

Why Sales Training Fails

Mike Schultz & John Doerr



How successful are:

- Baseball players that strike out 9 out of 10 times?
- Hockey goalies that let 9 out of 10 shots through the five hole?
- Entrepreneurs looking for funding that failed in 9 out of their last 10 businesses?

You get the idea. Let's throw one more into the mix:

**9 out of 10 sales training initiatives have
no lasting impact beyond 120 days¹**

Perhaps you've had more luck (and we hope you have), but if you're reading this report, something about the "Why Sales Training Fails" title resonated with you.

Whether you've felt the pain and want to avoid it next time, or you're ahead of the game and like to line up your ducks for success, you want to know why sales training fails. And, assuming you can avoid the failures, how you can make *your* training initiative *succeed*.

If this sounds like you, then you're in the right place. In this report, this is what we'll be covering.

Now, on to the specifics.

Fact: 48% of more than 1,600 executives from cross-functional business disciplines indicated “organic revenue growth” as their organization’s top goal.²

Fact: 92% of business leaders surveyed believe there is “significant to very significant revenue growth potential” that could be generated from existing sales resources.³

Fact: Between 85% and 90% of sales training has no lasting impact after 120 days.⁴

Of the greater than 2,000 companies surveyed by CSO Insights, 93.9% are investing in some kind of sales training.

75.6% of companies invest greater than \$500 per sales person per year, and 43.3% spend \$1,501 to greater than \$5,000 per person.⁵

Whether you eventually spend \$7 per person or \$7,000, before sales training initiatives kick off, company leaders sit around the table and talk about their hopes and goals. They tend to look something like this:



You know you need to increase sales results. You know you *should* have better results.

Yet *sales training gets put on the docket, sales training launches, and sales training disappoints.*

7 Reasons Why Sales Training Fails

Sales training can be a disappointment right away when it just doesn't go well. It can be a disappointment months later when results don't materialize. Regardless, sales training strikes out a lot. When it does, it's usually because of common and predictable reasons.

In our experience and in our research, we see sales training initiatives fail most often for the following 7 reasons. If you avoid these mistakes, you can set yourself up for a successful training initiative that leads to long-term revenue growth. We'll cover each in turn.

1. Pipe Dreams and Pot Luck Learning – Failure to Define *Business* and *Learning Needs*
2. Knowing is Half the Battle – Failure to Build Fluent Sales *Knowledge*
3. Square Pegs | Round Holes – Failure to Assess and Improve *Attributes*
4. On the Road to Nowhere – Failure to Define, Support, and Drive *Action*
5. Buehler, Buehler – Failure to Deliver Training that *Engages*
6. Lack of Reinforcement – Failure to Make Learning *Stick* and *Transfer*
7. Stop or I'll Say Stop Again! – Failures of *Evaluation, Accountability, and Continuous Improvement*

Pipe Dreams and Pot-Luck Learning - Failure to Define Business and Learning Needs

“I was bold in the pursuit of knowledge, never fearing to follow truth and reason to whatever results they led.”

–Thomas Jefferson

Sales training has virtually no chance of producing lasting results if business leaders:

- Base their objectives and expectations of results on wishful thinking versus *strong analysis*
- Fail to analyze the *real learning needs* of their team

Regarding expectations of results, too often sales training is seen as an “event” and not an investment of time, energy, and financial resources intended to produce a specific business outcome.

We see this regularly, and company leaders report the

same to us all the time. The academic community experiences the phenomenon as well, noting that business objectives for sales training are all too often “platitudes rather than real plans for action.”⁶

Without the proper business expectations, it’s impossible to design an intervention that will have a lasting impact.

Doomed to fail before it starts.

For the most part, when business planning is either off target or business leaders aren’t really behind the effort, the most common outcome is:

Under-resourced sales training efforts that don’t have the horsepower to produce what they could, and often don’t produce much at all.

Soldier: *What? A swallow carrying a coconut?*

King Arthur: *It could grip it by the husk!*

Soldier: *It's not a question of where he grips it. It's a simple question of weight ratios. A five ounce bird could not carry a one pound coconut!*

–Monty Python and the Holy Grail

Once we spoke with a business leader who had just scheduled a ½ day sales training program with the expectation of “massive and immediate impact on results” to the tune of tens of millions of dollars in sales.

Whether it was the buyer who wanted the big impact and was only willing to invest in a ½ day of training, or it was the trainer who said this was all they needed to

produce amazing results, doesn't matter. In any case, it's highly unlikely that such a small effort will yield results of any significance. The proportion of the input (the training initiative) needs to be rigorous enough to produce the desired output (the tens of millions of dollars in sales).

Doesn't matter where they grip it, swallows* can't carry coconuts.

*African or European

Assess the Learning Needs of Your Team

In conjunction with business objectives, you need to assess the learning needs of your sales team.

You need to figure out:

- Where your sales team is now regarding the skills, knowledge, and attributes needed to succeed in their particular sales role (Point “A”)
- Each individual’s improvement potential
- In what sales role each individual is most likely to succeed (and where they’re not likely to)*
- What it looks like when you’ve succeeded (Point “B”)
- What kind of effort and time it’s going to take to get from “A” to “B”

According to research by Aberdeen Group⁷, best-in-class companies⁸ provide 6.5 sales training days per sales person per year versus just under 4 days per person per year for all others.

Many companies fail to assess their team’s learning needs *rigorously enough*.

*There are seven distinct sales roles.

What Happens When You Don't Assess Needs

Sometimes companies feel that the front end of the pipeline is not full so they need training on prospecting. Or they think that their team is not uncovering the full set of customer needs, so they provide training around asking questions.

But there's almost always a lot more going on. The companies don't dig down to find out what that is, and *what it will really take to produce the desired result.*

This produces sales training initiatives that:

- Focus on content that the team doesn't need
- Leave out content that the team does need

- Fail to deliver content at the right level of sophistication (e.g. too basic or too advanced...getting it just right is left to chance)
- Fail to build learning processes rigorous enough to actually develop needed skills and knowledge to the point they transfer to on-the-job behaviors

Compared to laggard companies, 88% more best-in-class sales companies assess their sales teams to identify gaps in required job roles. It's one of the reasons they're best-in-class.⁹

Before implementing any training program the companies that succeed take a much more serious look at their business objectives and the learning needs of their teams.

Knowing is Half the Battle - Failure to Build Fluent Sales Knowledge

“An investment in knowledge pays the best interest.”

–Benjamin Franklin

At the risk of oversimplifying, sales training initiatives work when they help salespeople do things that produce maximum revenue.

Without rigorous inquiry into what those things are, and what it will take to make sure salespeople do them effectively, the focus of sales training ends up heavily skewed towards *skills development*.

Whether it’s prospecting, asking questions to uncover needs, making sales presentations, maximizing account

revenue, or something else, these kinds of skills topics tend to dominate most training.

While sales skills are essential, they are only one side of a very important coin: *capability*.

The other side of the coin is sales knowledge. (Get it? Knowing is half the battle. Thanks, G.I. Joe.)

Figure 1. Right Skills + Right Knowledge = Can Do



Example: Why Skills Training is Not Enough

One of the most important skills in sales is, as many people refer to it, *asking great questions*. In skills training, this often takes the form of:

- Defining what asking great questions means
- Giving examples of what it looks like when it's done right
- Walking through the process of asking great questions in specific stages (e.g. prospecting, needs discovery, overcoming objections) of the sales cycle
- Allowing participants a little time to craft a handful of great questions
- Practicing asking great questions in role plays and case studies
- Sharing and discussing all the great questions everyone came up with

Assuming the training is designed and delivered well, this is laudable. But is it enough?

