



Driving Impact With **Sales Coaching and Onboarding**





Introduction

Today's buyers have high expectations for value-added insights from salespeople. At the same time, creating deep connections with buyers has become even more challenging for salespeople in a constantly changing business landscape. This fast-changing environment also means intensified competition and greater demands on sales performance. In fact, the **State of Sales Enablement Report 2021** revealed that the top three most commonly listed challenges that organizations faced this year include competitive pressure, time to deal, and customer experience and retention.

As organizations struggle to ramp reps for success and continuously improve their performance at scale, companies need to shift their priorities to better meet the needs of their buyers by equipping reps through effective coaching and onboarding. This research brief takes a deeper look into how sales enablement can optimize coaching and onboarding programs in order to maximize rep productivity, enhance customer experiences, and track the success of these efforts against strategic business goals.



In a successful enablement program, I want to be able to see a measurable impact on the business. At the end of the day, the number of people that have been through an e-learning or the number of people that have sat through different webinars or trainings, those are important statistics to have, but they don't mean anything if I can't correlate those activities to real measurable business impact.

–Giorgia Ortiz, Vice President of Strategy and Revenue Enablement, Lever



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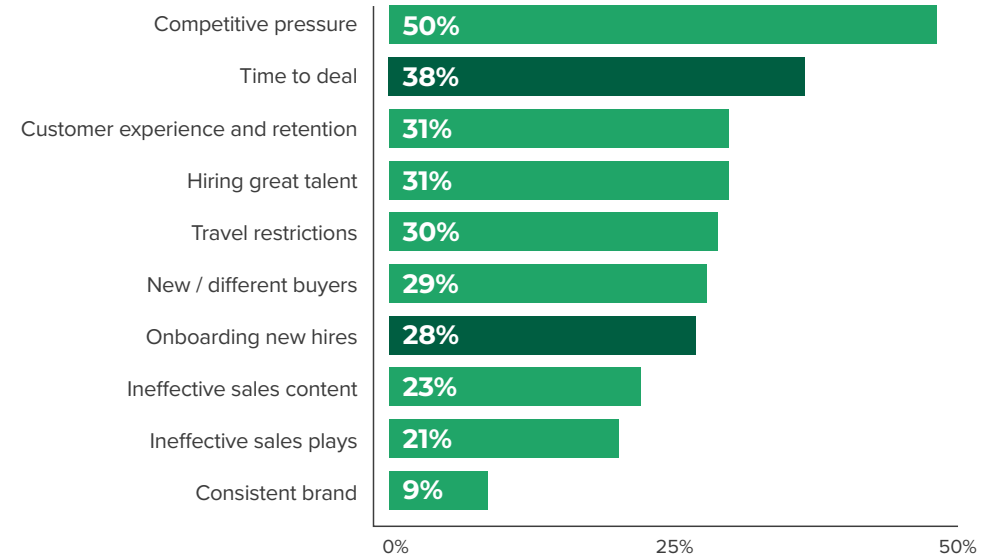
Effective Onboarding Drives Impact Faster

ACCELERATE TIME TO DEAL

Whether it's a hyper-growth start up trying to scale or a large enterprise wanting to increase market share, there is pressure to onboard reps quickly so they can start closing deals and contributing revenue. However, this has proven to be a challenge for many organizations over the last year, especially since many are still operating in virtual or hybrid work environments.

Research shows that 28% of companies report onboarding new hires as a top sales challenge this year, and 38% report time to deal as a top challenge.

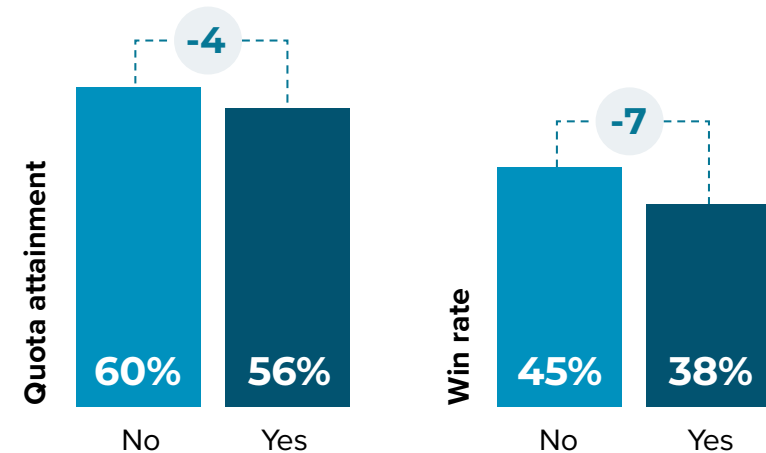
What are your top three sales challenges?



