THE IN-HOUSE TRAINING COMPANY

The Sales Accelerator

A unique sales performance improvement programme

Activity : Value : Conversion

Overview

The Sales Accelerator programme is a fresh approach to improving business development productivity. It focuses on identifying and using a series of business productivity metrics in order to build a clear action plan for improving sales results – typically within 90 days. The metrics are grouped under three headings:

- Activity – measured by the most important leading indicators and dependants (eg, proposals or quotations presented to customers; active customer / client meetings)
- Value – average order value
- Conversion – conversion ratio (at key stages in the business cycle)

The basic principle is that a small improvement in each area can lead to a significant increase in sales results and productivity. And the object of the programme is to show how best to achieve that.

The programme therefore looks at each of these three areas in turn, spending a day on each.

Suitable for any and all businesses and all levels of experience and expertise, this is a remarkably practical and hands-on programme. During the workshop, participants discuss, review and apply many proven sales and marketing techniques and personal selling ideas. The goal is to generate and commit to changes and actions that can lead to a 10-30% increase in the next three to six months.

There's also a consultancy option, rather than the workshop-based programme. See below for details.

Seven key benefits

1. Increased impact of your new sales conversations, presentations and proposals leading to faster decisions and increased conversion.
2. Greater confidence, consistency and professionalism throughout the business development process.
3. Enhanced sales questioning skills and techniques, leading to better and faster development of customer needs, problems, value and expectations.
4. Improved people, communication, influence and persuasion skills when approaching, consulting or presenting your services and solutions.
5. Generation of more new business leads, appointments and opportunities.

6 Proven ways to gain additional business and referrals from existing customers and contacts, through direct approach and lead generation.

7 Be better able to differentiate your firm, your solutions, track-record and expertise clearly and accurately with tailored value statements for each stage and for each opportunity.

The skills developed over the course of the programme will add value to all the participants' client meetings and client relationships.

Audience

All sales professionals, at any level, including account managers and directors and business development consultants. Experienced sales people will gain from this programme, not just those at an earlier stage in their careers.

Format

This is not a training course in the traditional sense, but more of a sales performance review and planning event. It is highly-interactive and encourages participation through a combination of short presentations, group discussion, practical exercises (including structured preparation and role-play), case studies, and breakout sessions designed to create highly focused and targeted action plans, and encouraging new behaviours as well as reinforcing existing abilities and approaches.

The programme is delivered in a workshop environment, typically in two main sessions:

- a two-day course covering Activity and Value
- followed about four weeks later by:
- a one-day Conversion and review session.

(Alternatively, the modules can be delivered as three separate one-day sessions, each held a fortnight apart).

The 'Conversion' day features a review of progress, updates on goals and metrics and further planning, rehearsal and review of upcoming calls, pitches, presentations and proposals.

Special features

All participants are asked to complete a pre-workshop questionnaire. This asks them to identify some personal learning objectives ahead of the training, perhaps in discussion with a manager. They will also be asked to bring with them two typical or current sales opportunities or prospects and a report showing some sales KPIs from the last 2-3 months. Typical metrics might include:

- Number of appointments / number of new appointments
- Average order value
- Conversion ratios

These metrics are related to the important, but simple to use, 'tools' which are introduced during the workshop through a series of practical exercises to help enhance key business development skills. These tools are usually customised for each client.

For maximum impact, it is recommended that the trainer spend some time with you analysing your current sales productivity, so that the programme can be tailored to focus on those areas that could deliver the greatest benefits, eg:

- Reviewing the learning points, to emphasise those that are particularly relevant to your team, adding or omitting material as required in order to meet your precise objectives
- Toolkit changed to fit your target products and customer types and to be consistent with your internal culture, terminology and style
- Integration of product information into bespoke ‘best practice’ case studies and exercises

The consultancy option

A workshop is not the only way of applying the ‘Sales Accelerator’ model to your business.

We also offer a ‘Sales process and productivity improvement’ service on a consultancy basis.

This is a consultancy-led and analysis-based approach that will review – and identify improvements to – your sales strategy, operational processes, tactics and skills-base. It does not come with any pre-conceived precepts or solutions. The initial analysis is fully objective and impartial.