Ask yourself:

- Even if your salespeople practiced these skills in a training class, could they ask questions that uncover needs *across all products and services* your company offers?
- Could they appropriately include *all of your products and services* as solutions to the various needs that prospects might have?
- Would they be able to *position the company's value proposition* the right way for the different situations they encounter?
- Would they consistently get all of this right *in the moment* during a sales conversation?

Even if your salespeople have the skills to ask great questions, it's often a lack of *knowledge* that holds them back from actually putting “asking great questions” to work for them.

Your salespeople need to have *expert sales knowledge*. They must be able to speak fluently about:

- The customer needs you solve
- Your products and services as solutions to those needs
- The marketplace
- Your company and your value proposition
- The competition and how you win

And more.

Some of you may be saying to yourself, “Wait. We provide knowledge training. We even hold a retreat each year focused on knowledge topics.”

Perhaps you’re the exception, but most product and service training doesn’t get the job done. If there is

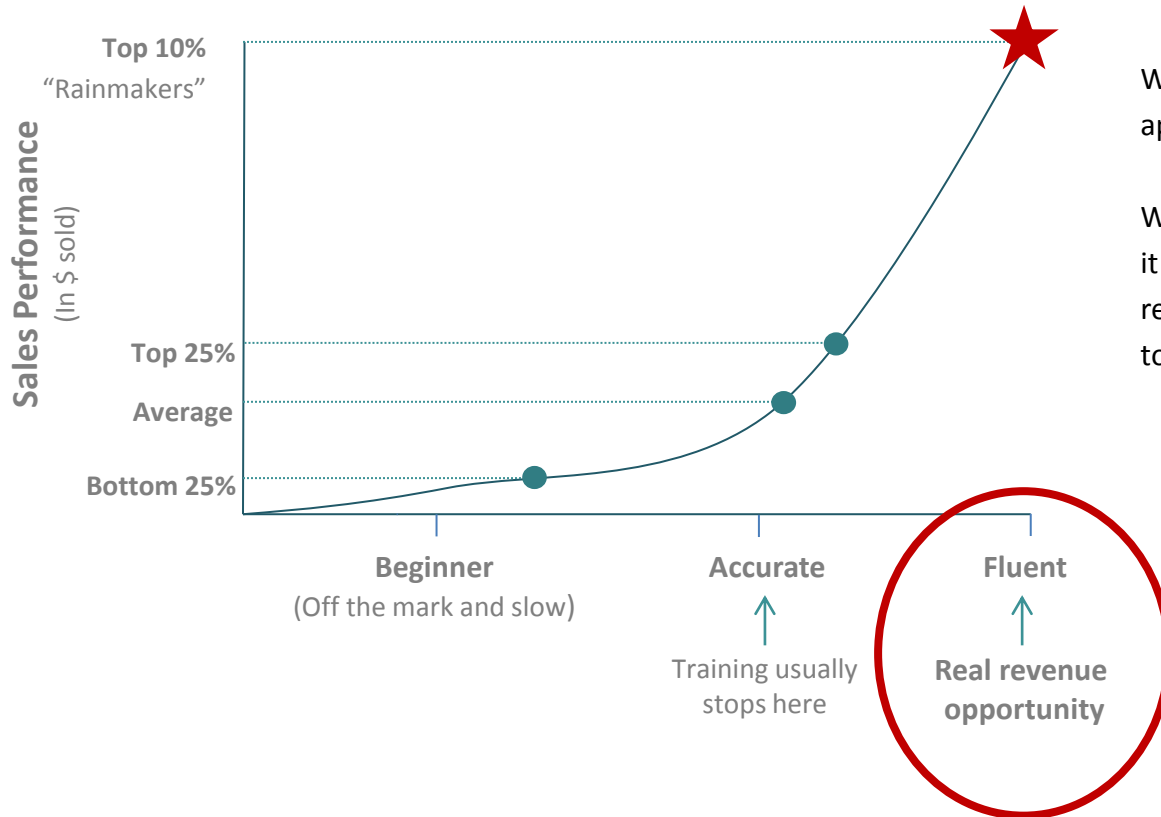
some kind of test for knowledge gained, it’s usually only for *accuracy*.

I (Mike) got As in Spanish all through high school and college. I passed a lot of tests, but I still couldn’t hold a conversation in the language.

The problem is I wasn’t *fluent*. And that’s the same problem with sales knowledge. Salespeople must be fluent in order to be able to use knowledge appropriately in their sales conversations.

**Accuracy is not enough.
Salespeople need *fluency*.**

Figure 2. The Real Revenue Opportunity: Training Salespeople to Sales Knowledge Fluency

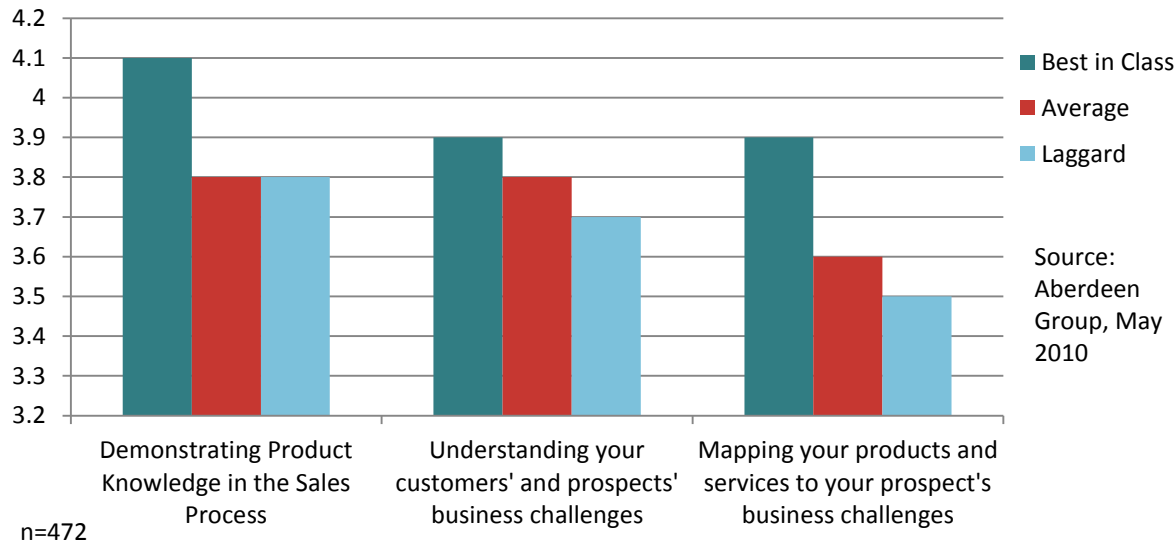


We define fluency as *accuracy plus speed* plus appropriate *breadth and depth*.

When knowledge training stops at accuracy (if it even gets this far) you miss out on a major revenue growth opportunity had you trained to fluency.

According to Aberdeen Group, best-in-class companies are better at demonstrating product knowledge, understanding client business challenges, and mapping products and services to those challenges.¹⁰ In other words, best-in-class companies have fluent salespeople. If you can build this kind of sales knowledge within your team, you too can experience best-in-class sales results.

Figure 3. How Sales Knowledge Fluency Leads to Best-in-Class Sales Results



Sales training will continue to fail until sales knowledge training:

1. Takes its appropriate place alongside sales skills training
2. Covers the right content
3. Trains salespeople to fluency

To this last point, many say, “Fluency happens over time. You can’t expect someone to become an expert right away.” Right away, true. But it can and should happen *a lot faster* than it does at most companies.

Build knowledge experts, and train to fluency. Otherwise, salespeople won’t be capable of leading the masterful sales conversations you need them to lead.

