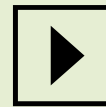


FINDING THAT INSPIRATIONAL SALES LEADER

WHAT IS SALES MANAGEMENT? MOST COMPANIES HAVE SALES MANAGERS TODAY, BUT WHAT IS THEIR ROLE IN THE BUSINESS? THIS MONTH PETER HEREDIA, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF MAX SALES SOLUTIONS, DISCUSSES WHAT THE KEY ACTIVITIES OF AN EFFECTIVE SALES MANAGER SHOULD BE AND THE STARTLING IMPACT ON RESULTS THAT A GOOD SALES MANAGER CAN HAVE.



High performing teams are led by people who understand that coaching and motivation are the keys to success



How important is the role of the manager? If a team is doing poorly, the buck stops with the manager. If the manager is playing in the matches at the same time as managing the team—a player manager, they may be performing well themselves although the team is not.

Should they be excluded from responsibility then? Will their role in the activity ensure the team stays on track? How different is this to managing a sales team? If sales people are hitting the road each day and nobody is monitoring their performance or studying what they do, how will they improve? How will they be directed toward their goals on a regular basis?

Will your best player automatically make the best manager? Or, alternatively, should you're new sales manager be your best sales person?

There is a popular logic that sales managers have to be great sales people and have often been the top sales people at their companies. They bring in business; they build fantastic relationships and keep their customers happy. These activities are very important and if this is the job they need to do to make your company successful, then great.

However, most companies need all of their sales team doing all of those things well and to make this happen your sales manager must lead, drive, motivate and develop their team to deliver even bigger results.

Some questions that you should ask yourself when thinking about what you expect from your sales team and sales leadership:

- How much time is dedicated to developing your sales people?
- How are they building their skills, competencies and productivity focus on key selling activities?
- Apart from their day to day gain in experience, where do you believe

that their growth will come from in the next 12 months? Is this in line with your targets?

■ How much more motivated would your staff be if they were receiving clear development? What would be the impact on retaining the best staff?

Why do only a small fraction of sporting teams have a manager that also participates in the games that they play? It's for the following reasons:

- So that they can see from the sidelines what is and isn't working in delivering positive results.
- So that they can focus on motivating all of their team who are on or off the pitch.
- So that they can provide feedback to encourage every individual.
- So that they can identify skills and activity that needs developing.
- So that they can view the opposition from every position rather than just their immediate area of focus.
- So that they can make tactical changes when improvement is needed.
- So that they can look at every player and spend time with them one on one to improve their game.



Peter Heredia, Managing Director of Max Sales Solutions

Training

Training sales people when they are new or when new products or procedures are introduced will give them the basic knowledge and skills to do the job.

When training is combined with coaching, individuals

When training is combined with coaching, individuals increase their productivity by more than 80% – the percentage is about 20% with training alone

The facts about managers who embrace their coaching staff

- 72-79% see an improvement in their relationships with direct reports
- 60-70% see and improvement in team work
- 60-65% have an improvement in job satisfaction
- 53-60% report that they become more productive

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Coaching

Coaching reinforces what has been learned during training and introduces new information, new approaches and practice to improve individual performance. Coaching makes sure that results are delivered.

Coaching addresses performance gaps that are to do with attitude or how the salesperson feels. If an underperforming salesperson knows his products and has strong sales skills then training is not going to help. If he is experiencing fatigue, de-motivation, boredom, stress, or lack of focus, then coaching is what he needs. ■

WE HAVE SEEN THAT THE BEST SALES MANAGERS GET THE BEST RESULTS BY SUPPORTING THEIR SALES TEAMS IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

1. LISTENING TO THEIR CUSTOMERS

It is amazing how even the most experienced sales people don't do this.

2. DOING THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS FIRST

Make sure that everyone is working most of the time on the active opportunities that are most likely to buy.

3. ORGANISING THEMSELVES

Schedule calls, meetings and all the other activities that will contribute to selling more. Avoid last minute activity whenever possible.

4. ALWAYS HAVING CLEAR OBJECTIVES

Even planned coffee and doughnut meetings should have a clear objective.

5. FOCUSING ON REVENUE GENERATING ACTIVITY

Everything else isn't a priority for any sales role.

6. BEING PASSIONATE ABOUT WHAT THEY DO

Everyone can choose their attitude and it will affect their day and everyone that they deal with.

ABOUT:

Peter Heredia is the Managing Director of Max Sales Solutions. He has worked with sales teams around the globe for more than two decades and has worked in the Middle East for the last ten years. His passion is helping smaller businesses to significantly improve revenue performance by focussing on the productivity and efficiency of their sales teams.

His approach has proven extremely effective in part because he truly understands the psychology of sales people and realises that to change their behaviour they need to be involved with any new solutions.

If you would like to talk to Peter about your sales team then please contact him on peter@maxsalesolutions.com