

# THE COMPLETE SALES KPI STRATEGY GUIDE

---

For Customer Success Teams

# Do you ever feel like you're not selling enough, especially in comparison to your investment in CRM and your sales team?

Sales activity management helps sales teams unlock maximum revenue potential by engaging salespeople in the behaviors that matter.

In our [first Sales KPI Report](#), we analyzed 1,500+ sales activities that are being used to manage and motivate 100+ sales teams. Now, we're presenting you with a complete guide to launching your sales activity management strategy based on our sales KPI research and catered to your specific type of sales team.

## WHAT YOU'LL FIND IN THIS GUIDE:

1. Today's Customer Success Rep

2. Most Common Customer Success KPIs

3. Expert Recommendations

4. Interesting KPIs

5. KPI Timeframes

6. The Activity Based Selling Methodology

Select to go  
straight to  
that section!



### About LevelEleven

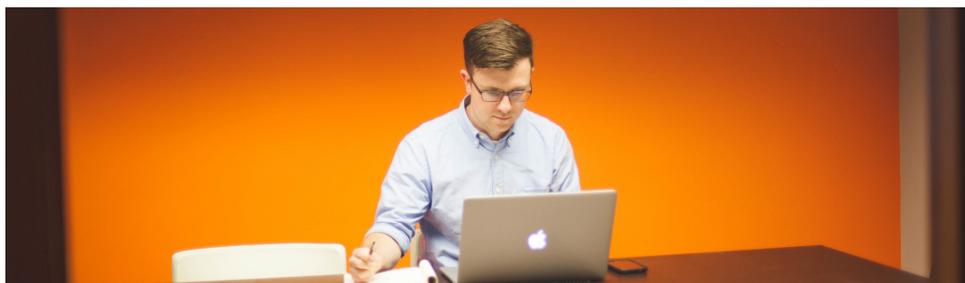
LevelEleven is for sales leaders who want to sell more. We have the industry's leading sales activity management system, which lives right within Salesforce and unlocks maximum revenue potential for companies including Paycor, Ryerson and Comcast. LevelEleven engages a sales team in the behaviors that matter, allows managers to course correct in real time and creates a true culture of performance.

[learn more here](#)

Just to ensure we're on the same page about the role this guide is addressing, here is our basic definition of a customer success rep...

## TODAY'S CUSTOMER SUCCESS REP

The customer success rep works with existing customers to help them get maximum value out of your solution or product. They are closest to the customer and are therefore able to uncover new sales opportunities. They are also sometimes referred to as account managers.



## MOST COMMON CUSTOMER SUCCESS KPIS

This chart shows the most popular customer success KPIs. At the top of the list we have *Opportunities Created* with 15% of teams using this metric. Next are *Calls* (12%) and *Meetings* (9%).

KPI	% of Customer Success Teams Using this KPI
Opportunities Created	15%
Calls	12%
Meetings	9%
Wins	6%
Emails Sent	6%
CSM Leads Generated	3%
Initiatives Completed	3%
New Contacts Added	3%
Milestones Completed	3%

# Leading vs. Lagging

---

During your KPI discovery process, it's important to distinguish between leading and lagging indicators:

## LAGGING INDICATORS

They track how you're doing, but only in terms of what has already happened (and are, therefore, not real time).

Some examples include *Wins*, *Close Rate*, *Deal Size* and *Sales Cycle Length*.

## LEADING INDICATORS

They are controllable behaviors that show you what's happening right now and whether you're on pace to hit your goal.

Examples include *Conversations*, *Milestones Completed* and *Opportunities Created*.

For example: *Deal Size* is a lagging indicator. It's not a controllable behavior.

But there are leading indicators that would improve the likelihood of increasing that deal size metric, like VP-level conversations, ROI discussions and prospecting into larger companies. If increasing your deal size is a key company goal, then you'll want to consider establishing leading indicators that align with it, such as those referenced above.

### TIP

A great best practice is to focus on 3 leading indicators and 1 lagging indicator as your team's main KPIs.

# EXPERT CUSTOMER SUCCESS RECOMMENDATIONS

Our research revealed that customer success teams should start with these four KPIs as their main focus. Note that there are 2 leading indicators and 2 lagging indicators:

## 1 Conversations

*Conversations (not just calls) with existing customers.*

## 2 Opportunities Created

*Opportunities uncovered for increased business, through upsells, cross-sells, etc.*

## 3 Milestones Completed

*Customers who have reached the peak stage of engagement with your product or service.*

## 4 Wins

*Renewals, upsells or cross-sells.*

## Customer Success Expert Spotlight

We asked customer success experts across various industries and organizational structures what they would recommend for teams just starting out with sales KPIs.