Square Pegs | Round Holes – Failure to Assess and Improve Attributes

When I worked for a large company, I (John) used to know a number of people who were top performers – really excellent results producers – who retired. But there was a big problem...they never told anyone! For years, they just kept showing up to work, but they weren't nearly the producers they used to be.

They had the *capabilities* to be top performers – they could sell – but they were no longer *actually doing what it took* to produce results. After years of crushing sales

targets for this company, commitment waned. Results dropped.

Commitment is an *attribute*, not a *capability*.

In this case, attributes were the difference between past success and current mediocrity.

It's not enough to just give your team the capabilities to sell; you have to know if they have the attributes required for top performance. We call these attributes *drivers* and *detractors* of sales success. Together these will tell you not only who *can* sell, but who *will* sell at a high level.

You Must Assess Attributes along with Skills and Knowledge

As the academics put it, sales jobs are complex, and thus performance may be less attributable to skills, knowledge, and credentials, and more attributable to positive attitude and self-image, motivation, and emotional intelligence. They go on to note that if it's true, assessing "competencies" (we use the word attributes), is a must.^{11 12}

They say, "If it's true." *It sure is.*

Sales leaders *must assess attributes* along with skill and knowledge needs. When they don't, sales training fails because:

- **People don't have the *drivers* to succeed:** People end up in sales training and may actually attain the requisite skills and knowledge to succeed, but they don't have the *drivers* in place to achieve top performance, and, sometimes, any performance at all. When this happens – and it often does – square pegs...
- **People have *detractors* holding them back:** People end up in sales training that have the drivers in place to succeed, but may have *detractor* attributes that act like weights pulling them down as they try to compete in the sales race.

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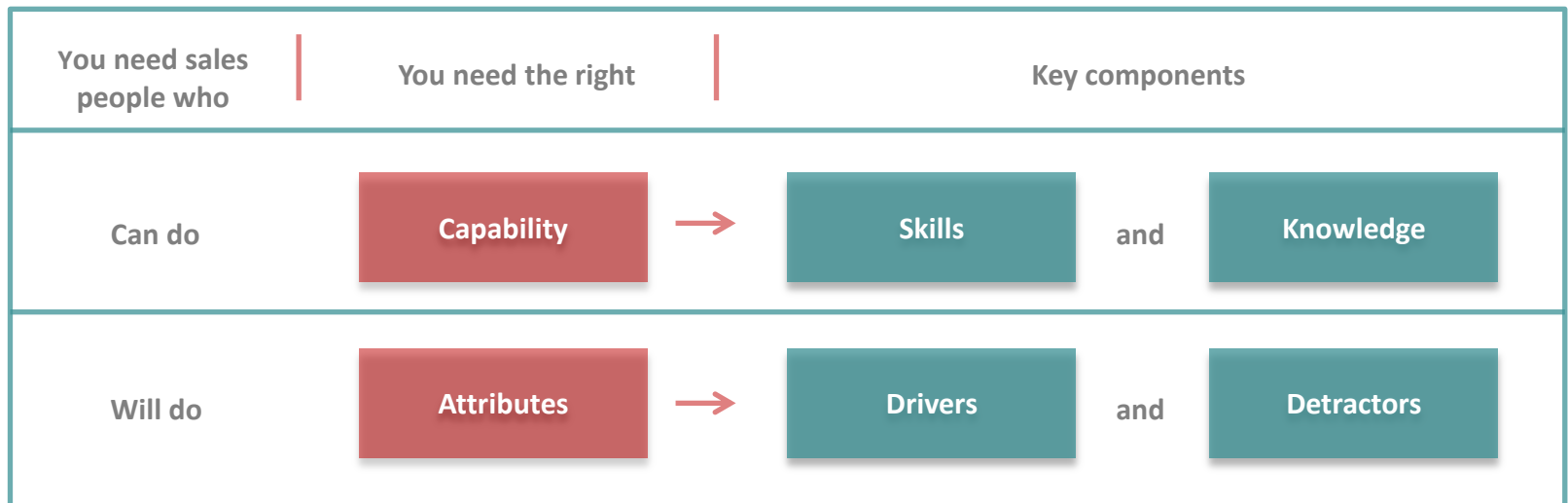
Sales Drivers and Detractors

If the *drivers* of success aren't in place – meaning the person doesn't have, for example, the desire to achieve in sales, the necessary commitment to take action, the right self-image, and so on – it's quite possible the person shouldn't even be in the training at all.

Much as you might want your kid to go to medical school, if all they want to do is teach art history, medicine rarely works out.

If too many *detractors* are in place, the salesperson might know what to do and have the capability and drive to do it, but they still often fail.

Figure 4. Right Drivers + Acceptable Level of Detractors = Will Do



Example Detractor: But He Won't Like Me...

Say a salesperson is listening to a prospect talk about his plans for a technology purchase. The prospect says he plans to move forward in three areas: A, B, and C.

The salesperson, having been through these technology challenges many times before, knows that A and B are good ideas, but C is a disaster waiting to happen.

He should bring this up appropriately to the prospect, see if there's something he's missing, and, if he still thinks C is a bad idea, see if he can help get things on the right path. He might even have the conversation skill to be able to do this well.

But if the salesperson has the detractor *need for approval*, it's likely he won't say anything at all because

salespeople with a need for approval have great difficulty speaking with prospects about anything that might upset the prospect or rock the boat in their relationship.

This detractor attribute will, in this situation and many others like it, inhibit the salesperson's ability to help the prospect make better decisions, to build a trusted advisor relationship, and set themselves apart from competitors.

So while he had the capability to sell, something else was holding him back from reaching top performance.

Neglect attributes – real, incisive inquiry into each person – and sales training initiatives come out of the gate with weights tying them down.

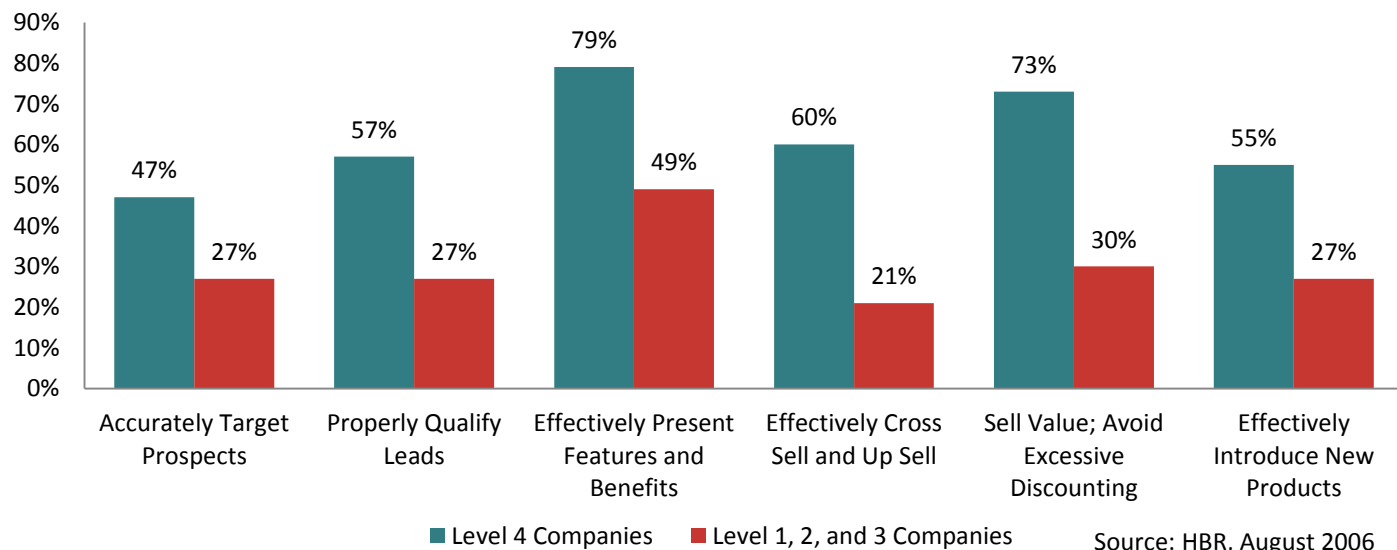
On the Road to Nowhere – Failure to Define, Support, and Drive Action

ES Research estimates that up to 70% of companies don't have a standardized sales methodology and process.¹³

So what, right?

