TAL SMART

6 PITFALLS YOU MUST WATCH OUT FOR IN IT SALES TRAINING PROGRAMS

Navigating technology sales in a savvy and empowered customer environment is no easy task!

No surprise that companies across the United States are spending as much as over $20 billion on Sales Training!

57%
In spite of the management setting realistic sales goals through data driven approaches, over 57%[1] of sales reps tend to miss their assigned quotas.

94%
The natural implication of this is that 94%[2] of companies choose to invest a substantial amount of time, money and resources into expanding the capabilities of their sales talent!

87%
However, in spite of spending extensively on training, the results are often not long lasting for many companies. The numbers indicate that nearly 87% of the new knowledge acquired during training is lost within only 12 weeks[3]

That doesn't mean trainings don't work!
Statistically speaking, as per Accenture, for every dollar a company invests in training, it receives about $4.53 in return – which is equivalent to a 353% ROI[5]

INVESTING IN IT SALES TRAINING?
Watch Out For These 6 Extremely Common Blunders

01 CONFUSING IT SALES TRAINING WITH VANILLA SALES TRAINING

• Modern IT Sales is not just about reciting product or service features and pushing prospects for a closing.

• It's about turning focused attention to a potential customer's business, understanding their pain points and then aligning your product or service's role in resolving their specific problems.

• For success, this process needs to be executed, keeping in mind the current market trends in technology, along with the different problems and probable tech led solutions for them.

RESULT
Limited Applicability of Learning from Training

SOLUTION
Look out for a sales training partner who deeply understands the technology space and provides actionable guidance to the attendees on both the basic technical and business aspects of trending technologies through domain specific case studies on converting sales.

This helps to train the participants in a way that are able to meaningfully consult prospects, while interacting with the different stakeholders involved from technology, business, finance and so on.

FOCUSING ON THE "WHAT'" INSTEAD OF THE "HOW"

• Most IT Sales Trainings tend to follow what may be called a typical textbook approach.

• In other words, share the problems in a typical sales rep's behavior, but without offering a realistic framework to improve upon that.

• Moreover, there's little focus on developing a certain long-term mindset and equipping participants with the practical ability to tackle different situations that may arise.

RESULT
Learning is Not Actionable

SOLUTION
Go for those training structures that offer more than just academic type content. Additionally, look out for programs that also offer elements of assessments, case studies, collaborative activities, tools & job aids and so on.

Ideally, if there are video based case studies, the learning will be much more easy to absorb and put to practice.

02

03 ATTEMPTING AN "ALL-IN-ONE" TRAINING APPROACH

• Most training programs are designed without any well-defined strategy to pursue a specific training objective.

• Of course, any sales training investment's object is to increase revenue broadly. However, at the onset, there needs to be smaller objectives that lead to that end.

• For instance, that could be by increasing sales through establishing better rapport with prospects, upselling to existing accounts, enhancing telesales etiquette and so on.

RESULT
Lack of a clear strategy fails to bring in the desired ROI level

SOLUTION
Go for a training partner whose courses are structurally designed to cater to your specific business objective of investing in the training process.

Before finalizing, make sure to check out what each day or module seeks to cater to, and how well that plan aligns to the objective.

TRYING TO COVER MUCH IN TOO LITTLE TIME

• Most sales trainings are designed as isolated events over a period of 2–3 days.

• These days are typically packed with too much content into lengthy strenuous sessions.

• There's only little focus on any pre-reading or offering opportunities of absorbing ways of practical implementation to complement what's being taught.

RESULT
Difficulty in Implementing the Learning
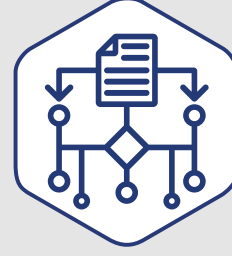
SOLUTION
Opt for a systematically structured training program that treats learning as a process instead of a one –time event.

In other words, focuses on spacing out the knowledge by sharing bite sized nuggets over a period of time, ensuring its optimum stickiness.

04

05 NOT EQUIPPING SALES LEADERS WITH PROPER RE-ENFORCEMENT SUPPORT

• Coaching, post training, plays a pivotal role in enabling sales reps to successfully modify their behavior.

• Unless there are coaches available to guide or the sales managers are equipped with the skills to re–enforce what's been taught, there's going to be little trickle down impact on practical implementation.

• Hence, any IT Sales training is incomplete without training the sales managers first, and also guiding them on the basics of effective coaching

RESULT
Reduction in Learning Stickiness & Implementation

SOLUTION
Check out if your training partner offers meaningful coaching support and any opportunities for equipping sales managers the basic knowhow of coaching their juniors effectively.

NOT ENGAGING THE PARTICIPANTS ADEQUATELY

• Lastly, for employees to pay attention in any corporate training program– the lessons need to be interesting and something that adds real value to them.

• Hours and hours of theory-based training interests nobody in the business world, no matter how good a speaker the training instructor may be.

• Lack of interactive elements in the course design fails to capture and engage participants and in turn retain their attentiveness.

RESULT
Reps don't pay enough attention to what's said due to lack of an engagement mechanism – leading the training to be completely a waste of money

SOLUTION
Before opting for any training program, make sure to look into how their course framework is designed.

Look out for the inclusion of interactive elements such as visual content material, presence of games, group discussions, role–plays and so on.

06

1 https://accent-technologies.com/2016/08/16/10-powerful-statistics-sales-training/
2 https://c3.sfdcstatic.com/content/dam/web/en_us/www/documents/reports/sales/state-of-sales-3rd-ed.pdf
3 https://www.pointforwardsoftware.com/sales-training-closing/
5 https://blog.hubspot.com/sales/strategies-make-sales-training-effective