year?
- What specific metrics do you need to accomplish to get there?
- What technology, SaaS Revenue do you need to generate?
- What's the profit margin you should achieve?
- What conversion ratio you should aim for?
- What goals do you need to complete to feel satisfied?
- What account strategy are you pursuing to get you there?

Break Down Your Long-Term Goals into Short-Term Goals.

If your goal is to generate \$3M in total yearly revenue, that can be translated to \$750K quarterly revenue or \$250K in monthly revenue.

It's much more manageable to create a strategy to achieve \$250K in monthly revenue than focus on your yearly goal.

You can plan how many deals you need to book to achieve your goals. Assuming the average account is \$100K, then you will need to close 2.5 deals per month to meet your monthly quota.

If you average, the close ratio is 33 percent. Then you will need to compete for at least 7.5 accounts to meet your monthly goal. While this is a very simplistic example, it will help keep you on track!

Know Your numbers

Annual Total Revenue Goals	Quarterly Total Revenue Goals	Monthly Total Revenue Goals	Average Margin per Opportunity	Average Close Rate	Number of Opportunity to Monthly Goal	Number of Opportunity in Pipeline	Close Cycle
\$3,000,000	\$750,000	\$250,000	\$50,000	33%	15	45	30

Activity Plan

- Identify the metrics related to your performance against your goals.
- Create a daily, weekly, and monthly action plan that will get you to your goals.
- Ensure that you are replenishing your pipeline with new qualified opportunities and replace lost and closed deals.
- Improve your existing capabilities. For example, a 10 percent incremental increase in your closing rate will

positively impact your overall productivity and income.

- Know all your revenue bucket requirements, and create a path to achieve your macro and micro goals.

PROACTIVE LEARNING

Write down the exact responsibilities and duties of the sales manager.

Write down your exact responsibilities and duties in the absence of a sales manager or sales leader.
What would you do differently?

CHAPTER 4

FOCUS ON WHAT YOU CAN CONTROL



“Inspiration is one thing and you can’t control it, but hard work is what keeps the ship moving. Good luck means, work hard. Keep up the good work.” — Kevin Eubanks

Sales activities drive sales objectives which influence business results.

For example: Adding 16 additional prospecting calls per quarter may generate four new opportunities per quarter, which can increase your revenue by 35 percent.

Sales objectives: Whatever the goals your sales manager and company want you to achieve, your personal sales objectives should be higher. Your sales objectives are the metrics that allow you to reach your quota. It’s your go-to-market strategy.

Sales Activities: What are the actions you take daily to accomplish your sales objectives? Do you need more

opportunities? Draft a prospecting action plan and execute it until you get the intended results. Every specific outcome you are trying to achieve will require specific actions and behaviors to get you there.

Prospecting Process Drives Results

Persistence drives results: The larger your prospecting activity, the higher the number of appointments you'll generate and the sales you create.

	Leads	Meetings	Won
The Number s	8	3	1
Monthly number s	80	32	10
Your Activity	New prospect/week	New Meetings/Week	New Sales/Week

- Assuming: lead to opportunity Conversion Ratio of 40 percent
- Assuming: An opportunity Close ratio of 30 percent

Let's do the math! Exercise

If your target is 10 deals per month:

- How many appointments do you need per month?
- How many prospects do you need to get to your numbers?
- How many cold calls do you need achieve this month to get to your numbers?

Prospecting Math

Assuming the following market data for short cycle small-medium business sales cycle:

- 25 percent of prospects turn into appointments.
- 20 percent of suspects turn into prospects.
- Assuming you want to self-source six leads per month.
- Assuming your average Close Ratio is 33 percent on every appointment.

How many appointment do you need?

- Answer: 18 ($6 / .3333 = 18$)

How many prospects do you need?

- Answer: 72 ($18 / .25 = 72$)

How many suspects do you need?

- Answer: 360 ($72 / .20 = 360$)

You can do the same math to understand your quarterly and yearly prospecting goals.

Action-Plan Success Model

Prospect for opportunities: Block the necessary time daily/weekly to connect with prospects, and identify ideal potential customers, partners, associations, and influence centers that can become lead sources.

Set the appointment: Allocate time to meet in person with your customers, as well as communicate with them via social media, email, video, and text.

Qualify your clients: Probe your clients thoroughly to identify if your business solution may be a good fit for their current issue. Use this opportunity to understand your client's business and gauge their level of engagement and commitment to the partnership.

Make the Presentation: Be prepared, sell your idea and vision. Listen to customer concerns and make the necessary adjustments to meet your customer demand.

Handle objections: Lead with sound questions, validate the customer's concerns, and incorporate them into your business solution.

Close: Get the customer agreement to proceed forward.