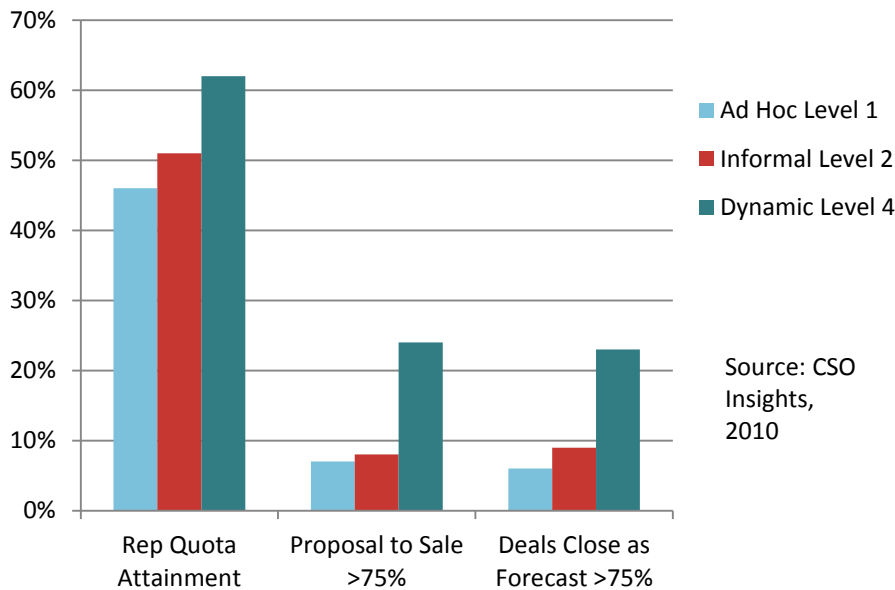
According to sales researchers Jim Dickie and Barry Trailer in “Understanding What Your Sales Manager is Up Against” in the *Harvard Business Review*,¹⁴ companies that have “dynamic” compared to “ad hoc,” “informal,” or “formal” selling processes have the following differences in results:

Figure 5. A Dynamic Sales Methodology Improves Sales Results



A check of the 2010 version of the same research¹⁵ revealed the following comparisons between the lower two process categorizations (Ad Hoc and Informal) and the top categorization (Dynamic).

Figure 6. A Dynamic Sales Methodology Improves Sales Results Similarly Years Later



Source: CSO Insights, 2010

In the same research report, CSO noted that 86.7% of companies that employed a specific sales methodology achieved “modest or significant improvement”, with only 4.9% reporting that a methodology had “no impact” on their results.

Those 70% of companies that *don't* have a standard process and methodology underperform those that do by significant amounts.

Process and Methodology

The power of process and methodology cannot be understated. Here's why:

Process: A systematic series of actions, typically grouped in stages, aimed at producing a specific output.

- Process is a guide to action. No guide, and you're on the road to nowhere.
- Process helps people be efficient and get more done.
- Process prevents re-inventing the wheel.
- Process allows for process improvement. If you can measure it you can manage it. Find the people that are succeeding and find what they're doing to succeed, and you can help other people do the same.

Methodology: A system of strategies, principles, rules, guidelines, tools, learning approaches, language, and evaluation methods for selling.

- Methodology provides guidelines and tools for how to do specific things in the sales process like leading sales conversations, prospecting, delivering presentations, closing, goals setting, account expansion, and so on.
- Methodology creates a shared language that everyone in the company understands, uses, and follows.
- Methodology helps define “what works” in various areas of the process, and provides a platform to share that across the sales force and company.

If you want sales training to succeed, don't let it float in a process-less and methodology-less vacuum. Provide a framework that salespeople can follow systematically to move prospects through the pipeline.

Goals and Action Planning

Process and methodology are essentially guides for behavior. They help you know when to do certain things (process) and how to do them well (methodology).

Sales training that gets this far, but doesn't focus on goal setting and action planning to further guide behavior, misses a huge opportunity to boost results.

When researching one of our own books, we spoke to Dr. Jim Harter, Gallup Consulting's Chief Scientist of Workplace Management and Well-Being. Gallup has asked over 12.5 million people, "Do I know what is expected of me at work?" Just over half answered the question, "strongly agree."

In other words, just under half are not so sure what's expected of them at work.

Dr. Harter further told us, "Workplace performance suffers dramatically with those that answer below 'strongly agree.'"

In other research by Dave Kurlan, a review of assessment results of 400,000 salespeople compared the top 5% versus the bottom 5%.

Among the results was the following:

- Top 5% of salespeople: *100% have written goals.*
- Bottom 5% of salespeople: *16% have written goals.* ¹⁶

Nothing says "road to nowhere" more than lack of goals and action plans.



When sales training focuses on helping salespeople build (and write down!) goals for themselves, it:

- Guides action so that action is directed towards specific, desired sales outcomes
- Provides a shared framework for evaluation and measurement of success
- Maximizes motivation and commitment¹⁷ (driver attributes), increasing the odds that the salesperson actually takes the actions to which they commit

Following goals there's action plans.

Everyone should have an action plan.

But take care: don't build action plans without first focusing on goal setting.

Without clear, written goals, action plans aren't *meaningful* to the individual. Without meaning, execution over the long-term weakens significantly.