About sales process improvement

Sales process improvement is often more about sales productivity than sales strategy, ie, finding a practical way to achieve greater sales results, margin and performance with the same or reduced time, cost and effort. In order to achieve this, three aspects of the sales process must be analysed: Activity, Value and Conversion.

A typical analysis might consider:

1. Steps and stages within current sales process, with examples. Including time taken from enquiry to order, plus number of contacts and effort required.
2. Activity and productivity of sales people plus sales ratio analysis.
3. Opportunity value (including account penetration, growth and order value size).
4. Conversion ratio – at all key stages of the sales process.
5. Volume and quality of sales pipeline or account portfolio.
6. Sales lead generation, prospecting and ROI.
7. Repeat business, account growth and referrals from initial order or first time customer.
8. Customer satisfaction with the sales process and post-sale.
9. Ability of sales and marketing people to differentiate effectively against named competitors and to resist price pressure.
10. Pricing, proposal and sales options strategy and techniques.

How it works

Typically, we offer a free initial consultation followed by a fully priced analysis report and development proposal. It is often a three-stage process:

1 Sales process and productivity analysis

Following a free, 'no-obligation', meeting Graham will spend time reviewing your sales data and interviewing staff and senior stakeholders. This may take several days and involve detailed analysis and review. Graham will present a report on his findings, together with recommendations for improvement. This report itself will be of particular value as a base for future process improvement. The client is under no obligation to engage us to deliver the improvements if they feel, perhaps, that they have the resources to do this internally.

We start with a free, 'no obligation', meeting between the client and Graham to define, refine and prioritise the sales performance and productivity goals that the business is seeking to achieve. We then deliver an itemised price proposal for the first phase, the sales process and productivity analysis.

This analysis may take several days and involve detailed analysis and review, mapping the current sales process, reviewing the metrics currently used, assessing the skill base within the team, sales team dynamics, product strategies, etc, etc (in line with the initial brief) and making recommendations for improvement. Graham will present a report on his findings, which will be of particular value to the business as a base for future process improvement, together with an itemised and costed proposal for the improvement planning and implementation phase. The client is under no obligation to engage us to deliver the improvements if they feel, perhaps, that they have the resources to do this internally.

2 Improvement planning and implementation

A sales process improvement project is generally run over a three- to six-month period and may involve a number of specialist consultants and trainers depending on the specific requirements. The focus is on prioritising those changes and improvements which will have most immediate impact on the bottom line. Again, Graham will present a report at the end of this phase, showing the return on investment achieved to date and identifying further actions (to be undertaken either by us or by management, as the client prefers).

3 Continual performance improvement

A challenge for any organisation with a project of this nature is how to maintain the momentum. If required, we can assist with this through regular on-site consulting, coaching and training days. This can be done on an ad hoc or a retained basis, either fixed price or payment by results.

Inspired? To find out whether this consultancy approach might benefit your business, give us a call now on 01582 714285 and we'll gladly put you in touch with Graham for an initial free-of-charge conversation.

The expert trainer / consultant

Graham specialises in providing high-quality consultancy, coaching and training in sales, sales management, customer service and personal productivity. He has a long career in sales and was a top-performing IT and solutions sales professional and sales manager. His most recent full-time role was as Managing Director of Sales Productivity and Development for Thomson Financial, helping develop a large European sales force. His work has taken him all over the world and involved him in working closely with hundreds of different organisations from all business sectors, his client list including such organisations as BT, Vodafone, AT&T, Orange, Pfizer, GSK, Boots, Unilever, American Express, Thomas Cook, Apple, Sony, Motorola, Cisco, MFI, Barclays Bank, LIFFE, Abbey National, Prison Service, Home Office, Law Society, BBC, Daimler-Chrysler, Citroen, Weetabix, Nikon, Shell and many, many others. In addition he has written over twenty books published in several different countries, including *Companies don't succeed – people do!, Sales Training Games, Telephone Tactics* and *Working Smarter.*

Known internationally as both a trainer and a popular motivational speaker, he believes that effective learning has to be interactive and challenging. All his learning events are built around practical exercises, role play and case studies. His training style focuses not on just explaining new ideas or developing new skills, but also on motivating people to use them and to develop themselves as individuals. This approach gets results, as the following comments from course participants show:

'Brilliant course, really interesting and very focused to my job role and day to day work.'
'Took away some very good ideas that I can use every day… good examples too.'
'Very confident in the subject, and amusing too. Made the course very interesting. A very clear sales model to use going forward.'
'Full of useful hints and tips which I will apply to my job.'
'Extremely well presented and structured'
'A very intensive course and a lot of concrete tools provided.'
'Very good… contained everything we do on a regular basis and problems we have come across… the exercises made it very interesting too.'