*Here's what they said...*



## SEAN HIGGINS, FOUNDER, ILOS

Video Communication Platform for Teams and Organizations



Sean says that when his customer success teams started using KPIs, they tracked things like emails sent. But they quickly learned that there wasn't a high correlation with the new business they were winning and the number of emails they were sending, so they stopped using that metric. Here are the four KPIs he recommends for Customer Success teams:



*"You manage what you measure. I like the metrics that are more funnel-based, as opposed to things like calls, emails and meetings. You could be sending tons of emails, but if you're not getting deals from them, then it's not a good metric to track."*

## INTERESTING KPIs

### Need more KPI ideas?

Here are the top 3 most unique KPIs we discovered customer success leaders using:



### TREND TALK

Another popular metric for customer success teams is *Churn*, the percentage of customers that you lost since last month. The lower your *Churn* number, the better. If your *Churn* percentage is negative, you're gaining more business than you're losing. Inversely, you could measure *Retention*, where the higher your percentage the better (a *Retention* number above 100% means you've added more business than you lost).

# CUSTOMER SUCCESS KPI TIMEFRAMES

Perhaps just as important as what you're measuring is how often you're measuring it.

Below are the most popular timeframes for the most common KPIs for customer success teams. Timeframes for customer success teams vary, but all teams analyzed *Opportunities* weekly and *Emails Sent* monthly.

CUSTOMER SUCCESS				
	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Quarterly
Calls	0%	40%	60%	0%
Wins	75%	0%	25%	0%
Opportunities	0%	100%	0%	0%
Emails Sent	0%	0%	100%	0%
Meetings	50%	50%	0%	0%

Now that you have the data, here's how to implement it in a way that will accelerate revenue...

## THE ACTIVITY BASED SELLING METHODOLOGY

Activity Based Selling is built off the premise that sales is a cascading chain of controllable behaviors that lead to a defined outcome.

Sales and customer success teams often get lost in day-to-day distractions, which results in missing on the fundamental actions that drive long-term results (e.g., live conversations, creating quality opportunities). While companies have historically only monitored lagging metrics (e.g., close rates, deal sizes, quota attainment), and steps within the sales pipeline, there is a need to monitor and manage the activities that lead to sales using technology that already exists. This helps organizations unlock maximum revenue potential by engaging their teams in the activities that matter, and creating a culture of performance.

We've broken down the KPI management process into four simple steps:

1

Define



2

Align



3

Calibrate



4

Accelerate



## 1. Define your key metrics.

- Define your sales organization's structure.
- Develop your own hypothesis of the right metrics & activities for customer success reps.
- Interview customer success reps, managers and executives to see what they think are the right metrics.
- Identify metrics vs. activities vs. process.
- Assess CRM readiness and adjust as needed.
- Define weighting across key activities to enable a composite score for customer success reps.

### Expert Advice:

*"I would be very cautious against focusing too much on one metric independent of the funnel, because of its moving parts. Maybe I get a bunch of new opportunities, but if they're bad opportunities, that's going to show up in my win rate. My win rate is going to be way down. When you zero in on one thing, it can be easy to lose sight of how you're doing as a whole."*

**- SEAN HIGGINS, FOUNDER, ILOS**

## 2. Align your organization.

- Review operating metrics with customer success managers for buy-in.
- Develop personalized scorecards for customer success reps and managers.
- Create buy-in by reviewing metrics with customer success reps and discussing how it helps manage their business.
- Display performance metrics publicly.
- Review daily and weekly progress to date and pacing to goal.

### Expert Advice:

*"Your KPIs need to be shared with the team so they understand them. They also need to be reinforced through consistent communication and holding people to the expectations. It's unrealistic to mention them once and expect everyone to understand and buy in."*

**- DARREN SUOMI, SVP OF GLOBAL SALES, VIDYARD**

### 3. **Monitor** and course correct.

- Inspire collaboration via accessible stack rankings.
- Run consistent one-on-ones using objective data as your guide.
- Ensure managers monitor KPIs daily to course correct where the team is falling behind and celebrate success.
- Use contests/incentives to rally the team around lifting a metric, or for a special initiative.
- Assess data monthly/quarterly to identify any goal misalignment, and adjust as needed.

