ONE SOLUTION™

THE POWER OF ONE

CULTIVATING A SALES MINDSET

One team. One mission. That is ***THE POWER OF ONE***

CULTIVATING A SALES MINDSET

A critical behavioral concept is skill versus will.[1] This is one of the most difficult challenges for any sales manager seeking to motivate and inspire their sales team. You can invest time and energy into tools and systems that support the sales process and invest in training to help build sellers' skills; however, it will not make a difference if your sales reps are unwilling to embrace the key behaviors that drive success for the organization. With the dramatic changes that have occurred in B2B selling, especially in the past year, leaders are asking themselves how they can change certain selling behaviors and make those changes stick over time. Accomplishing this will be essential to creating an agile sales team.

When recruiting new sales talent, sales reps who have an openness and the ability to pivot to accommodate market changes are in high demand; however, sales executives still struggle with effective strategies to incorporate agility into their existing organization and implement behavioral change. Here are a few practical ways to use behavioral psychology to help change the behaviors of your sales team:[2]

- Identify the Right Behaviors
- Manage the Pipeline
- Connect the Desired Behavior with Success Measurement Tools
- Reinforce and Reward

1 https://thepeakperformancecenter.com/business/coaching/skill-will-matrix/

2 https://www.membrain.com/blog/five-steps-to-changing-salesperson-behaviors-according-to-psychology

1. Identify the right behaviors. Buyers' needs have changed over time, but in many cases, sales strategies have remained the same, which has resulted in a disconnect between expectations and results.

A classic example of this is having a singular focus on new customer acquisition that results in more prospects in the pipeline but an increase in business churn. The truth is that 65% of your business comes from existing customers, and 80% of your profits will come from 20% of your current customers.[3] To create the best possible return on sales outreach, you need to encourage behaviors that create the right balance between customer acquisition, retention, and penetration goals. The pandemic has created the need for more flexibility and new selling behaviors, both in customer acquisition and retention. It is critical to take the time now to review and identify new behaviors that can help you excel in the market.

2. Manage the pipeline. Even with a new focus on customer retention and penetration, the pipeline is still one of the most important components in the sales process. Although B2B buyers are doing more product research and becoming more self-selecting, lead acquisition and prospecting are still important to keep the pipeline full to expand revenue. Rather than continuing to embrace the "go get 'em" mentality behind filling sales quotas, successful B2B sales leaders are applying a more strategic approach to filling the pipeline. Instead of having in-house reps dedicate more time to prospecting and less time to managing customer satisfaction, B2B sales leaders are adopting a "divide-and-conquer" approach by outsourcing lead acquisition and qualification so in-house sales reps can spend their time only converting highly qualified leads. The result is an increase in revenue from new sales and a reduction in customer churn.

3. Connect the desired behavior with success measurement tools. Sales teams are competitive and goal-driven by nature; however, most companies still focus on measuring sales success solely against a financial goal. Reps will naturally gravitate to achieving their goals in the fastest and easiest way, which often results in behaviors that don't align with the company's needs.

For example, driving consultative selling behaviors may require you to change KPIs from call count to a higher number of key products presented or sold on average per call. This simple change drives the team to make quality consultative calls on bundles of products and solutions that eliminate customer pain points.

Another common challenge for sales executives is getting reps to consistently and accurately document customer information and exchanges in the CRM system. Convince your sales team to document by showing them how the CRM data is used to create sales tools, drive new leads, or provide selling insights. This helps reps make the connection as to the "why" CRM data input is critically important to improving their efficiency and effectiveness.

Tying performance measurement and compensation to CRM documentation also will help change behavior and enable sales leadership to drive accountability throughout the organization.

3 https://smallbiztrends.com/2016/10/customer-retention-statistics.html#:~:text=The%20probability%20of%20selling%20to,customer%20is%2060%2D70%20percent.&text=80%20percent%20of%20your%20future,business%20comes%20from%20existing%20customers.

4. Reinforce and reward. Do you use the carrot or the stick? To motivate sales reps, reward and recognition initiatives often deliver superior results. There are many different ways to show recognition. Some organizations use gamification with leader boards that compare sales rep results, while others use mentions and congratulations on internal social platforms, formal recognition cards, kudos shared in team meetings, and awards given in annual sales meetings. For rewards-driven motivation to be effective, sales leaders must set clear expectations for the desired behaviors and create a system that provides visibility to encourage those behaviors. They also need to be prepared to hold their teams accountable to truly make behavioral changes sustainable through regularly scheduled coaching sessions and a formalized quarterly versus annual performance review.

Behavioral change is one of the hardest goals to accomplish, but it can provide one of the biggest payoffs in the end. Identifying and aligning the right behaviors to clearly defined goals in a fun and visible way can dramatically accelerate the success of the team.

KEY QUESTIONS THAT SHAPE B2B SELLING BEHAVIORS

- How can I get the team to work with clients in a digital environment?
- How do we describe the importance of targeting and qualifying prospects?
- Why won't reps document their customer interactions in the company's CRM system?
- How can I convince reps to sell our lead products rather than the easy, lower priced units?
- How can I encourage them to lead with selling our value proposition and focus on the customer's pain points like cost saving, productivity and safety compliance?