Those that identified time to deal as a top sales challenge report lower quota attainment rates by 4 percentage points and lower win rates by 7 percentage points.

Since many teams are struggling with ramping their reps efficiently and effectively, companies can focus more attention on improving their onboarding programs and dedicating the necessary resources to do so. Done effectively, companies can see faster time to ramp, and sellers can start winning deals sooner and more repeatedly.

Is time to deal one of your top three sales challenges? (Impact on quota attainment and win rate)



An effective sales onboarding program really puts the seller at the heart of their own onboarding, giving them the opportunity to own it, drive it, and feel empowered and confident throughout. It's making things available to them when they need them in the right format, so they feel comfortable and confident with their onboarding into the organization.



–Claire Scull, Vice President of Global Sales, Cello Health

STREAMLINE PROCESSES WITH ENABLEMENT-LED ONBOARDING

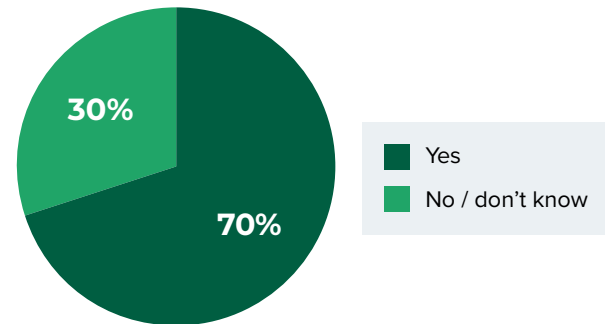
This past year, many organizations have struggled with their sales process. In fact, 70% of respondents report that their sales process has become more challenging which can affect business results.

Having enablement manage sales onboarding efforts can increase the ease in executing the sales process and achieving sales goals—although 43% of organizations still operate their programs without the help of enablement.

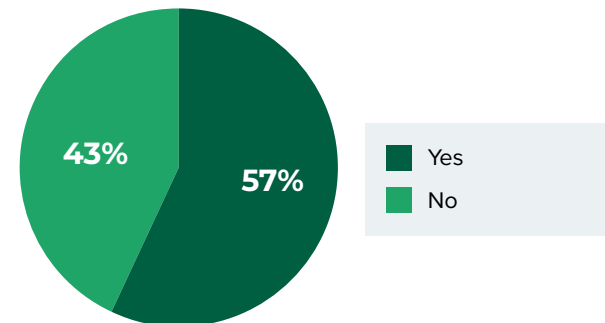
Impact on the sales process

When comparing enablement's involvement in onboarding to the impact on the sales process, the data shows that respondents experience less of a challenge with their sales process. In particular, companies where sales enablement is heavily involved in onboarding are 27% less likely to say that their company's sales process has become less challenging over the last 12 to 18 months.

Has your company's sales process become more challenging over the last 12–18 months?



Is sales enablement heavily involved in onboarding at your company?



27%

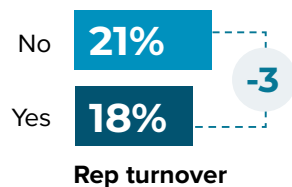
less likely for respondents' sales process to become more challenging when enablement is involved in onboarding



Companies where sales enablement is heavily involved in onboarding also report lower rep turnover by 3 percentage points, higher customer retention by 3 percentage points, and are 10% more likely to have high rep engagement levels compared to those where sales enablement is not involved in onboarding.

Is sales enablement heavily involved in onboarding at your company?

(Impact on rep turnover and customer retention)



10%

increase in likelihood of having high rep engagement when sales enablement is involved in onboarding





To create successful onboarding programs, cross-functional collaboration is crucial. Enablement can leverage feedback from core teams (e.g. marketing, product, and the field) to foster alignment across departments and ensure reps are set up for success. When enablement is heavily involved in onboarding, companies are 54% more likely to have formal collaboration with other functions in the organization.