#### Expert Advice:

*“If you’re going to start with KPIs, you better be ready to follow through on the cadence you committed to. As soon as you delay, because you don’t have the information, you’ve put a torpedo in your process. You’re going to take on water. The KPIs won’t be regarded with the same level of importance as you would have intended.”*

**- EVERETT HILL, PRESIDENT, CATALYTIC ADVISORS**

### 4. **Grow** from a strong foundation.

- Use composite scoring to uncover best practices from the top 20% of your team, focus coaching on the middle 60% and train or remove the bottom 20%.
- Invest in training and technology to increase the output of individual activities.
- Hire and onboard against your established metrics to accelerate time to ramp.
- Hire managers who are capable of leading a modern customer success team.

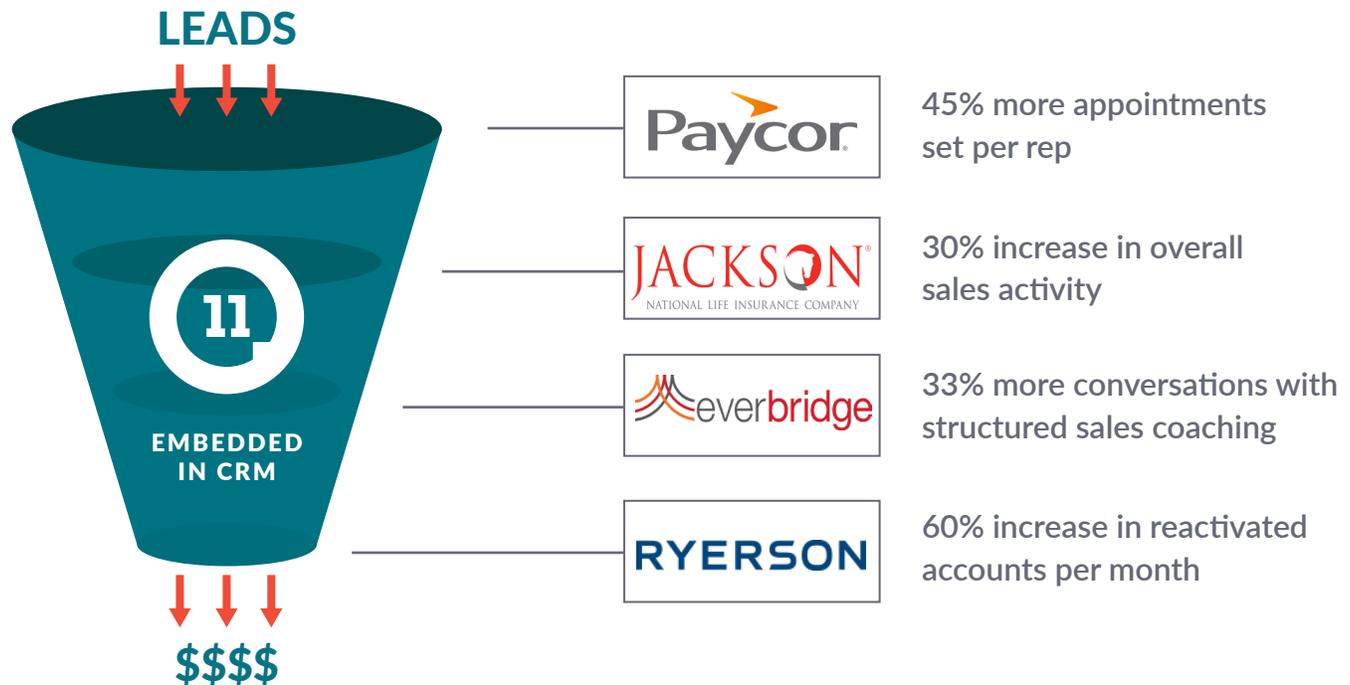
#### Expert Advice:

*“The magic begins by identifying key performance indicators that unearth a whole slew of sales insights that can be broken down to the individual rep level. Sales managers can use this data to eliminate educated guesses and uncover what’s really working, what’s not working and, overall, leverage a playbook to dramatically drive results.”*

**- DOUG DANOWSKI, VP OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & STRATEGY, INTELLIVERSE**

# Ready to Step Up Your Sales Activity Management Strategy?

With LevelEleven....



*"We've seen a massive spike in activity and focus ... we're on pace to have more activity in 2016 than we did in 2015, with a smaller team."*

**DOUG MANTELLI**, SVP of National Sales Development, Jackson

## Special Offer for Readers of this Study

### Free KPI Discovery Call

Talk to one of our sales performance experts for a free 1-hour session on identifying your team's main KPIs. Just click here and include "Free KPI Discovery" in the message box.

Already know what your team's critical KPIs are and ready to talk about managing and motivating them? **Request a demo.**