Referrals: You delivered on your commitment, you earned their trust, now you can use your client as a source of future leads to replicate your excellent work.

A good sales manager watches your results closely and keeps you honest. As your own sales manager, however, you should be brutally realistic and honest with yourself. Face your environment as is, create a daily stretch activity plan that will get you the results you are after.

It would help if you focused on gauging your progress against your goal attainment, not your activities alone. Activities are critical to moving things forward, but results are the KPI that matter most.

Ask yourself the following questions:

- Are you progressing towards the accomplishment of your goals?
- What do you need to do to produce the necessary outcome?
- What should your focus be to achieve your goals?
- What obstacles should you overcome to get to your goals?
- How is the health of your pipeline? Do you have enough opportunities to meet your goals?
- What are your booking goals 90 days ahead?
- How many opportunities do you have in each critical stage, trailing 6 months?

Your brand increases your reach; your knowledge and expertise can attract a broader audience that can benefit from your business solutions. Your ability to master your trade and create connections across vertical markets within your industry, trade, or profession can propel your ability to generate substantial business.

PROACTIVE LEARNING

Write down all the fundamentals that affect business results.

Write down the exact success plan that you envision will create your ideal results and income.

CHAPTER 5

PIPELINE MANAGEMENT AND OPPORTUNITY STRATEGY



“To succeed, jump as quickly at opportunities as you do at conclusions.” — Benjamin Franklin

Pipeline management is the discipline of tracking and analyzing the opportunity flow throughout your pipeline with the focus on eliminating stagnations, redundancies, leakage points, and gaps.

It’s a continuous process that targets past, current, and future performances.

Your opportunity pipeline is the actual state of your business funnel that allows you to manage your day-to-day, week-to-week, month-to-month, and quarter-to-quarter activity to generate an intended outcome.

How often should you update your pipeline?

Your pipeline should be updated every time an opportunity moves from one stage to the next. Accurate forecasting requires timely and continuous updates to preserve the integrity of the data.

Pipeline Management Benefits

- Validates forecast accuracy.
- Increases your ability to generate revenue and margin.
- Fills the pipeline with quality leads.
- Provides an overview of the health of your pipeline.
- Identifies potential issues that will hinder your ability to meet goals.
- Highlights the areas that need improvement and focus.
- Keeps you honest and motivated to push forward.
- Serves as a pathway to guide your progress to achieve your goals.
- Provides quick visibility to critical metrics.

Components of a Healthy Pipeline

- Right deal size/quality and quantity.
- The right mix of deals/products and business solutions.
- A healthy balance of opportunities across different stages in the sales process.
- Proper stage classification/accurate understanding of each case.

- Alignment with company strategic business development initiatives.
- Sales milestones are met on time.

How Do You Build a Strong Pipeline?

Know Your Numbers

- Know your closing ratio.
- Know the duration of each stage of the sales process.
- Know your closing rate per each stage
- Know the health and balance of your pipeline.

Manage Pipeline Input

- Develop enough leads to support the attainment of your sales goals.
- Validate each opportunity based on merit and progress.
- Eliminate unqualified leads, redundancies, and stagnating dead leads.
- Move leads based on progress. Stay focused meeting short-term, intermediate and long-term goals.

Qualify Your Pipeline opportunities

- Strong probability – Add a close date, push forward to close.
- Medium probability – Add a close date, try to move to next stage.

- Low probability – Eliminate or tighten the close date timeframe.

Manage Your Pipeline Progress

- Manage your pipeline closely (daily, weekly, monthly, and quarterly). A tighter pipeline with a higher conversion rate is way better than a sizeable unfocused pipeline. It would help if you focused on quality above quantity, so long as you meet or exceed your goals.
- Keep an eye on your closing ratio, sales milestones, and major deals.
- Perform a deep dive into your pipeline performance to diagnose health, strengths, and weaknesses.
- Review your pipeline on a weekly basis. Identify issues and resolution, and keep your pipeline moving forward and eliminate dead opportunities.

Pipeline Review - Account Management

Pipeline review should be a daily endeavor. Using a company CRM dashboard may be a good way to evaluate your pipeline.

Check the following daily:

- Current leads status, this week, month, quarter and YTD.

- Leads status, last week and this month
- Opportunity status, this week, month, quarter, and YTD.
- Opportunity, last week and this month.
- Close Ratio – MTD, previous month, YTD?
- Deal to close this week and month by volume
- Leadership board- 10-12 won deals per month.

Lead management

- 20 new minimum leads - this week
- 15 minimum new opportunities- this week
- 2-3 deals per week – closed won this week
- 20 new minimum leads - last week
- 15 minimum new opportunities- last week
- 2-3 sales per week – closed won last week

A thorough review of your lead and opportunity pipeline demonstrates where you stand in the sales process. The key is to have enough qualified opportunities that will allow you to meet your goals.

