



You Can Always Sell More How to Improve any Sales Force

VALUE READING



Jim Pancero

Inc, President

*Advanced Sales Training &
Consulting*



How many sales reps directly report to you? I have been asking this simple question a lot lately and the answers I am hearing are not that positive. I have been noticing a trend the last few years; it seems the average number of outside sales reps reporting to a “business-to-business” sales manager is slowly but surely increasing. I recently met a sales manager with 26 direct sales reports and another who had 20. Can you imagine what their daily life as a sales manager must be like? A sales manager with 26 direct reports has no time to coach and lead but instead only functions as a “911 dispatch operator” spending all their time fighting fires and solving problems.



Where Do You Spend Your Time As A Sales Manager?



The second question I have been asking sales managers is “Where do you spend your time as a sales manager?” This answer also, is not that positive. Because of the increasing number of salespeople reporting to one manager, the average sales manager spends the majority of their time acting as the “administrative leader” with no time, or awareness to lead their team’s planning or selling process.

Are you a “Transactional” or “Selling Process” Sales Manager?

The job of a sales manager can be divided into two distinct areas or efforts. Do you spend more time

functioning as a “transactional” or as a “selling process” sales manager?

The vast majority of “business-to-business” sales managers are only functioning as reactive “transactional” sales managers investing all their energies into special pricing requests, order expediting, problem solving and customer glad-handing. Transactional sales managers spend almost no time actually coaching and leading their teams’ selling efforts. Transactional managers are always available to help solve a problem or to remove a roadblock, they just do little to actually direct or lead any members of their sales team.

The alternative to “transactional” sales coaching is to be more of a “selling process” sales manager investing the majority of your time helping each team member improve their selling skills, sales tools, and selling processes. Transactional managers only tend to work

on today or history-focused problems asking, “What happened?” and “So what are you going to do about it?” Selling process sales managers invest their energy coaching and guiding their teams’ future focused selling efforts asking “What are your next three steps with this account?” and “How can you better position your value and uniqueness?”

Transactional sales managers are good at maintaining a sales team, their territory, and sales volumes while process sales managers excel at building and growing a teams’ selling skills, sales processes, and strategic competitive advantage. What can you do to become more of a “growth focused” process sales leader

How It Got This Way

and less of a “maintaining” transactional problem solver in your job as a sale manager?

“Transactional” sales managers did not go to college to learn how to shuffle



paper and only solve administrative problems; they evolved into a transactional focus due to their lack of leadership training and awareness, their personal bias, pressure from upper management and the immediate demands of their sales team. The more reactive you are as a sales leader waiting for others to tell you what to do the more likely you will focus all your attention on transactional coaching and problem solving.

The most common reason the majority of sales managers only function as transactional managers is because no one is speaking up to identify a better way to increase sales.

Most sales managers reactively look to their boss for guidance on how they should be managing and leading their sales team instead of proactively speaking up to offer ideas that could improve their sales team's performance and results.

What ideas do you have that can allow you to invest more

time coaching and leading, and less time focusing on administrative issues?

Selling continues to become more complex and harder. The majority of customers have become buyers that are more effective and negotiators demanding more from selling organizations. Markets have become hyper-competitive with little differentiation or uniqueness between vendors, profit margins have become tighter, and most sales organizations are demanding greater sales volumes from all members of their sales team.

If your manager has never been trained on effective sales leadership and has spent his or her career functioning as a transactional sales manager then your manager will likely assume that is the only way the job is supposed to be completed and will expect similar efforts and focus from you as a sales manager.

Another reason for so much focus on this reactive

transactional leadership style is the reality of today's cost cutting focus and mentality. Sales managers and schoolteachers share much in common. Both directly experience the results of their leadership's cost cutting measures by being given more students or sales reps to teach and manage. The cost cutting pressures of the last several years have meant, "Consolidating our sales team" which really means, "Give more sales reps to each sales manager."

What You Can Do About It

Are any of these concerns or reasons for reactive transactional sales leadership happening within your company's sales management team? Even if you are now functioning as a predominately-transactional sales manager, it does not have to stay that way. You can change the way you manage and lead your sales team by becoming more involved in future- focused



sales coaching, and account leadership that can help your sales reps achieve more than they would achieve if just left alone.

Markets continue to become tougher, competitors are becoming stronger, and all sales professionals are wrestling with how to increase their sales volumes and selling efficiencies. You, as a

sales coach and leader, can affect the focus and effectiveness of your teams' selling efforts and direction, if and when, you increase your proactive selling process coaching and leadership.



mile
madinah institute
for leadership & entrepreneurship

The Madinah Institute for Leadership and Entrepreneurship (MILE) brings executive education to discover new dimensions in Leadership Development to help executives grow in their professional careers. MILE is a CSR initiative of Knowledge Economic City (KEC) and Saudi Arabian General Investment Authority (SAGIA), which has now grown into a collaborative initiative, aiming to attract the contributions and support of many other companies, academic institutions, research & consulting organizations and professional groups.



blog.mile.org
conversation enriches understanding

Below is the link of MILE blog where you can find Jim Pancero's webinar video:

<http://blog.mile.org/you-can-always-sell-more-how-to-improve-any-sales-force/>



Join MILE Communities of Practice (COP)

MILE COP is a platform where subject experts and market leaders are interacting through discussions, blogs, webinars and by sharing valuable content and presentations. Come and join our ever growing Communities of Practice (COP) for FREE at: <http://community.mile.org>