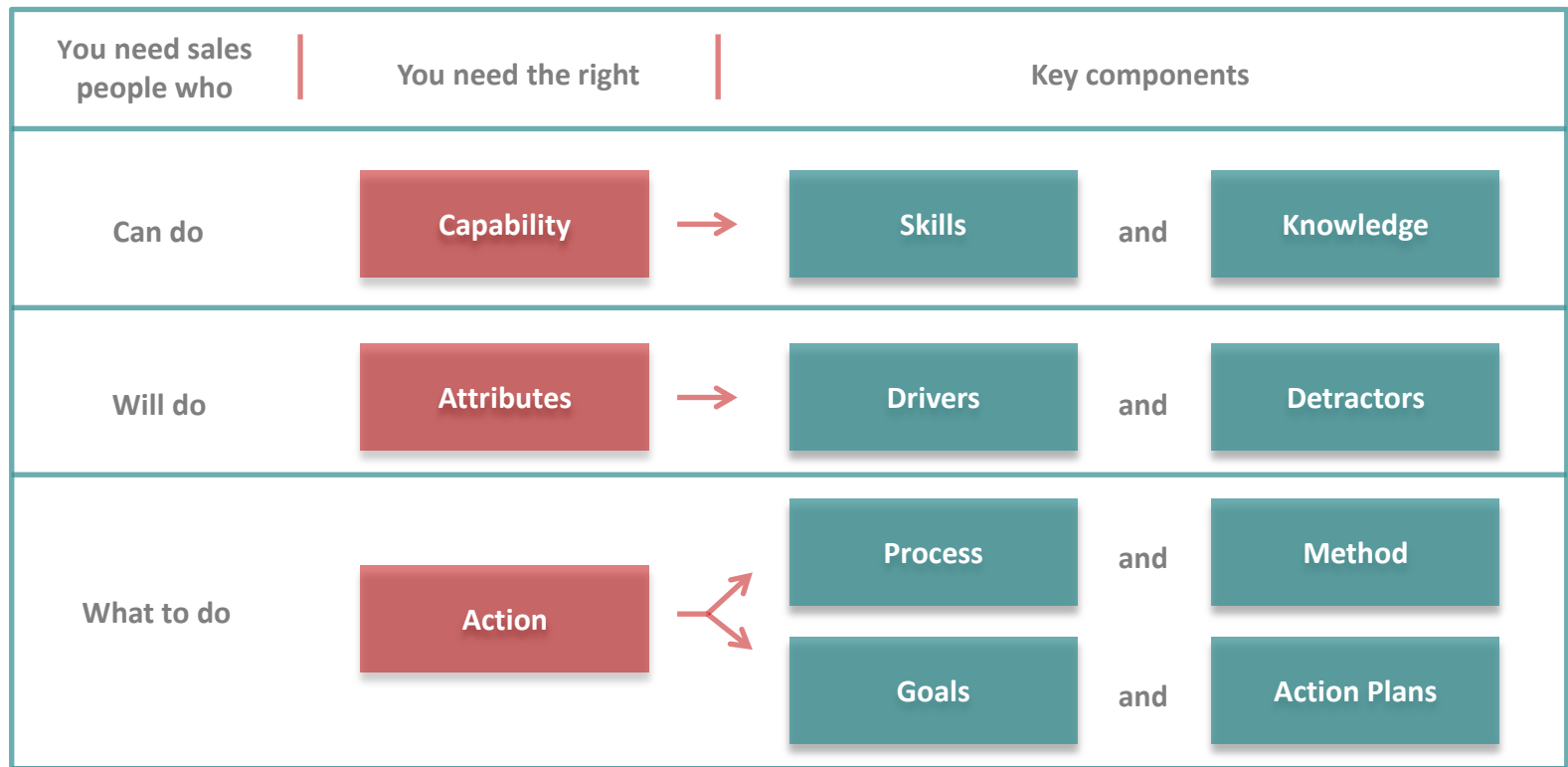
When goals *are* in place, not only do they have the effect of maximizing action, they can also increase the salesperson's attributes of desire and commitment, which increases their passion and motivation to succeed in sales.

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In section 3 we discussed building capability. When salespeople are capable, they *can sell*. In section 4 we discussed attributes. When the right attributes are in place, they *will sell*.

Add process and methodology, and goals and action planning to the mix and you add something very powerful: *what to do to sell*.

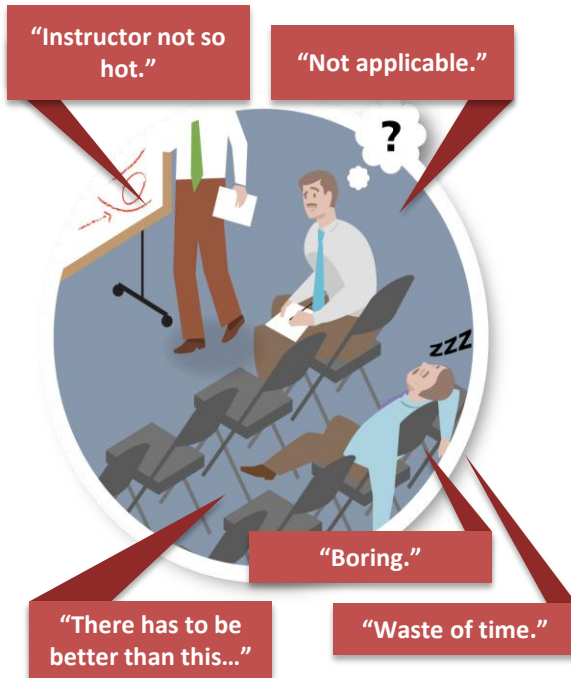
Figure 7. Combine Can do, Will do, and What to do and Drive Top Results



Without process and methodology, and goals and action plans as a part of sales training and performance improvement, sales activities are haphazard, less energetic, lower volume, less effective, and less efficient.

Buehler, Buehler – Failure to Deliver Training that Engages

Figure 8. What Happens During Training



Before training, leaders and managers too often:

- Don't know who can sell
- Don't know who will sell
- Don't know what needs to be improved to make an impact

During training, participants often say it's:

- Boring
- Confusing
- Unclear how to apply strategies
- Unconvincing that salespeople should even bother trying

As noted earlier, ES Research estimates that between 85% and 90% of sales training initiatives have no lasting effect beyond 120 days.

Taking a look through the lens of *before*, *during*, and *after* helps to understand why.

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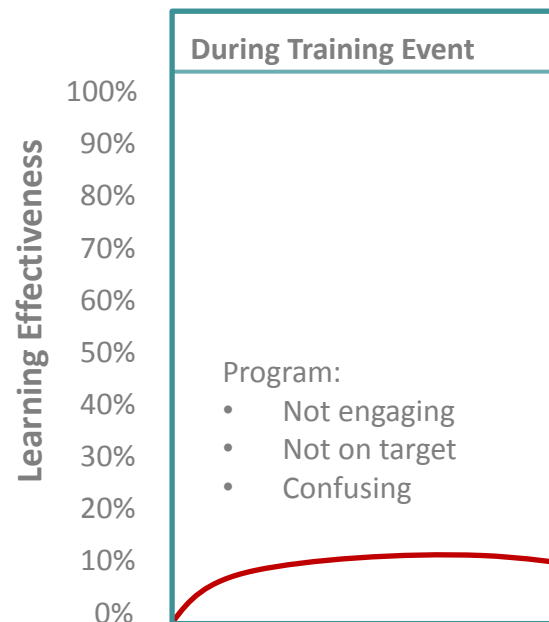
Getting the Before and During Training Right

If you can get the *before* right, you focus on the right people, and make sure training is on target for their needs. Attending to points 1, 2, and 3 in this white paper will go a long way towards making *before* a success.

Then you can design and deliver *engaging* training, built for maximum adult learning, supportive of using newly learned skills and knowledge in the field, and setting the foundation for building on success *after* the event.

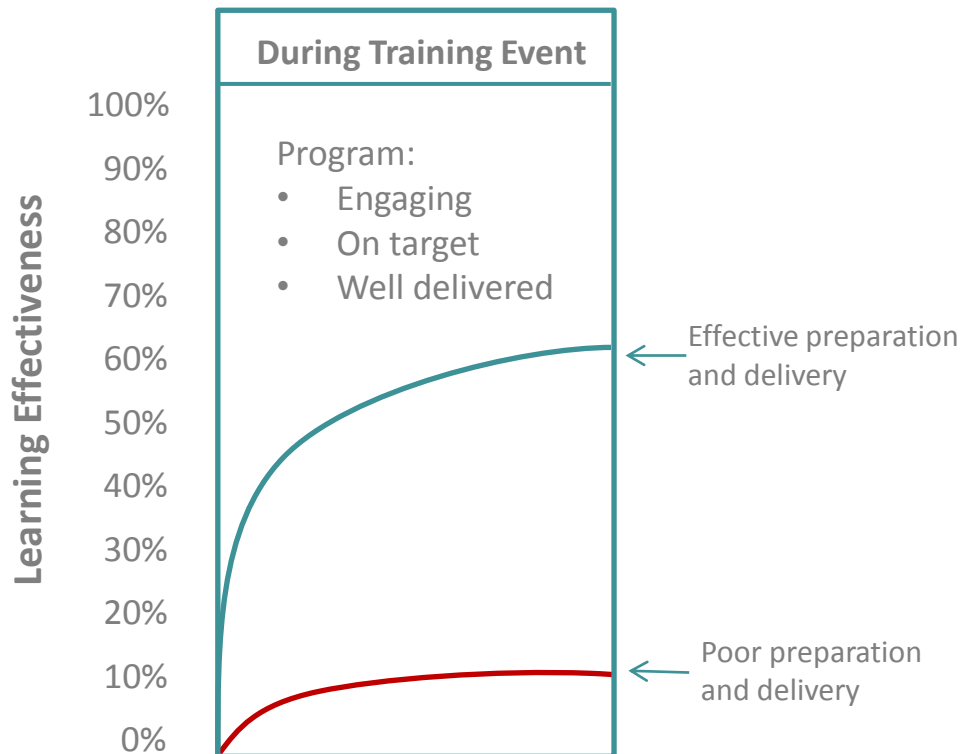
Miss out on *before* and *during*, and right out of the gate you have a problem that looks like *Figure 9*.