Actively Managing your Pipeline

Are you updating and monitoring your pipeline and taking the right level of execution needed to keep a healthy pipeline?

Your Role

- Entering daily qualified opportunities into your pipeline indicating the sales stage and whether it's a commit opportunity, in progress, or an improbable win.
- Qualifying opportunities while ensuring the accuracy of the sales process.
- Advancing opportunities through the pipeline according to milestone attainment and progress achieved.
- Evaluating the opportunity based on gaps, sticking points, and obstacles.
- Strategizing to get over potential issues, gaps, and huddles.
- Accurately valuing the anticipated close date of each opportunity in your pipeline.
- Measuring and calculating the probability of your current pipeline (deal size, win rate, number of opportunities) versus your goals.

Pipeline review questions:

- How many qualified opportunities do I have in my pipeline?
- What is the total revenue margin of these opportunities?
- What probability of conversion do I need to achieve to meet my goals?
- Do I have enough to satisfy my monthly/quarterly goals?

- How many more opportunities do I need to generate to replace my lost opportunities and close deals?
- How can I move my current high-value, high-margin whale accounts forward?

Answering the above questions will make you aware of what activities you need to engage on to generate new net opportunities to achieve your short-term and long-term goals.

For example, pilots train for years to handle unexpected technical challenges. A pilot must be able to forecast the weather, predict events, identify changes, read aviation maps, navigate using electronic assistances and master the plane's controllers all for the purpose to fly and land safely, especially when things go wrong. Pilots are trained to make critical decisions to save lives, knowing that there is no room for errors. They know when to follow the rules and when to break them to save lives.

Similarly, A salesperson pipeline serves as a planning process map. You can achieve your goals, knowing the number of closed opportunities that will get you there. It's a sort of dynamic business plan that allows you to adjust and manage changes on an ongoing basis. Your results are merely the logical outcome of an effective planning process that keeps you nimble and honest.

PROACTIVE LEARNING

Review your pipeline in details, and write down the things you do well and the areas that need improvement.

Write down an action plan that will allow you to double the size of your opportunities within the next 12 months. Then, calculate the additional income you will generate hitting that target.



CHAPTER 6

LEVERAGE YOUR ORGANIZATION TO SELL MORE



“Team members need to learn to leverage one another, and that doesn’t happen over a golf game or on a phone. It happens by getting together and taking the time to know each other.” — Patrick Lencioni

You are one person, and you cannot serve your client portfolio alone. You will need to leverage the power of your company resources. Your management team, peers, partners, as well as all your internal cross-functional teams must work together to get the job done and ensure that all current and future issues will be handled professionally and on time to keep your customers satisfied.

Your past success may have depended entirely on your ability to get things done on your own. Your long-term success, however, will depend on your ability to get your internal partners to join forces with you to achieve your common objectives.

Your success will primarily depend on the strength, genuine care, and cohesiveness of the aggregate support teams that get you to the finish line. No one succeeds alone; it takes a multitude of professional people to create an efficient business.

Things will occasionally break down, technical issues will occur, and customer dissatisfaction will often ensue if the problem is not resolved quickly and satisfactorily.

As a salesperson, you certainly do not have the capacity or the bandwidth to address these daily issues on your own. It would help if you developed trusted relationships with your internal and external support staff to assist with questions like installs, implementation, marketing, legal, and finance.

Your sales manager can help assist with most of these issues. If you are operating without a sales manager, however, you will need to be proactively creative in navigating the company's internal corporate complexity to resolve your critical issues quickly.

The worst thing to do is neglect an existing customer's needs. Things tend to escalate quickly and build tension and animosity if not handled with care. It takes years to build customer trust, but only minutes to lose it. Don't jeopardize your hard work and reputation, stay customer-centric; your reputation, personal brand, and future referral depends on it.

Getting the right people to do the right things at the right time to defuse tension and resolve the problem is always paramount.

Knowing whom to go to, what to ask for, how to do it, and why you should get it done is vital to improving customer satisfaction, the influence of your brand, and your ability to win greater market share.

For example, a prominent e-commerce distributor of goods sold globally was working with a large processing company for months to ensure a smooth launch on a specific date. Several technical divisions were undertaking the development effort. However, due to poor communication management and internal rivalry among these international divisions, the project was never completed on time despite a couple of extensions. This failure cost this processing company substantial financial and reputational capital.

Building Partners' Relationship Is a Vital Process.

- Build a robust internal relationship with key people before you need any assistance. Work hard to build trust first.
- Get to be known for embracing the doctrine of customers' genuine concern and care.
- Get to know the area of people's expertise and strengths. Volunteer to occasionally assist in learning.

