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SALES TRAINING

Sales Excellence Benchmark

How Does Your Team Measure Up?

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With half of b2b sales people due to miss their targets this year, it's time to shift perspective

Salespeople love attention grabbing figures. So here's one. This year, less than 50% of B2B salespeople are likely to hit their targets. **There's no hiding from it. Sales has got a lot harder.** Today's clients are having to justify their purchasing decision to more stakeholders than ever before. On average, they must convince 6.8 other people why they've chosen your

product over another. That's 6.8 people who will hold them responsible if they make the wrong call. That's a lot of pressure. The way people buy has changed, but the way many people sell hasn't. If you want to smash your sales target, you need to shift your perspective and consider how B2B clients make decisions and then make it easier for them to do so.

STANDING IN THE SHOES OF YOUR CLIENT

Most salespeople who want to increase their volume of sales try to do so by increasing the numbers of potential clients they engage with. When they do, they focus on shouting about their products in the hope of getting the client to 'choose' them over others. But this approach isn't addressing the root of the problem. Clients want to minimise risk and limit change. It's easier for them to play it safe and stick with what they know than make changes.

You aren't necessarily competing against your business rivals, you're competing against your client's status quo, whatever that may be.

You need to give your potential client a compelling reason to change their approach, before they will care about choosing you as a solution.

EASY BUY = EASY SELL

A good sales process should make it easier for clients to buy, therefore it's imperative to understand how today's buyers make decisions. This is the journey they need to go on:



Due to the pressure of sales targets, most sales approaches actually make it harder for a client to say 'yes'. At present, most salespeople jump straight to step two and don't offer any support for step three. But results will be far better if you focus on the way your client thinks about their situation and how they can secure stronger outcomes.

Your sales process should be reimagined to map to the client buying process.

MAKE CHANGE WELCOME, NOT FEARED

People don't like change. That applies as much to clients as it does salespeople.

Mapping your approach to the client's buying process, will have a dramatic impact on your sales revenue. The best way to get potential clients to choose your products – and then to be able to sell their choice internally - is through the **CHANGE – CHOOSE – CHAMPION** model.

The B2B world has changed, are you ready to change with it?

1 CHANGE

Help your client understand the challenges they face and why their existing approach (the 'status quo') will not solve matters. In fact, their approach may be creating the challenge in the first place.

Some clients may be fully aware of the problems they need to overcome but aren't sure how to respond. Others may be unaware they could be doing things more efficiently, at lower cost or with better results. You must open their eyes to new options and inspire a 'lightbulb' moment within them. You have to flick the switch that shines a light on an utterly persuasive reason for them to take the risk of changing the way they operate.

Create a narrative that not only illustrates the reason to change, but also helps build a criteria for how that change should be made.

2 CHOOSE

Once the client has committed to change and identified their real needs, it is the salesperson's role to closely align their company and brand with the newly identified needs of the client. However, in addition, your client needs to be completely persuaded that your solution will deliver results to be confident enough to push the decision through their business. The salesperson must work with the client to co-create recommendations focused on achieving the outcomes the client needs.

Align your brand with the client buying criteria before co-creating a compelling recommendation with the client.

3 CHAMPION

Once the client has decided to choose you, their role in the decision-making process hasn't finished, it's just begun. They now have to sell their choice to multiple internal stakeholders - an average of 6.8 people.

The salesperson's role is to help the client understand their internal decision-making process and its potential challenges, then work together with them to champion the recommendation within their business, driving change and building consensus.

Identify the decision-making process and collaborate with your client to create tools and discussions to proactively drive their internal decisions.

Benchmark Sales Excellence

Mapping your approach to the client's buying process will have a dramatic impact on your sales revenue. Below we introduce **Connect** and **Control** to Flume's core **Change – Choose – Champion** model and describe what top sales professionals are doing at each stage of the process.

CONNECT

IDENTIFYING THE RIGHT PERSON AND GETTING THE RIGHT CONVERSATION STARTED

Clients are busier than ever before and will avoid talking with salespeople if they can. Today's strongest salespeople plan and tailor their approach for a specific client to stand out and get the right conversation started.

