

The Changing Face of Sales & Sales Leadership in Today's Economy

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Many CEOs and C-level executives are more involved than ever in the sales and customer retention arena, finally realizing that the “right” sales team is KEY to corporate success. C-level executives are getting more involved in who is hired, why, how they perform, and why they leave. Moreover, they really want sales and profit to grow - and the sales team is the key to making this a reality in today's market.

Nonetheless, hiring, selecting and retaining the sales force in some companies is still an HR function. At Growth Dynamics, a decade of research proves that the selection, performance and retention of the sales team is not an HR role - it is a sales leadership responsibility. Yes, sales leadership should be defining and selecting the right people for the sales organization.

In today's uniform industry, competition is increasing, customers expect more for less, and the process of selecting and retaining the “right” sales organization that can effectively develop and retain your customers is more complex than ever. Sales professionals must adapt to an ever-changing customer environment by adapting their sales efforts and being motivated to perform.

The Changing Marketplace for Sales

In the 1980s sales was based solely on relationships. In the 1990s companies focused on price and bundled services - and the internet was coming. In 2000, technology opened the market to global competition, demand for websites, CRM technology, and e-campaigns to drive customer communications and e-blast businesses. Today, customers want it all: the best technology, lowest price, trusted relationships and the most effective and prompt service. They are also willing to leave and go elsewhere even when they have all that - for an offer that may be only slightly better than yours. This makes for a highly complex and competitive selling environment.

What's Working in Sales Force Selection

Today's talent pool is changing from a “Live to work” to “work to live” model. No longer can a company rationalize letting a candidate “try” a job. Success is a must.

GDI research proves that top performers will have unique skills, attributes, motivation and experience that FIT your company, culture and customer. Successful top performers require strong leadership, want to be respected, insist on knowledge-based information that validates performance goals and want to be held accountable and challenged to succeed. Equally important, they seek compensation and rewards that FIT the role expectations VS success.

Sales Team Benchmarking – Defining Top Performance

By establishing a “Sales Benchmark” that clearly defines the attributes, experience, skills and motivation necessary for sales success, your sales leadership gains a targeted, comprehensive process to attract, interview, qualify, select, develop and retain the right sales force for top performance.

With the plethora of candidates in the job market today, attracting the “right” people 1st is crucial. Next, you must have an interview process that includes job-specific questions to help sales managers qualify, assess to select only the right talent.

Sales Force Performance & Team Analysis –Defining What You Have

To build a sales team that helps you grow your company, top leaders know that it is easier to develop and improve the performance of the team you have... versus losing your best people. Growth Dynamics recommends assessing your existing team to define their strengths, skills, and motivation and gain their insights to define areas for improvement. Eliminate obstacles by arming the sales force with targeted training, knowledge and coaching so they can adapt and improve.

Sales & Customer Retention

Today, as the manufacturing industry consolidates, a company’s competitive advantage lies in its sales force. Top companies are focused on sales force performance and customer retention, and are taking an active role in helping their sales force to adapt, optimizing the customer relationship with strategies for retention and sales growth. As loyal customers expect the sales force to truly understand their business, make recommendations and offer solution-based services, you must make sure you select and retain the right sales team to meet the challenge.

Visit www.gdicorp.com to learn more.