

**Sales Solutions**

# Getting positive results with effective sales training

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**Question:** I'm a sales rep working for a sales training company in Seattle. Because our training is somewhat intangible in terms of results, how can I guarantee my clients will be satisfied with our performance when training their salespeople?

**Answer:** Selling a service that you perceive doesn't offer quantified results can be difficult, but it's not impossible. In the March 31 edition of Sales Solutions, I described two keys to success with this type of sale. The first is differentiating the hot buttons of prospects in different industries to understand how to sell your sales training solutions to various vertical markets, and second, learning from your prospects the best way to sell specifically to them to help you hone your solutions so that they are customized for their particular needs.

In this edition of Sales Solutions, I will describe the remaining three keys to success with this type of sale:

- Focusing on the desired outcome by your prospect.
- Understanding the specific, quantified results your prospect is looking for.
- Presenting your solution in a way that resonates with your prospect.

First, by focusing on the desired outcome of the prospect, you can work backward from the goal to determine the specific steps to ultimately reach the objective. So, for example, if one of the goals of your prospects is to increase the dollar amount per sale to customers, you'll want to include an element in your sales training that helps their salespeople to do just that.

Or, if your prospects want to focus on finding new customers, your sales training program should focus on the new business development phase of the sales process to teach their salespeople. Your program should include elements that can be measured for success along the way so you know you're on track to reach the prospects' desired outcome during the process of working with them.

Next, understanding the specific, quantified results your prospects are looking for will help you design programs with tangible, measurable results. If, for instance, your prospects want to increase revenue by 20 percent as a result of your program, you'll need to first do the math to understand where they are now with revenue and what, in terms of dollars, a 20 percent increase really means.

Once that is understood, begin to plan your program, taking into consideration the typical sales activity to reach their current revenue now, and what your program can do to change the intensity of the sales activity, or increase the skill level of the salespeople in their various sales activities. You'll also want to be sure your program can realistically help your prospects reach such a lofty goal, and if not, be honest with your prospects and reevaluate the goal so it's realistic. It's always better to under-promise and over-deliver so that you meet or exceed the goal, instead of not meeting the goal.

Finally, presenting your solution in a way that resonates with your prospects will secure the deal. By showing that you understand what a successful outcome will look like to your prospects, you will inspire confidence in them choosing to work with you. Take each of the elements your prospects have described in their ultimate goals for your program, and break them down to show exactly how you will address each one. By addressing what's important to each prospect, they will appreciate your customization just for them to meet their specific needs.

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