

“A must-read for every sales and marketing leader who wants to turn enablement into a revenue multiplier.”

—Jim Steele, President and CRO, Yext

FOREWORD BY JIM STEELE



ENABLEMENT MASTERY

GROW YOUR BUSINESS FASTER BY ALIGNING
YOUR PEOPLE, PROCESSES, AND PRIORITIES

E L A Y C O H E N
CEO, SALES HOOD

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Preface

Only a few people on the planet have the experience and expertise to help companies grow revenues tenfold under the banner of sales enablement. Imagine what it is like to energize, educate, and enable the sales teams responsible for the fastest growth story in technology history. That was my world from 2005 to 2013. I published my first book, *SalesHood: How Winning Sales Managers Inspire Sales Teams to Succeed*, about that experience. *SalesHood* is about helping companies and front-line managers build the right sales coaching culture and cadence.

Arthur Do and I also founded SalesHood, a software company focused on accelerating revenue and increasing sales productivity with a modern enablement platform. Our founding vision was to inspire people and companies to be the best they could be by sharing and spreading knowledge at scale. We wanted to take the enablement best practices and guiding principles that worked well at Salesforce and scale them using technology. Over a five-year period, working with tens of thousands of salespeople, we proved that enablement could be a revenue multiplier. Our Journey showed us how important enablement is to every CEO on the planet. We also realized that enablement is a company-wide initiative and not just a sales phenomenon. Universities and business

schools started reaching out to us to learn more about the discipline of enablement too.

Given my experience in the industry, I decided to write a new book rich with practical knowledge and frameworks to serve as the foundation to improve corporate enablement strategies and develop people to execute the strategies. The goal of *Enablement Mastery* is to help every company and team grow faster by aligning its people, processes, and priorities.

Executive of the Year

In 2011, Marc Benioff recognized me as executive of the year. If you would have told me in my early teens that I would be recognized as an executive of the year by one of the most powerful technology CEOs on the planet, I wouldn't have believed you.

I remember sitting at the awards dinner in the Wynn Hotel conference room in Las Vegas with hundreds of the top executives from Salesforce and thousands of people who had tuned in via video conference. Marc got onstage and started recognizing executives for their leadership and results in their respective areas of the business. We celebrated the leaders who were achieving excellence. They were the ones who believed and made it happen. One by one each leader was brought up onstage and congratulated. Marc recognized the top product leader, top sales leader, top marketing leader, and top customer-success leader. I remember sitting at my table wondering if they even had a category for the work my team did. What would that category be? Then Marc got to the most prestigious award—the executive of the year. He started describing the person who would soon be recognized,

explaining the effect this person had at the company. As he went on, the person started sounding familiar to me.

That's because it *was* me.

Marc called me up onstage to accept the recognition and the award. It was one of the highest points of my professional career and life. Years of work and dedication had gotten me to that point. At that moment, my life flashed in front of my eyes. I remembered selling furniture at my dad's furniture store. I could smell the grass from all the lawns I had cut during the summers when I had my own gardening and landscaping business. I remembered my time selling first aid supplies and learning how to cold call by knocking on doors in industrial parks in Toronto. I remembered helping clients and selling investments and loans at TD Canada Trust. I remembered my time as a product manager at a startup and then my time at Oracle. All these experiences led to this moment.

My story became clear. I am a doer who is motivated to help people be the best they can be.

I was recognized as executive of the year at Salesforce at the time that I was senior vice president of sales productivity. We had just completed a company-wide launch of new messaging and certifications around an initiative that was near and dear to the heart of our CEO. My team and I stepped up and ensured that every employee understood the importance of the new corporate pitch. We enabled a company-wide transformation by creating a curriculum that we rolled out to every sales and customer-facing employee in the company for training, coaching, assessment, and certification. They learned it and had fun doing it, too. We exceeded expectations.

As I reflect a few years later, I am still floored that a CEO recognized an operational leader for accomplishments

in sales enablement. It was a nontraditional executive recognition. We proved that knowledge sharing and enablement is a top CEO priority. Enablement as a strategic imperative by a CEO would soon be a trend that would become much more common.

I asked my former boss, Linda Crawford, to share why she thought Marc and the executive committee decided to recognize the work we did at the time. She said: “Salesforce was in hypergrowth mode, and the company needed to recognize leaders and teams for helping to achieve its big goals with innovative multipliers. You did it and proved your knowledge-sharing process was a home run for the company.”

I am excited when I see other CEOs recognize their executive team for successes in enablement and knowledge-sharing. Mostly, I believe they see how it contributes to revenue, leadership development, and culture.



Introduction

Enablement is most effective when it is company-wide, when it is top-down and bottom-up, starting with the CEO and touching every employee, partner, and customer. It is inclusive of all departments, teams, and roles. Everyone plays a part. Everyone is enabled.

There's a shortage of practical guides and business books written for companies to execute successful cross-company enablement. That's why I wrote this book. I'd like to give company leaders, managers, and individual contributors a process map to be the best they can by mastering enablement. The essence of enablement mastery is to help companies grow their business faster by aligning their people, processes, and priorities.

People

Mastering enablement starts with your people. The first part of this book answers the following about enablement professionals: who they are, how they found themselves in enablement jobs, what motivates them, their responsibilities, why they do what they do, where they fit inside an organizational structure, and whether they live in sales or marketing or human resources.