Programme outline

DAY ONE – ***Activity***

Key objective

This first module introduces the Sales Accelerator model. The goal here is to show participants how to increase their pro-active activity levels by around 10%. It covers all aspects of creating new business opportunities, from existing customers and non-customers alike, and is linked to personal activity improvement goals.

Main elements

1 Improve the productivity, accuracy and effectiveness of your business approach by using new and unique models and techniques.

2. Different methods of creating and generating new business opportunities in the short, medium and long term. This includes sourcing new business, up-selling, cross-selling, warm calling and gaining referrals.
3. Using organised persistence to track and build new customer revenue.
4. Managing your sales time effectively.

Key learning points

- Sales productivity – understand the dynamics of increasing the combination of activity levels, deal value and conversion rate of proposals/quotations to orders and implement an improvement plan.
- Sales goal setting: setting business development objectives for quantity and quality – plus tips and tricks of top performers.
- Maintain a peak activity level, on a consistent basis using 'organised persistence' and structured business development tracking methodology.
- How to prioritise opportunities and manage your time when sourcing new business.
- Identify potential new customers – and particularly the decision-makers and influencers – with greater accuracy.
- Make outbound business or appointment calls with improved confidence, control and results.

DAY TWO – *Value*

Key objective

To be able to better anticipate, identify, create, and develop business opportunities using a customer / client-focused communication-based business model and consultative skills.

Main elements

1. How to develop sales more effectively from new and existing customers; and managing the first appointment with a new customer.
2. Use structured and assertive drawing-out skills to identify, develop and formalise business opportunities and to gain commitment.
3. How to better position your company and your products and services against your main competitors.
4. Create and deliver persuasive business messages based on specific need areas, criteria and value.

Key learning points

- Advanced consultative selling – use a variety of structured and advanced questioning techniques to confidently and efficiently uncover opportunities, need areas and business criteria – confidently and efficiently.
- Involve the customer/client at all times, and to a far greater degree, and keep better control of business development process.

- Value message – differentiate your solutions clearly and accurately with customer/client-matched value statements.
- Presenting the *right* USPs, features and benefits and making them relevant and real to the customer.
- Qualification and reading buying signals.

DAY THREE (held around four weeks after the first module) – *Conversion*

Key objective

This module looks at how to improve the final qualification, progression and conversion of opportunities in your sales pipeline. Also includes price negotiation, overcoming objections and obstacles to gaining agreement. The module begins with a learning review, sharing participants' experiences over the last four weeks in applying the new techniques and skills acquired during the first two modules. This is an opportunity to revisit particularly challenging areas as well as to share and celebrate successes.

Main elements

1 Structuring and preparing for negotiating a deal and knowing when and how to move into the 'end-game' mode.
2 Anticipate and answer customer objections and questions more confidently.
3 Build more credibility and proof into your business process to reduce 'buyer's remorse' and speed-up decision-making.
4 Being more assertive and developing better instincts and strategic thinking in progressing quotations and proposals.

Key learning points

- Smart ways to position price, emphasise value and be a strong player without being the cheapest.
- Becoming more assertive in closing deals, and the importance of organised follow-up on the telephone.
- Qualify pipeline opportunities with more accuracy, using a proven check-list.
- Use an 'option generator' to simplify complex proposals, increase business value and close business faster.
- Writing more effective sales proposal documents and quotations.
- How best to draw-out, understand, isolate and answer customer objections, negotiate points and concerns.
- Practical methods of asking for agreement and closing a sale.

Any questions?

Please just give us a call on 01582 463463 – we're here to help!
Or visit www.theinhousetrainingcompany.com