When enablement creates a structured onboarding program that encompasses feedback from various teams, it can help reps become more productive faster and set the revenue engine up for success long-term.



54%

increased likelihood of having formal collaboration with other functions in the organization when enablement is heavily involved in onboarding



Get active in the field and talk to people. Talk to some of your best performers, but also talk to some people that are struggling, find the distinction between what the best performers are doing and [also] the people that are struggling, and try to marry up some trends.

–Sheryl Buscheck, Senior Director of Global Enablement, Infoblox



TRACK ONBOARDING PROGRESS

Companies can invest in onboarding technology to simplify their efforts and track their success. Those that use sales onboarding solutions report higher quota attainment rates by 5 percentage points and also higher win rates by 5 percentage points.

By using technology to support onboarding efforts, companies can invest in the employee experience as well, as an intuitive and engaging learning experience can influence morale as new hires join a company—especially as many are still operating fully virtually.

Companies can also integrate their sales onboarding tools with their CRM in order to maintain a centralized system for revenue teams and managers to track performance and measure against progress in trainings and onboarding sessions. When sales enablement teams are highly effective at using onboarding tools, they are 100% more likely to be effective at using data to analyze the business impact of their efforts.

Investing in dedicated onboarding technology allows sales enablement to measure its impact against strategic business goals and ramp reps more efficiently and effectively.

Does your organization use sales onboarding tools?

(Impact on quota attainment and win rate)



Quota attainment



Win rate

Likelihood of Enablement When Using Onboarding Tools Effectively



100%

more likely to use data effectively to analyze the business impact of sales enablement efforts



The quantitative piece should be measuring the performance data, the productivity metrics that are available in [your CRM] so that you can define what good looks like and also where they are tracking. Then obviously, you can assess the movement of that over time.



—John Dougan, Senior Director of Global Sales Delivery and Coaching, Workday

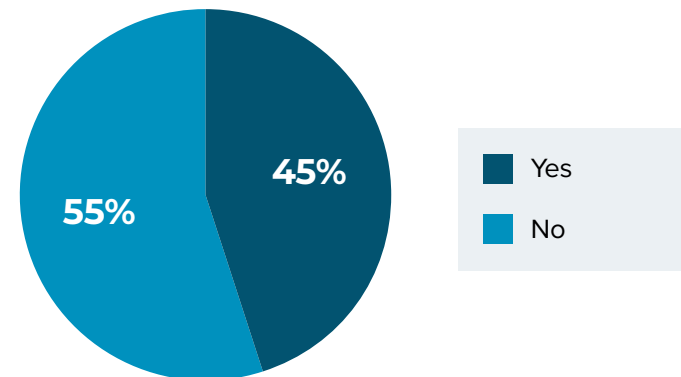
Coaching Unifies the Revenue Engine

IMPROVE COLLABORATION ACROSS TEAMS

Coaching helps teams reinforce the skills and knowledge learned in onboarding on an ongoing basis to ensure consistent high quality performance. Implementing dedicated coaching programs can improve collaboration within the business, help customer-facing teams refine their skills, and ensure they are meeting buyers' evolving needs.

Currently, research shows that only 45% of companies have their enablement teams managing coaching programs. That means over half of companies are missing out on an opportunity to improve cross-functional collaboration and drive strategic business impact.

Is sales enablement heavily involved in sales coaching?



When companies have a consistent sales coaching program established for reps, they can enhance collaboration across teams and improve business performance. In fact, when enablement is involved in sales coaching, it is 56% and 35% more likely to exceed expectations when working with frontline sales managers and sales leaders respectively. Keeping close relationships with these key stakeholders is vital for developing strong coaching programs, as they can provide a unique perspective on the sales process that enablement may not be able to see.

Impact on Collaboration When Enablement is Involved in Sales Coaching



56%

more likely to exceed expectations when working with frontline sales managers



35%

more likely to exceed expectations when working with sales leaders



It's all about how we design our coaching programs from the pulse of the field as well as in line with core business objectives.