Figure 9. Poor Pre-Training and Training Activities Lead to Virtually No Results



If *before* and *during* activities are executed properly, you have a situation more like *Figure 10*.

Figure 10. Effective Pre-Training and Training Activities Lead to a Big Bump in Results



Delivering a poorly designed and poorly received training event has greater effects than just wasted time. Bad training discourages salespeople from participating in future programs, and can have a negative effect on sales team morale.¹⁸

When training is boring, not applicable, not at the right level, and too focused on lecture versus practice, participants don't engage.

No engagement = no learning = no improved behavior.

For training events themselves, you have to get the content right and *engage your teams* with instructors they can respect. You must also use appropriate adult learning devices such as role plays, case studies, simulations, exercises, video, and other interactions.

Otherwise, not only will training fail, it'll be more difficult to get anyone back in the room for the next go round.

Lack of Reinforcement – Failure to Make Learning Stick and Transfer

Figure 11. What Happens When Training Isn't Reinforced



If you don't reinforce training and do it with enough rigor (most don't), even good training is likely to fail eventually.

In points 1, 2, and 3 in this report we cover *before*. In points 4 and 5, we cover *during*.

Now...*after*.

Months *after* a sales training initiative, salespeople too often say:

- I don't remember what was covered in the sales training program
- I don't know enough to use the tools and apply the advice
- I didn't get enough practice to feel confident enough to give it a try
- I tried something and it didn't work...not sure if I did it wrong
- I'm pretty sure the powers that be don't remember that this was a priority anyway

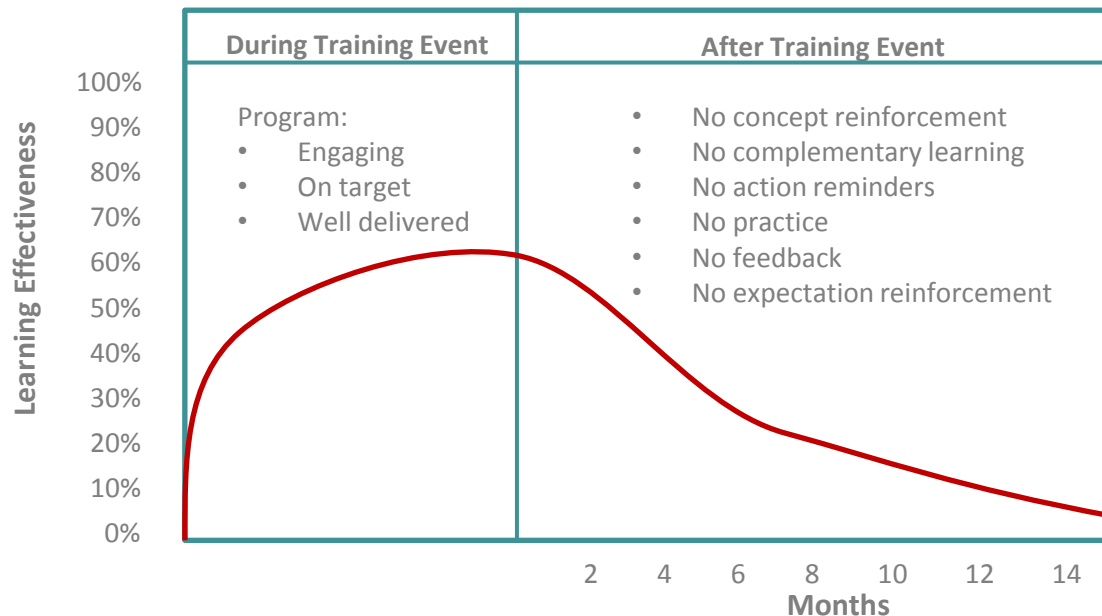
Most sales training is focused around a two- or three-day event where salespeople learn and practice new skills. The problem with *event-only* training is that the effects of the event fade.

Without reinforcement, as much as participants might have loved the program, it's the rare salesperson who goes home and curls up by the fire with their General Foods International Coffee and reviews their sales training binder 3 times a week.

With event-only training, after short-term bumps in sales improvement, salespeople forget learned skills and knowledge, forget how inspired and motivated they were given what they covered, and the learning effectiveness decreases.

In this case, you end up with what ES Research calls the 120 day sales training curse. Four months later, results and behaviors go right back to where they started before the training.