- Set realistic expectations with your customers and try to over-deliver. Prepare them for what they should expect and by when.
- Be candid with your internal support team, but show gratitude with kind words, emails to their managers, and occasional thank-you notes.
- Manage temperament; not everyone has patience and maturity. Work with people as they are, not how you would expect them to be.
- Build consensus before need. Prepare solid cases. Understand people's challenges and be their voice when needed.
- Get to know your internal systems, tools, processes, programs, training process and limitations intimately.
- Figure out the best way to motivate and manage your internal team in case of crises.
- Don't panic and create an unnecessary rush when under pressure. Handle the heat, stay calm, and work as fast as possible to diffuse and correct the situation.

Action Item

- Allocate time weekly to meet the crucial internal player. Get to know your company's movers and shakers. Get to know them intimately before you need their assistance.
- Ask questions: How can I help make your job easier? What are the things I should avoid?

- Build a personal rapport based on trust and mutual respect. Your private brands matter on how fast you get people's support.
- Show gratitude and appreciation for people before you need their assistance. Show civility and good gestures; people love recognition.
- Build a stable relationship with your management team. You need to know who can assist you or guide you when you're faced with significant challenges.
- Don't just ask for help, build solid cases that compel people to support your plan of action.
- Build a list of "whom to go to, and when". You need to go through all possible scenarios with your peers. Compile a file with the assistance of your peers, internal staff, and management team, and use it as an internal playbook guide. Please share it with everyone; it will come in handy in times of panic.

PROACTIVE LEARNING

Write down the exact areas that you need to improve upon to leverage all internal and external resources necessary to your success.

Write down the exact actions you would implement immediately to build long-lasting relationships with people necessary to your day-to-day business success.

CHAPTER 7

CUSTOMER CENTRICITY ABOVE ALL.



“Get closer than ever to your customers. So close that you tell them what they need well before they realize it themselves.” — Steve Jobs

As a sales leader, I cannot understand the lack of focus on customer centricity. The evidence is all around us. Companies that are doing incredibly well share the same belief that growth is only achieved by doing what’s best for the customer all the time. Some companies want customer loyalty, business, and attention, yet they do very little for the customer.

Imagine a world where the customer only pays if he is delighted with the service rendered. What if he pays you after consuming the product, tasting it, and approving of it? If that was the case, what level of standards, attention to detail, degree of innovation, and inspection would be provided before deploying it to the customer?

Rushing a product to the market without thorough inspection, care, and genuine concern for the well-being of the

consumer tarnishes a good company's brand name and makes the salesperson lose faith and confidence in what he does as he tries to manage a deluge of customer complaints.

Work Like an Artist

I'm always amazed by the quality of work, due diligence, and attention to detail artists put into their practice. It seems like every single product created is imbued with pride, dignity, and love. It takes resources, research, time, technology, innovation, smarts, and ingenuity to create a great product, but it takes almost the same effort to create a substandard product.

The difference is the focus embedded in every single step while making the product. Six Sigma, a data-driven approach and methodology for eliminating defects, reduces manufacturing defects, but pride and care create customer satisfaction and loyalty beyond belief.

Imagine the company tell its customers, "Take a product, enjoy it, and pay me only when you are 100 percent satisfied with the outcome."

Would you buy from them again? I believe so. Many great companies become business empires because of their customer centricity business model. People want to buy from the company they trust and believe in—companies that have character, dignity, and show pride in everything they do. Companies that make communities better, invest in their employee's well-being, that care about the product and

services as well as their reputation and brand name, are usually successful.

Amazon is a good example; it focuses on simplicity, speed, value, and reliability. Apple created a superior product that looks good, feels good, and provides an incredible value to the consumer. Zappos is an organization that built its reputation around the simple philosophy of “to provide the best customer service possible”. Zappos rewards its employees for achieving customer excellence, and customers respond with their loyalty and recurring purchases.

Customer Centricity is the Bedrock of Growth

Explosive growth happens only when customer centricity is at the heart of the company business model. Customer centricity is the biggest driver of revenue and long-term growth. The CCCO (chief customer centricity officer) should have a position as important as the chief financial officer (CFO).

The salesperson with the highest customer centricity ratio should be rewarded as often as the salesperson with the top numerical performance and low customer satisfaction ratio. Customer centricity is the most significant factor in customer retention, customer satisfaction, and repeat business.

Happy customers are the biggest promoters of the business brand. Customers testimonials have more weight and

trusted positive effect on consumers than any marketing initiatives.