–Jeff Scannella, Senior Manager of Sales Productivity and Enablement, FullStory

Along with improving collaboration, sales coaching can help companies achieve their larger strategic initiatives. When enablement is involved in sales coaching, its efforts are 83% more likely to be aligned with strategic business goals. Companies are also 40% more likely to report being satisfied with enablement's efforts when sales enablement manages coaching programs.

Impact on Strategic Alignment When Enablement Is Involved in Coaching



83%

more likely for enablement's efforts to be aligned to strategic business goals

Impact on Companies' Satisfaction With Enablement When Involved in Coaching



40%

more likely to report being satisfied with enablement's efforts



MEASURE IMPACT WITH COACHING TECHNOLOGY

Another key aspect of establishing a formal coaching program is ensuring that enablement can report on its progress. Companies can achieve this by implementing coaching tools. Investing in dedicated coaching technology allows sales enablement to track and measure its direct impact against strategic business goals. The research shows that teams that use dedicated sales coaching tools report higher quota attainment rates by 3 percentage points and higher win rates by 5 percentage points.

Companies can integrate their coaching solution within their CRMs to provide context on pipeline health, sales call performance, and data that will help paint a clearer picture for managers on where they may need to coach their teams. This creates a more holistic approach to enabling revenue teams which can simplify processes and streamline behaviors more easily.

When teams use sales coaching tools, they are able to supply data-driven feedback to help improve consistency in rep performance. For instance, companies that are highly effective at using coaching tools are 56% more likely to be successful at providing key insights into what works than those that are only somewhat effective at using these tools.

Does your organization use sales coaching tools?

(Impact on quota attainment and win rate)



Impact for Companies that Use Sales Coaching Tools



56%

more likely to be successful at providing key insights into what works when highly effective at using coaching tools

Those that use dedicated sales coaching solutions are also 25% more likely to prioritize improving sales competencies as a key sales enablement goal. By supplying revenue teams with data-backed insights on their performance, companies can track the progress of their customer-facing teams, know exactly what skills require additional coaching, and drive more behavior change.

Impact for Companies That Use Sales Coaching Tools



25%

more likely to prioritize improving sales competencies as a key sales enablement goal



Ideally, sales coaching helps to create a behavior change because you're challenging their beliefs. You're helping them apply the knowledge that they've learned in training to actually execute in their day-to-day, on-the-job execution.

–Carole Mahoney, Founder, Unbound Growth



Conclusion



INVEST IN COACHING AND ONBOARDING

When companies have established coaching and onboarding programs, they are more equipped to enhance performance across the revenue engine. Dedicated coaching and onboarding solutions that are integrated seamlessly with other core tools in the sales tech stack such as the CRM can provide important insights that enablement can use to track performance and measure growth year over year. Without formalized approaches to onboarding and coaching, companies continue to struggle with achieving deals quickly and creating a unified customer experience.

LEVERAGE ENABLEMENT TO DRIVE IMPACT

Companies can lean on the help of enablement to establish effective coaching and onboarding programs, ensure their efforts are aligned with strategic business goals, and track revenue teams' performance over time. By investing in coaching and onboarding technology and managing them effectively through enablement, companies can realize significant business impact and long-term success.



Enablement empowers us to curate a more targeted onboarding experience for the teams we support, along with much more meaningful certifications or assessments and coaching opportunities throughout the process. What that does is ensures that we're focused on continually developing and empowering the teams we support to make sure that they're executing flawlessly and are leveling up and seeing progress in the organization.

–Devon McDermott, Vice President of Enablement and Learning and Development, Persado



ABOUT SALES ENABLEMENT PRO

Sales Enablement PRO brings together leading sales enablement professionals—across practitioners, thought leaders, consultants, and solution providers—to provide sales enablement expertise from experts. For more information, please visit salesenablement.pro.



ABOUT ASCENT CLOUD

Ascent Cloud builds and deploys SaaS solutions that help align sales people to outcomes by bridging the gap between the data in CRM and what is needed to enable frontline sellers and sales leaders. Ascent Cloud's mission is to excel beyond the status quo and empower its customers with industry-leading solutions for sales and customer-facing teams. For more information visit ascentcloud.io.