

5 PRINCIPLES OF BUILDING

A MODERN SALES TEAM



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Welcome to the World of Modern Sales



It can be a confusing place: **KPIs, predictive analytics, CRM dashboards, Activity Based selling, sales stacks** ...are we missing anything?

There have been a lot of changes in sales over the past couple of years, and you, as a sales leader, might feel like you're being pulled in every different direction to bring your organization into the twenty-first century.

THE GOOD NEWS?

We're here to help with a few essential tips for building the foundation for a modern sales organization.

ABOUT ASCENT CLOUD



Ascent Cloud provides industry-leading solutions for sales and customer-facing teams that enhance their CRM and empower leaders to improve performance. Our sales activity management system, LevelEleven, lives right within Salesforce and unlocks maximum revenue potential for companies including Symantec, EMC and Comcast. LevelEleven engages a sales team in the behaviors that matter, allows managers to course correct in real time and creates a true culture of performance.

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I. RECOGNIZE THAT THE INDUSTRY HAS CHANGED

Have you ever Googled something before making a purchase?

OF COURSE, BECAUSE YOU'RE A MODERN BUYER.

While old-school buyers were naturally skeptical of salespeople, they still relied on them for information. The modern buyer, on the other hand, does their own research and isn't at the will of the salesperson for information. They are in control of the buying process and expect salespeople to help them learn – not sell to them.

THERE'S A CHANGE IN THE MODERN SALESPERSON AS WELL.

Because the buyer expects the salesperson to help them learn, helping is the new selling. Modern salespeople should engage in less spin and persuasion, more teaching and education.

The role of the sales manager has also changed. Instead of racking up frequent flyer miles and steak dinners, a **modern sales leader** acts as a coach and mentor. He or she focuses on more than just what's closing this month and understands how to **drive performance around sales metrics**.

SO WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOU?

A LOT. But for the purpose of this eBook, let's talk about this:

Once you acknowledge how much the sales industry has changed and adapt to the new roles that have come out of it, you'll have the right foundation for creating a modern sales organization.

You'll also need to know how to define meaningful metrics.

II. DEFINING MEANINGFUL METRICS

Modern sales teams are fueled by Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

When defining KPIs, make sure that they are based on activities that are controllable and actionable – things that your salespeople can actually have a measurable impact on. Sales leaders should communicate with their reps to boil down the few critical behaviors and activities they need to focus on that will lead to closing business.

OK, BUT WHERE DO YOU EVEN START?

Easy, just reverse engineer the whole thing. Start from your desired result (likely more sales wins) and break down each step of the sales process to see how much of each activity is needed to get you there.

ASK YOURSELF QUESTIONS LIKE:

- On average, how many product demos does it take to close a deal?
- How many conversations do we need to get that many demos?
- What's the number of connections required to create that number of conversations?

When you're able to calculate those numbers, create a process. If you know it takes an average of **10 demos** to get one new customer, and you want to get **10 new customers**, then you need to perform **100 demos**.

100 demos x .1% conversions customers

You could leave your sales team feeling busy all the time and not entirely sure what they should be doing at any given moment. Or you could define and implement these KPIs, which will help them understand which activities to focus on each day. Pretty easy decision, right?

III. IMPLEMENT COMPANY-WIDE VISABILITY

Remember those sales KPIs you just defined? They need to be visible in a big way.

Sales reps benefit from company-wide visibility when their KPIs are tracked on a personal scorecard. This keeps them focused on those KPI activities that they need to be carrying out to reach their team goals.

They can also benefit from CRM dashboards or digital leaderboards. In a strong sales culture, visibility into which reps are ahead on metrics will encourage healthy competition. Being able to see who's falling behind inspires peer mentorship.

As the sales leader, you will really appreciate this visibility. Seeing where the metrics are at all times, in real time, will help you immediately identify when there's a problem and figure out how to tackle it.

(We're behind on this metric, so which of our activity KPIs will address it?) Visibility around sales KPIs also provides you more insight into how each of your sales reps is performing and why.

EVEN C-LEVEL EXECUTIVES GAIN FROM TRANSPARENT KPIs

Not only do they have a better understanding of what's happening when metrics start to lag, but it also creates better opportunities for them to recognize sales reps who are performing well. They might even congratulate the sales rep (or entire team) at an office event or with a company-wide email, motivating reps with well-deserved recognition.

IV. COACH AROUND KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

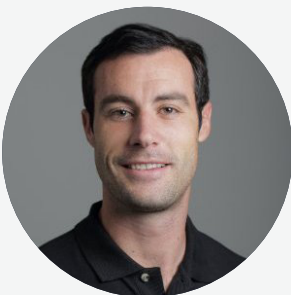
The role of a sales manager can be tough, especially when you're new.

You've just been promoted from the sales team, so you're really good at being a salesperson, but maybe not as familiar with how to coach or mentor other salespeople.

KPIs WILL DEFINITELY HELP YOU WITH THIS.

In fact, modern sales organizations enable sales leaders to be **metrics-driven coaches**. The **one-on-one meeting** is the time to pause, review and adjust behaviors or activities if necessary. Modern sales leaders hold them on a regular basis and understand that both the sales rep and sales manager need to come prepared with agenda items to review.

Instead of just sitting down with your sales reps once a week to ask what's closing, you'll be able to take a deeper dive into where they might need help in the sales process. This way, you can coach and mentor them on one specific activity, rather than continually asking why they aren't closing deals. For some real-life examples on conducting effective one-on-one meetings, watch LevelEleven's webinar with AA-ISP, *Improve Your Results by Improving Your People*.



We find that in day-to-day management and coaching, we really want to focus the majority of our energy and guidance around those short-term metrics where we can create the most immediate impact and ultimately influence the production metrics (lagging indicators).

– **DAN MILLER-SMITH**

Dir. of Sales Dev, Procore Technologies

V. EVALUATE YOUR SALES STACK

There is an enormous amount of technology for the sales industry.

In the past decade alone, more than **200 insides sales companies** have been created. It can be overwhelming. As a sales leader, you're asking what technologies do you need? What technologies will make your team more effective? What technologies will make your sales process more efficient?

TAKE THE TIME TO EVALUATE YOUR SALES STACK.

Ensure that you're utilizing technologies that create productivity and efficiency, don't overlap with each other's capabilities and still allow your sales reps to do what they do best: sell.

Amid this chaos, remember this: Sales leaders must focus on the basics. Sales reps still need to be making calls and having meaningful conversations. Just because you can implement a sales tool for every part of the process doesn't mean you should.



When evaluating your sales tools ... start with, 'what am I trying to get done?' If you don't know what you're trying to accomplish, you're going to grab the wrong tool.

– **JIM KEENAN**
CEO, A Sales Guy

READY TO SET UP YOUR SALES ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY?

With Ascent Cloud's performance management system:



“Paycor is fast growing with plans to grow even faster, so it’s critical that we’re focused on improving sales productivity and LevelEleven helps us do that.”

– **BRIAN VASS**

VP of Sales Operations, Paycor

At Ascent Cloud, we leverage our industry-leading products to drive productivity with geolocation (Geopointe) and performance management (LevelEleven), and provide end-to-end solutions to our 1,800+ customers. Contact us today to learn more..

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