Today, many Fortune 500s face significant problems and limitations of varying severity that stem from customer negligence. We have all witnessed devastating news articles such as:

- Periods of rapid growth and expansion followed with emerging recalls and reputational stain. "Volkswagen's faked diesel emissions testing led to the resignation of Martin Winterkorn - CEO"
- Inability to replace the defective product on time due to a surge in returns and acute shortage of replacements. Samsung in 2016
- The product fails due to the absence of infrastructure, faulty distribution channel, service facility, untrained foreign specialists. Microsoft " Zune"; Hewlett Packard "TouchPad"
- The absence of technological standardization. Quality control below standard, creating customer's dissatisfaction. Toyota, Lexus in the case of "sticky pedals" in 2009
- Customer confusion, ranging from a lack of technological variations to inability to create a distinctive attribute to compete in an industry. Coors Rocky Mountain Sparkling Water - 1990
- Erratic product quality. Product defect and poor quality control. Johnson & Johnson's recall of

Risperdal Consta, an injectable antipsychotic treatment and Liquid Motrin for infants because they may contain particles of plastic - 2013

Most of the issues listed above could be avoided by not cutting corners and doing what's right for customers. The key to organizational success is to focus on the customer experience by building a healthy relationship, thinking long-term, doing what's right, treating customers with respect, and showing pride in serving others.

Customer satisfaction is not optional.

Companies should focus on creating value for their customers by making their lives better. Shareholder satisfaction and financial goals should be a byproduct of satisfied customers. A product or brand with high satisfaction rate sells faster, more frequently, and commands better margins.

Happy customers support profitable businesses, and create a healthy environment and happy employees. Customer centricity is a win-win for everyone. It is a discipline and the essence of a job well done. To think of it, it's every employee legacy, from the CEO to the salesperson, customers remember how you and your product made them feel.

Isn't it great to be part of a company that has a high-value system, that empowers and believes in its employees to make the right decisions even when it doesn't benefit the company?

We are all beneficiaries of companies that improve our way of life by focusing on what's important to the customer.

The best companies are entrepreneurial at heart, and they focus on helping the community to create a better world.

The Passion to Serve

The CEO who is customer-centric often dances to work. They love what they do, and lead by example by spreading their enthusiasm downward. The salesperson who is customer-centric is passionate about their work and the customers they serve. They don't pretend to care, because they genuinely care, and they spend every moment of the day trying to improve their customer's lives along with their company and its shareholders.

As a salesperson, you have a duty and responsibility to make a positive difference in your customer's lives, by applying the doctoring of genuine concern in everything you do.

PROACTIVE LEARNING

Write down exactly how customer centricity is vital to your sales career and sales growth.

Write how you can benefit by working like an artist. How could it be beneficial to your career?

CHAPTER 8

YOU ARE YOUR SALES DESTINY



“You’ve got to get up every morning with determination if you’re going to go to bed with satisfaction.”— George Lorimer

Having a good sales manager is priceless. Your sales manager’s most significant advantage is their ability to evaluate your current situation logically, in addition to helping you explore all available options to close more deals and resolve major dilapidating, debilitating issues.

A good sales manager may draw from other people’s knowledge and experiences and apply that insight to your case, saving you time and energy.

No Sales Manager: No Problem

What would you do if you joined an organization without a sales manager? What would you do in the case that your hiring managers quit upon hiring you? What would you do in the presence of an ineffective sales manager?

Great salespeople leverage all the resources they have, and forge a path where there is no precedent. Being curious, genuinely inquisitive, and friendly can get you to learn faster from your company product and system specialists. People love to demonstrate their knowledge, so give smarts and solutions to those employees who are patient and willing to learn from the pros.

It would be best if you deliberately tried to obtain all the internal and external knowledge you need to manage your day-to-day business before you need it. Spend time asking your peers about the worst scenario they had to overcome and how it was resolved. Take good notes; there will be a time where you will face a similar issue and will need the knowledge to fix it.

Knowledge is priceless

I recall a situation where a technical manager abruptly left the company after thirty-five years on the job. This person knew almost everyone and everything to resolve from the most straightforward issues to the most complex problems you can imagine.

He was a hands-on manager who was often helping others with weekend emergencies. He was the source of wisdom and the fixer of all issues. Upon his departure, the company almost come to a halt. Issues piled up, and no one knew how to resolve this deluge of problems; external contractors needed time to

become familiar with the system. It was a disaster, and it took almost a whole year to get back to some level of normalcy.

Be aware; some people's knowledge takes a lifetime of learning. Please do not take people's expertise for granted. Start taking excellent notes, write down everything, you will glad you did the day you need it.

Build bridges before you need it

Build a relationship with your organization's internal staff and work hard to establish great relationships with all your cross-functional teams (finance, marketing, legal, operations). Getting business done efficiently requires building and maintaining solid connections with people who can facilitate your job, speed up the process, and make you look good in front of your customer.

Know who to go to and when, and reach out to your upper management, only when your situation requires their level of interventions and expertise.