Figure 12. Poor Reinforcement Leads to Reduced Impact of Training Over Time

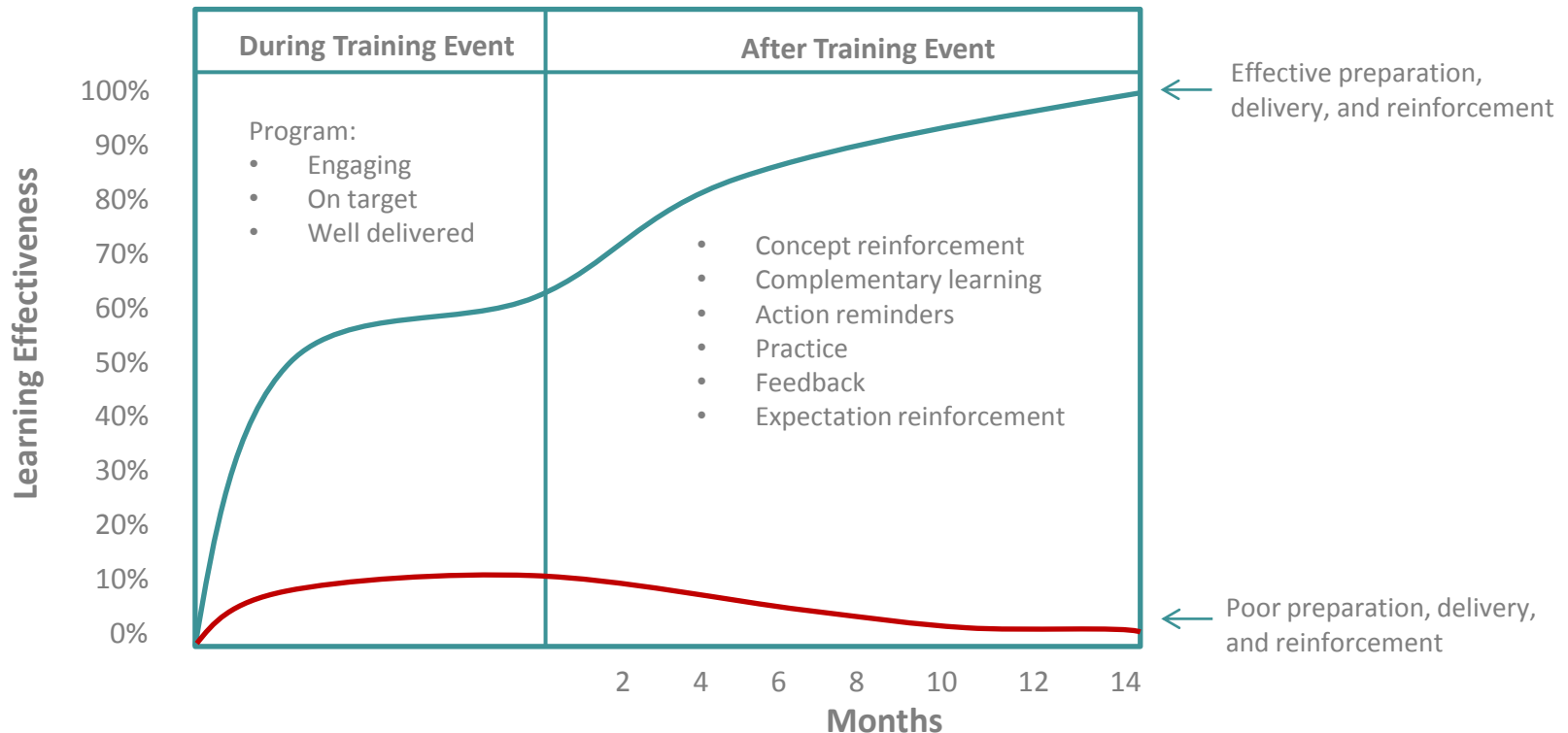


Reinforce Training for Lasting Impact

Adult learning is an ongoing process. Only through repetition and practice will your sales team internalize the training and consistently put it to use.

When you attend to the before, during, and after of the training here's what's possible...

Figure 13. What's Possible with the Right Before, During, and Post-Training Activities

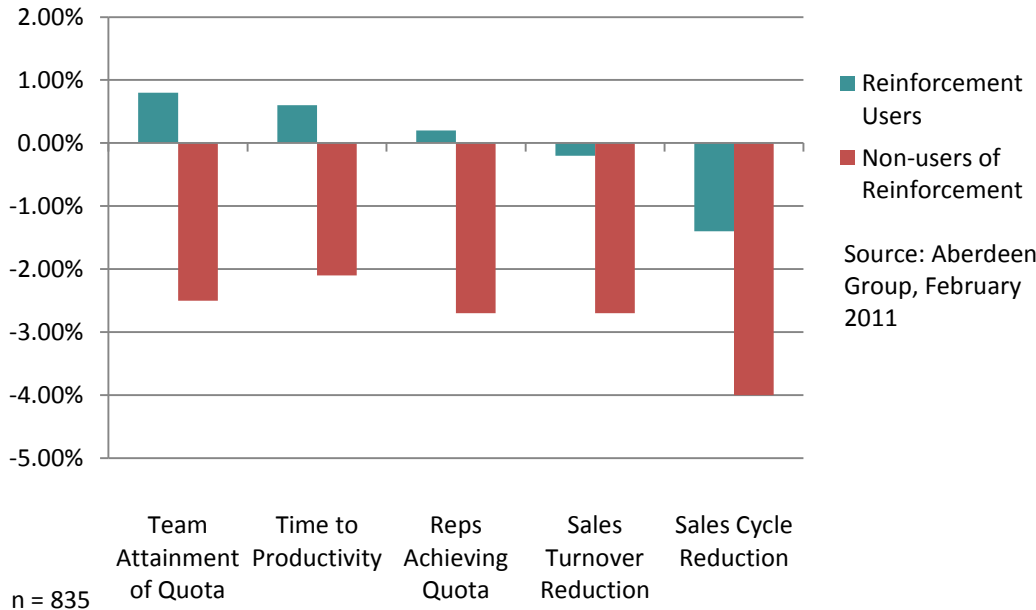


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“Best-in-class companies outpace laggards by nearly a two-times factor in providing post-training reinforcement of the best practices commonly learned in classroom-style instructor-led sales education sessions. These firms have learned that long-term success depends on underscoring the best practices in sales training deployments...”¹⁹

And the reinforcement makes a difference in results...

Figure 14. Impact of Reinforcement in 835 Organizations that Recently Employed Sales Training



The concept that learning needs to be reinforced won't be much of a news flash for most readers. Still, strong post-training reinforcement is the exception in sales training.

For those companies that get *after* right with reinforcement that works, it makes a tremendous difference in sales training effectiveness and sales results.

Stop or I'll Say Stop Again! Failures of Evaluation, Accountability, and Continuous Improvement

“In England, if you commit a crime, the police don't have a gun and you don't have a gun. If you commit a crime, the police will say, “Stop! Or I'll say stop again.”

– Robin Williams*

That's the best we can do to give the boring concepts of evaluation and accountability a little life.

Most companies implement sales training in order to increase revenue.

Sometimes boring things make a big difference.

Selling (like anything else) is a process with a series of inputs and outputs both common and readily identifiable and measurable.

Such is the case with *evaluation*, and its key components, *accountability* and *continuous improvement*.

If you can improve process efficiency (getting more things done) and effectiveness (getting things done with greater success), you can improve the eventual output, in this case, revenue.

Consider this:

Yet only 9% of organizations evaluate behavioral change and 7% evaluate organizational results stemming from training initiatives.²⁰

*http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8N1Hz2_gdh4 – worth a look

Evaluating Sales has its Advantages

Those companies that do evaluate sales performance systematically have a number of advantages:

- They *can* measure the effect of sales training and performance improvement initiatives
- They *can* improve sales strategies and rollout successes across the team
- They *can* remove ineffective sales strategies and training components in favor of those working better
- They *can* shorten learning curves, and get new salespeople producing faster than before
- They *can* improve continuously

The evaluation process itself also has a positive effect on sales results. Customer renewal rates, deal size, team achievement of quota, and salesperson achievement of quota are all positively impacted by performance management processes.²¹

Without effective training and sales performance evaluation processes, sales training can fail simply because companies have no idea if it has even succeeded. And without an evaluation process, it's nearly impossible to hold salespeople accountable for changing and improving behavior, or for taking actions and achieving results.

**No evaluation system =
no accountability.**

Implemented in the right way, sales performance evaluation analytics can be the source of significant competitive advantage.