SALESPERSON

- Utilises multi-channel introductions, selling the value of the conversation itself to ensure clients prioritise speaking to them above others
- Tailors the conversation to the clients' world, driving stronger engagement and follow-up action from every conversation
- Hypothesises and plans client interactions to deliver an easy to buy experience for the client at every stage

CHANGE

SHIFTING THE CLIENT FROM THEIR STATUS QUO

With more stakeholders involved and therefore higher scrutiny involved in B2B decision-making, new purchasing decisions have become more difficult for your client. It is more likely that they will stick with what they know, so their status quo is your biggest competitor. Today's strongest salespeople help clients see compelling reasons to change and help create a criteria for making safe decisions, before discussing their own solutions.

SALESPERSON

- Uses structured questioning techniques designed to shift clients from their status-quo
- Teaches with emotion, using stories created to shift client beliefs about their decision-making criteria
- Teaches with logic, using insights created to shift client beliefs about their decision-making criteria

CHOOSE

ALIGNING YOUR BRAND AND CO-CREATING SOLUTIONS

Due to the risk involved in a bad decision, trust in the brand and belief in the solution are crucial to the client. Today's strongest salespeople focus first on buy-in to their brand and way of working, before co-creating the recommendations designed to deliver the strongest results for the client.

SALESPERSON

- Pitches their company as the strongest match for their clients real needs. Delivery is simple, concise and focuses on why
- Co-creates recommendations with the client to increase ownership and internal advocacy
- Presents with charisma and gravitas to increase the impact of their recommendations

CHAMPION

COLLABORATING WITH YOUR CLIENT TO CONVINCING THE DECISION-MAKING GROUP

With more decision-makers involved in B2B decisions than ever before, it's tougher for your client to drive a decision internally. Today's strongest salespeople collaborate with the contact to help them drive change and build consensus for the recommendation within their business.

SALESPERSON

- Creates proposals which speak to the entire decision-making group, teaching them why to change and how to choose
- Helps clients understand and navigate their decision-making process to drive change, build consensus and speed up decisions
- Proactively grows revenues from within existing clients to create continuous revenue uplift

CONTROL

PROACTIVELY DRIVES THE CONVERSATION TOWARDS THE OBJECTIVE

Clients need to be persuaded they will achieve ROI from working with a salesperson. With so many options and a tendency to stick with the status quo, clients need the salesperson to assertively lead the conversation to increase confidence and likelihood of purchase.

SALESPERSON

- Is assertive in selling and closing deals, directly pursuing their goals whilst professionally pushing the client to consider new ideas
- Assertively handles client objections through strong listening, logical insights and emotional storytelling to shift opinions
- Proactively talks about price, focusing the client on value and negotiating with assertiveness and structure

Ready to supercharge your sales team?

If you are considering ways to boost your sales performance, below is a handy checklist for choosing the right sales performance provider.

1 HOW DOES YOUR TEAM MEASURE UP?

Using the definitions on the previous page, indicate the score you would give your team in each area to identify gaps in their approach and necessary areas for improvement.

	CONNECT	CHANGE	CHOOSE	CHAMPION	CONTROL
10					
9					
8					
7					
6					
5					
4					
3					
2					
1					
0					

2 CONSIDER HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT SALES PERFORMANCE PROVIDER

If you are seeking external help to boost your sales performance, ensure the provider you choose can answer these questions:

- Have they created content and approaches that are fit for purpose in today's market?
- Do they know how to embed new sales approaches within your business?
- Can they measure the change in behaviour and link it to KPI's you want to improve?

3 DECIDE IF FLUME CAN HELP

At Flume, we will help you choose the best way to improve performance at your business. There are three approaches we can take:

- We take your team on a journey from Sales Stars to Sales Gurus
- We identify the KPI's you want to improve and build learner-journeys that directly impact them
- We identify key challenges for the sales team and create bespoke learner-journeys to solve these

	SALES STAR	SALES LEGEND	SALES GURU
	1.0 Today's Buyer & Seller	2.0 Launch / Recap	3.0 Launch / Recap
CONNECT	1.1 Multi-channel Introductions	2.1 Tailoring Your Conversation	3.1 Planning Client Interactions
CHANGE	1.2 Questioning to Change Behaviour	2.2 Selling With Stories	3.2 Insight Selling
CHOOSE	1.3 Pitching Your Company	2.3 Co-creating Recommendations	3.3 Presenting With Charisma
CHAMPION	1.4 Proposals for the Decision-making Group	2.4 Speeding Up Decisions	3.4 Growing Accounts From Within
CONTROL	1.5 Selling and Closing with Assertiveness	2.5 Assertive Objection Handling	3.5 Assertive Negotiation