Your vice-president of sales or senior vice-president of sales could occasionally help you with major issues by referring you to the right parties. Requests from senior management are often taken seriously.

Your upper managers can act as a great resource as well. Your success has a direct impact on their regional organizational success.

Senior Management and Your Success

- Your success matters to your senior managers, your numbers represent a segment of their total KPIs. Your surplus and deficit have a direct correlation with their quota attainments and job performance.
- Senior management's role is to eliminate obstacles from your way to get you to your goals.
- Senior managers are held accountable for employee retention and job satisfaction along with job performance.
- Senior managers love to take credit for helping you to realize exceptional success.

Your upper management team may not understand your client needs and wants. They may not even have the time to get involved in your situation. However, it would be best if you always tried to keep them aware of your progress and get them involved in serious matters where their involvement can make a difference. A senior manager tends to have broad experience and often knows how to leverage the organization mind-matrix to resolve complex issues.

You are Your Own Sales Manager

In sales, you are indeed the master of your destiny. You are responsible for maximizing your skills and knowledge. Your ability to bring innovative ideas and creative solutions will promote your brand and will get you to deliver the best

results. Your organization may support your growth and development. However, you should have an unwavering desire to take charge of your career and development. It would help if you allocated time to think and plan how to grow and advance your career. You should also discuss your career aspirations with your managers. Leaders are always looking for talented individuals to promote to the next level of responsibility.

Think about it this way.

1. If you don't take responsibility for your career, who will? Besides, considering the time and energy spent in your job, why not aim to achieve a higher level of satisfaction and output?
2. Whether you are trying to attain a higher goal or move to the next level of your sales career, take the time to evaluate all your available options on a regular basis. At the same time, align your short-term goals with your long-term career goals.
3. Your vice-president of sales can provide you with input and support to achieve your growth aspirations. Share your ideas and desires, and be honest. Chances are, your manager may start testing your capabilities with higher responsibilities and involve you in exciting new projects.
4. Your upward mobility has everything to do with your strategic efforts, aspirations and grit.

You are responsible for your education, creating qualified opportunities, managing a coherent field strategy, developing a performance cadence, and building your brand. To succeed, you will have to learn to handle internal and external competing demands and pressure while managing your goals and career growth and aspirations.

Your Self-education is your salvation and growth path.

PROACTIVE LEARNING

Write down exactly how you can operate without a sales manager for a long period of time. What personal characteristics do you need to develop to be autonomous?

Write down exactly why you are totally in charge of your own sales destiny.

CHAPTER 9

YOU CAN MANAGE STRATEGY AND PRESSURE



“To be a champion, you have to handle stress and pressure. But if you’ve prepared mentally and physically, you don’t have to worry.”—Harvey MacKay

Sales is complicated; it requires continuous self-discipline and self-education to stay afloat. Eighty percent of the people in B2B sales are either average at best or below average. Let's explore the reasons behind this failure.

Many salespeople have shallow knowledge despite access to free online education. Beyond the formal training that often ends with college, many professional B2B salespeople do not focus on self-education to attain higher success. While it's incredibly easy in this day and age to access knowledge freely online, through books, and video tutorials, many sales professionals choose complacency over self-education.

Many salespeople choose to spend more time on their hobbies and interests rather than their profession. It's easier to blame circumstances than take personal responsibility. Some internal and external conditions may get in the way of achievement. How you choose to think, act and respond, however, is entirely in your control. Your thought and processes are what controls your output, income, and future. Focus on changing the way you think and you will change your life.

Company goals are the minimum benchmark required, aim higher. Do you know what you want? Alternatively, maybe you don't want to work too hard to achieve what you want. Your determination is your greatest unyielding motivator in life. It would help if you spent time thinking and planning how to get to the next level of your potential.

There is always a way. It's easy to give up the moment things get harder. It's easy to give up when the outcome seems difficult to achieve or when things get hard and complicated. Too many salespeople give up quickly; a simple no gets them turning around and running away to avoid rejection.

Many salespeople spend enormous time indoctrinating excuses to justify failure, rather than owning it. It's almost like you are selling without excitement, passion, or love for what you do. You should dedicate yourself to the profession of selling or you should find another suitable trade.

Success in sales is the discipline of corrected practices every day. Failure is errors in judgment uncorrected over an extended period. It's hard to observe professional salespeople repeating the same mistakes over and over without taking the time to reflect on why they are doing it. These bad habits become almost unconscious acts where one feels comfortably busy while going nowhere.

It's true that old habits are difficult to eliminate, but most bad habits can be self-corrected with deliberate, conscious efforts. Everything that was learned can be unlearned in the same fashion.

If you cannot design your success plan, then at least meet the company plan. Refuse to coast through months and quarters. Take control of your success and start focusing at a minimum in your organization goals.