In fact, 67% more best-in-class companies have sales analytics than laggards.²²

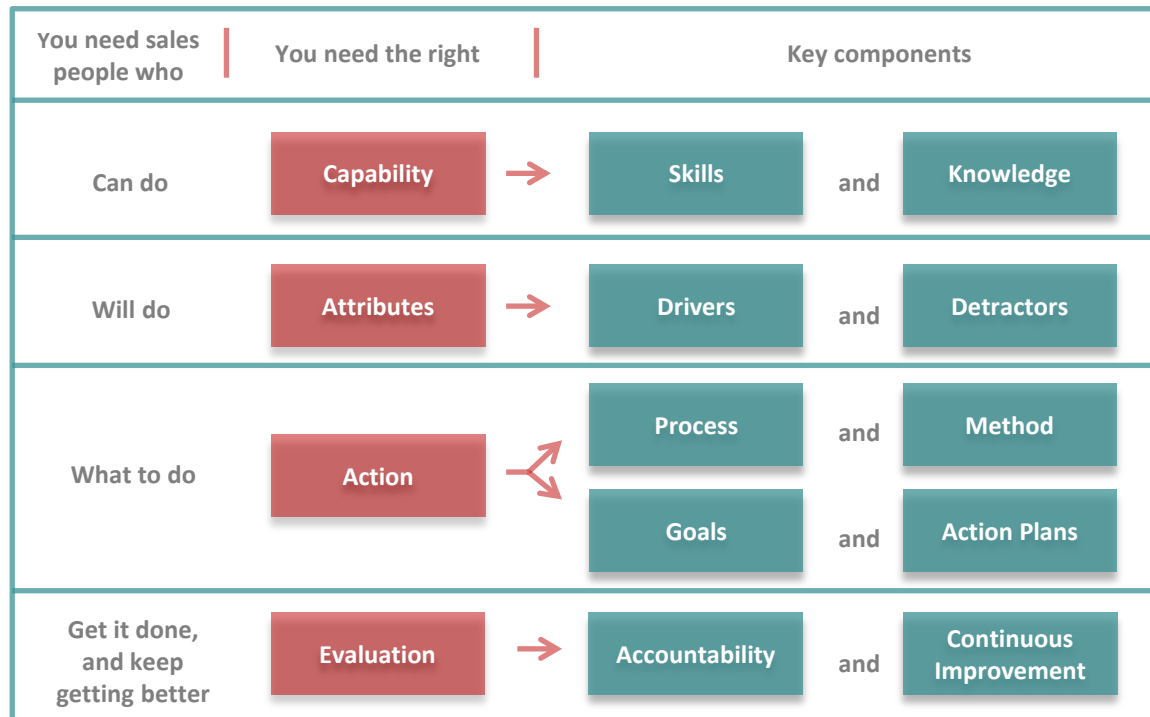
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As noted in the *Harvard Business Review*, “Organizations are competing on analytics not just because they can – business today is awash in data crunchers – but also because they should. At a time when firms in many industries offer similar products and use comparable technologies, business processes are among the last remaining points of differentiation. And analytics competitors wring every last drop of value from those processes.”²³

Employ analytics and you’ll be able to join an elite club: companies that actually succeed with *continuous improvement*. When everything comes together, you’ll have salespeople that:

- Can do
- Will do
- Know what to do
- Get it done and keep getting better...

Figure 15. Evaluating Training Results Leads to Accountability and Continuous Improvement



Without Accountability Everything Else Falls Apart

One other important note: Let's say that there *is* an evaluation system. Sales training can also fail if leadership is *unwilling to act* on enforcing activity and results expectations.

At one company we knew, we spoke with a business unit leader who was expected, for the previous several years, to meet revenue growth targets for his division. The core way he was expected to grow the division was through his *personal selling efforts*.

For three years straight he did *not* meet these expectations. When we asked him why he hasn't met the targets, he said he never really tried. He told us, referring to his company leadership, "They keep asking

me to sell more, but they haven't done anything about it yet, and I doubt they will. Until they do, why change? I'm happy with how things are."

Oy.

There are all sorts of issues with this statement, but it's clear that there's no accountability.

There's an ongoing *request*, but the request is about as effective as "Stop! Or I'll say stop again."

Without evaluation, accountability, and continuous improvement sales training and sales performance improvement can never be completely effective.

Grow Revenue with Sales Training

The fact is sales training can be an enormous source of revenue growth.

Yet so many sales training dollars go to waste because proper attention is not paid to what needs to happen before, during, and after the training. Failure doesn't have to happen to you if you make certain:

Before training:

1. No pipe dreams, no pot luck learning | Define business objectives *and* learning needs.
2. Both halves of the battle | Focus on sales knowledge as well as skills.
3. No square pegs in round holes | Assess sales attributes and proceed accordingly.

During training:

4. Road to somewhere | Provide a sales process and methodology along with goals and actions.
5. Too cool for school | Deliver great, relevant, and engaging learning experiences.

After training:

6. Reinforce | Don't let inertia, forgetfulness, and lack of practice bring you down.
7. Stop! Or things are going to change | Evaluate, hold salespeople accountable, and improve continuously.

Do this and you'll find that your sales training provides more than that 120 day boost in results. It will lead to significant revenue and profit growth that sticks.

RAIN Group Can Help You Get More Out of Your Sales Training

At RAIN Group we combine rigorous pre-training evaluation, highly customized training programs, robust reinforcement, and ongoing measurement and evaluation to ensure a successful training initiative. [Contact us](#) to learn more about our approach to training success.

Prepare – Before Training

Rainmaker Assessment

online modules

action plans

success measurements

Launch – During Training

core live RAIN workshop

role playing

simulation

buyer personas

action plans

Ongoing – After Training

ongoing live workshops

book

coaching

online modules & webinars

email reinforcement

success measurements

About the Authors

Mike Schultz is Co-President of RAIN Group and world-renowned as a consultant and expert in sales performance improvement. He's co-author of *The Wall Street Journal* bestseller, *Rainmaking Conversations* and *Professional Services Marketing*. Mike was named as the Top Sales Thought Leader in 2011 by Top Sales Awards.

Mike has worked with organizations such as Bank of America, Quintiles, Monitor Group, Instron, Ameresco, Pegasystems, Fidelity Investments, Ryder, Mellon, Beneficial Bank, and many others to improve sales performance and develop rainmakers.

Mike is also publisher of RainToday.com and on the faculty in the marketing division at Babson College. He's frequently quoted as an expert in *Business Week*, *Inc. Magazine*, *MSNBC*, *The Huffington Post*, and others and regularly speaks at industry conferences and events.



John Doerr is Co-President of RAIN Group and draws upon an extensive career in business leadership which includes senior executive management, sales and marketing, and product and service development. He is co-author of *The Wall Street Journal* bestseller, *Rainmaking Conversations* and *Professional Services Marketing*. John was named as the Top Sales Thought Leader in 2011 by Top Sales Awards.

John has trained and coached thousands of sales professionals helping them to improve sales performance globally. He's worked with organizations such as Oracle, Beneficial Bank, Bright Horizons, London Business School, DHL, Informatica, HP, and others to improve sales results.

John speaks on the subject of selling and marketing for clients and conferences throughout the world and has written hundreds of articles on the topic.

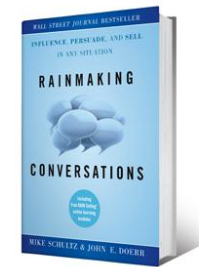
About RAIN Group

RAIN Group is a sales performance consulting and training firm dedicated to helping companies succeed with the complex sale. Founded in 2002, the firm has grown over the last decade into a recognized leader in sales improvement with an international client base.

RAIN Group has helped tens of thousands of salespeople, strategic account managers, and professionals in dozens of countries increase their sales significantly with our RAIN Selling methodology.

RAIN Group helps organizations:

- Enhance sales and sales management skills and improve sales results
- Increase cross- and up-selling success
- Recruit, hire, and retain the best sales talent
- Succeed with strategic account management
- Greatly reduce the learning curve for new hires
- Increase the success of new product and service launches



Wall Street Journal Bestseller
Named Top Sales Book of 2011 by Top Sales World

RAIN Group leaders Mike Schultz and John Doerr were named as the Top Sales Thought Leaders globally in 2011 by Top Sales World. We are leaders in sales research and publishing, including *The Wall Street Journal* bestseller *Rainmaking Conversations*, *How Clients Buy*, *Lead Generation Benchmark Report*, *Benchmark Report on High Performance in Strategic Account Management*, and many others.

We publish RainToday.com, named the 2010 and 2011 Top Sales Resource Site by Top Sales World. Our leaders speak at conferences and events globally on sales and selling and are frequently quoted in leading publications such as *BusinessWeek*, *Inc. Magazine*, *Huffington Post*, *MSNBC*, and *Entrepreneur Magazine*.

Contact us to learn how we can help you improve sales results.

Call 508-405-0438, visit www.RainGroup.com, or email info@raingroup.com.

Endnotes

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