Winning often will boost your confidence and self-esteem and will force you to start exploring higher career milestones. In sales, you may not change your YTD standing overnight, but you can change your direction. You can learn from your experiences; you can make some adjustments to start heading toward the right direction. Reaching your true potential may take time, but with focus, commitment, and dedication you will get there faster than you imagined.

Aim high and don't sweat the small stuff. Focus on the right actions that yield reliable results. Focus your attention on

yourself, and do the things that enhance your image, brand, and capability.

Manage your day according to your priorities. Start with what's critical and what can wait, then move down the list. Prioritize but allow some level of flexibility in running through your vital tasks. Don't get distracted, finish a high-priority task, then move to the next.

Don't wait for motivation; instead, become a creature of habit. Sales excellence requires rituals. It is easy to deviate from healthy habits, so stick to what works and what gets you closer to your outcome.

If you don't like the outcome of your results, change your process. Be flexible, allow changes to occur based on your vital needs. If you're not pleased with the outcome, don't complain about it, change it.

Take advantage of every opportunity, every resource to achieve greatness. Your goal is to become better in every aspect of your sales career. Practice every day. Learning takes time, so be patient with yourself and stay the course.

Discipline is the bridge between current objectives and future accomplishment. Without control, you will never get anywhere. Deliberate, planned action ensures goal attainment under the most challenging circumstances. Plan, execute, reflect, and adjust continuously.

Be all you can be, or become just a shadow of your potential. It's up to you to become all you can be. It will take hard work, dedication, and commitment, but you will get there. Don't choose the easy route, as it leads nowhere.

PROACTIVE LEARNING

Write down exactly how self-discipline and continuous, deliberate self-education are necessary to keep you a step ahead of your competitors.

List all the actions you need to take to build a winning mindset.

CHAPTER 10

SUCCESSFUL SELLING MINDSET PRINCIPLE



You would agree that selling is one of the toughest jobs in the world! Let's explore some basic requirements for professional selling.

Commitment to success. Keep going until you achieve your objectives, then create higher goals and follow them to completion.

Act as if it's impossible to fail. Face impossible odds with gusto, resolve, and bravado until you find a solution. Human genius solves everything. Condition your mind to look for innovative options, research your subject, study it carefully, and involve your peers and your management team to find a solution. There is always a way, and there is still an answer to even the most daunting situations.

Go all in every day. Believe in your products, services, organization, mission, and purpose, and don't allow doubt to creep in. Doubt kills will, creativity, and ingenuity.

Be the professional you are expected to be. Your clients should see you as good news. It would help if you strived to be the field expert and the growth partner that business owners depend on to achieve their desired outcome.

Be over-prepared for every meeting or call. Research, dig in, and do your homework before each client interaction. You cannot improvise your way to success, and you must earn it.

Accept complete responsibility for the outcome. You are entirely in charge of the progress, outcome, and failures. No excuses accepted.

Master the basics. You should learn and practice the fundamentals of the sales process in the proper sequence to ensure repetitive wins.

Be an ROI master. Demonstrate that your business solution will create an exponential return on investment

Use educational selling approach. Don't preach, educate your customers and elevate their level of knowledge. Educated customers make better, faster, and more lucrative buying decisions. These customers buy better business solutions based on long-term overall value and benefits rather than low price-tag solutions with poor added-value.

Build trust and credibility with every client. Great long relationships are built on trust.

Handle objections effectively. Practice ensuring that you generate well-thought-out answers every time.

Handle price objections tactfully. Demonstrate to your client that your proposed business solution is much more valuable than the money invested. Always conduct and deliver the customer with an ROI analysis based on his business needs.

Know how to close masterfully. Learn to methodically manage the selling cycle to close the deal in a manner where the client feels the solution is right and the value derived outweighs the investment.

Work with a sense of urgency and anticipation. There is no idle time in professional selling. Make every minute count. Being present in your customer decision-making cycles is vital to your wins.

Work smart. Spend 80 percent of your time with your most valuable clients and prospects. It would be best if you allocated the other 20 percent to the tasks that advance your sales agenda.

Keep your pipeline full. Professional selling requires prospecting, demonstrating your business solutions, and following up to ensure that you retain your existing clients and enlarge your funnel via client's referrals.

Set challenging income goals and sales goals. The quality of your output dictates your income. Your company's goals are the minimum benchmark to keep your job. Your

target revenues and income comfort zone should reside higher than your company compensation sales objectives.

Manage your assigned territory to perfection. Be precise, and do not waste unnecessary time in traffic and unproductive meetings. Be selfish and wise. Spend every minute of your selling day advancing your sales stages towards completion.

Focus on continual improvement. Focus on things that matter, self-motivate, and educate yourself continuously. Control your behaviors, be proactive, auto-correct wrong approaches, and be resourceful and methodical in everything you do.

Be relationship-focused and metric-centric. Focus on the tasks and activities that advance your production, deepen your relationships, and increase your influence.

Read on your trade. Be a voracious reader, and learn everything you can to build your expertise and knowledge. Read books, articles online, trade magazines, blogs, and anything else that will make you an intellectual asset to your customers.

Find mentors, coaches, and trainers. Leverage your peers, managers, specialized industry networking groups, and mastermind groups to increase your industry knowledge and expertise.

Action Item - Learning Process

Take 30 minutes per week and gauge your progress against your monthly and quarterly goals.

- Are you on target to achieve your monthly and quarterly goals?
- Do you have enough leads to make next month's goal?
- What does your pipeline look like? What areas do you need to focus on to accomplish your sales objectives?
- How are the health and balance of your pipeline? Are you adding quality leads and eliminating dead leads?
- What types of adjustments do you need to hit your targets? What's working? What needs to change?
- What monthly activity is required to improve your performance?
- What kinds of losses did you incur that could have been salvaged?
- What failures occurred because of your neglect, poor preparation, and sporadic follow-up?

You are responsible for your results. You must be honest with yourself and accept full responsibility to allow for improvement. Holding yourself accountable for your actions is vital to your success.

Taking time to reflect and make the necessary adjustments to meet your dream client outcome will propel your reputation and advance your career.

PROACTIVE LEARNING

List all the aspects that make sales a tough profession, and why do people believe so?

List all the things that make the sales profession the most desirable and most lucrative career one can have.

CHAPTER 11

YOU ARE THE ARCHITECT OF YOUR DESTINY



“You control your future, your destiny. What you think about comes about. By recording your dreams and goals on paper, you set in motion the process of becoming the person you most want to be. Put your future in good hands – your own.”

— Mark Victor Hansen

Regardless of whether you have a dependable, competent sales manager, or no sales manager at all, you are the master of your own sales destiny. Your ability to commit to excellence, do the hard lifting in terms of self-education, and finding the solution to challenging obstacles will define the level of success you can achieve.

You are your best sales manager. You can do anything you put your mind to. It would help if you kept your inner motivational fire burning high, stay the course, commit to become great at what you do every day. Success requires years

of toiling and personal sacrifice; there are no shortcuts to get the top of the pyramid of success.

Technology is a double-edged sword

The recent exponential evolution of technology and the complexity of business solutions has changed the landscape of sales. Customers are more demanding and more knowledgeable than ever before. In addition, it's getting harder to engage with decision-makers at all levels.

Online shopping and e-commerce platforms have enabled your customers to do research, find, and even buy the product or service with a click of a button. Competition has intensified across almost every industry. The Internet has empowered global companies to compete locally. Unique industry information is becoming a commodity, squeezing vendor margin and forcing salespeople to compete on price.

It's getting harder to extract healthy margins because of all the competing forces listed above. Hence, it's imperative that you self-educate in every facet of your business to provide a competing edge.

Knowing your customer wants and desires is a must. Solving your customer's issues by aligning your business solution is priceless.

Can technological progress render the sales professional absolute?

Great salespeople know how to evolve and adapt; inept salespeople perish, it's all about survival of the fittest. Salespeople must add value by becoming an integral part of the product or high-value solution they are selling. Regular self-education and training is the only way to stay relevant in this environment of exponential technological explosion.

Invest in yourself every day. The higher your intellect, business acumen, and experience, the more value you will create for your customers, and the more power and income you will generate over a lifetime.

DARE TO BE GREAT
WINNING MATTERS - MAKE IT A HABIT!

PROACTIVE LEARNING

Write what will happen to salespeople who do not exert an effort to adapt to the advent of technology in sales.

How is technology affecting your current selling strategies and tactics?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Anthony Chaine, Elite Sales Leadership Consulting, LLC, President, is a sales leadership professional, skilled at assisting sales organizations on how to drive exponential revenue growth and build profitable business.

Anthony has led the creation of this community institute that focuses on helping current and future sales leaders. The purpose is to affect people productivity and efficiency by making informed choices and taking timely action.

Anthony spent more than 15 years as head of sales of three major F500 companies. As a regional vice president of sales, he has guided thousands of frontline B2B salespeople and sales leaders towards optimum performance levels. He is recognized as an expert in sales execution, sales analysis, compensation strategy, recruitment, channel management, revenue creation, performance leadership, training, and sales forecasting.

As a speaker, Anthony Chaine knows how to energize and electrify his audience. He teaches sales strategies that drive personal and organizational productivity, growth, and collaboration. Anthony is a professional member of the National Speakers Association.

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