We must help enablement professionals earn their seat at the table by being better communicators and by finding the right balance of strategic thinking versus tactical execution. They need to know how to secure organizational buy-in for enablement initiatives. Since this role is new, it's important that enablement professionals are mindful about how their peers perceive their brand.

After reading the first section of this book, you'll know how to profile and hire the right enablement people, how to structure your enablement team, and how to set your organization up for success with the right enablement mindset. Enablement is a company-wide initiative, and I want to help you secure organizational buy-in top-down and bottom-up to ensure everyone is aligned.

Processes

With the right people and teams in place, we shift focus to the Enablement Process Map, which will become the common language to improve cross-departmental collaboration. Learn how to set teams up for success by working better together. Depending on how organizations are structured, different team members and departments will own different enablement processes. In some cases, marketing may own content development, and in other cases enablement managers may be the publishers. It's imperative that a process map exists that is agreed upon by all stakeholders. The processes cross teams and functions. They include go-to-market, learning, communications, customer engagement, and achievements.

After reading this section, you will have clarity around how to use the Enablement Process Map to facilitate better

collaboration on cross-company initiatives. When teams come together to work on programs and initiatives, they will be able to use the Enablement Process Map to easily and efficiently sort out how work gets done and who owns what. Friction will be reduced with better alignment of people and processes.

Priorities

The final part of this book discusses specific challenging enablement priorities, but when executed by the right people following the right processes, you'll achieve great results. We'll tackle hard programs like enabling front-line managers, kicking off events, and building modern universities. These are considered priorities suited for mature organizations. For some, they will be mission critical, for others, aspirational.

Company-Wide Enablement Is a CEO Top Priority

Since we're professing the importance of company-wide enablement, let's review why you should care and what this means to the many different roles in a company.

CEOs will want enablement mastery to realize their company growth goals through company-wide alignment. Sales leaders will want enablement mastery to attain a higher distribution of sales. Marketing leaders will subscribe to enablement mastery to more efficiently and effectively deliver relevant content to sales and the company. Human resource leaders will appreciate enablement mastery because they will gain a new appreciation of modern learning and reinvent their corporate contributions. Enablement leaders, both present and future, will better understand what it takes to align

people, processes, and priorities inside the complex realities and politics of a company.

The goal in writing this book is to increase awareness and execution of successful enablement strategies and tactics by avoiding enablement that's considered bad and ineffective. The path to enablement mastery is not an easy one. An Enablement Process Map is required to help organizational leaders have constructive conversations about who owns what and how work gets done. My goal in this book is to empower you with all the tools to bring your enablement vision to life with a strategy that aligns people, processes, and priorities while incorporating organizational buy-in at all levels.



Chapter 5

The Enablement Process Map

Here is a question I get over and over: In the context of complex organizational structures with silos and people racing to get their work done, how do we know who does what? Is there a definitive Enablement Process Map? The challenge is there are so many moving parts to executive company enablement. There are so many points of failure.

Think about a regular product launch or a website branding initiative. Companies spend huge amounts of funds to develop new products or launch a new corporate website. Resources are allocated to do the work. Teams huddle up to execute the plans, and they deliver. In most companies, the idea of enablement is an afterthought. After the product launch or after the website launch, folks on the project look at each other and say, “Well, it probably would have been a good idea if we enabled our employees and sales teams on this.” Everyone is well intentioned. It’s not that enablement was maliciously excluded. It just never bubbled up as a top priority and conversation. That someone is taking care of it is a thought that sits in the back of everyone’s mind.

Enablement is a company-wide initiative requiring a standard operating procedure supported by a clear outline of processes. We need an Enablement Process Map. Our teams and our leaders need to visualize what enablement looks like and how it works. It can't be something that we tuck away in the corner or do as an afterthought. It needs to be the center of our business strategies and tactics. I went on a multiyear journey to create the Enablement Process Map.

Inspired by Pragmatic Marketing

When I was early in my career, I was introduced to the Pragmatic Marketing Framework designed for technical product marketers. It worked well for me when I first moved to San Francisco and started working as a product manager in Silicon Valley. The framework showed me what I needed to do to be successful and also gave me the organizational context to understand how I impacted the business. I carried the Pragmatic Marketing aid with me to meetings. I pinned it up at my cube. I took it with me from job to job. I referenced it when it was time to build a new business plan or product plan. It was my Silicon Valley bible. My experience with the product marketing process map created by Pragmatic Marketing inspired me to create one for the enablement profession.

I wasn't alone. My fellow product managers and product marketers all loved it and used it too. What was great about it was that teams who used it and followed it were immediately on the same page. Everyone always knew what needed to get done. It provided a standard language for getting work done.

Overview of the Enablement Process Map

The enablement processes represent what we do to achieve our revenue and business goals. We need to use different processes to accomplish different business outcomes. The framework works left to right and top to bottom. We want to start by defining and codifying our processes and turning them into learning programs and content to be used in customer engagements. We want to close the loop by correlating attainment to activities and celebrating achievements. We want to focus on the most basic strategies and tactics first before we go into advanced and mature initiatives. That's how the left to right and the top to bottom is designed to work.

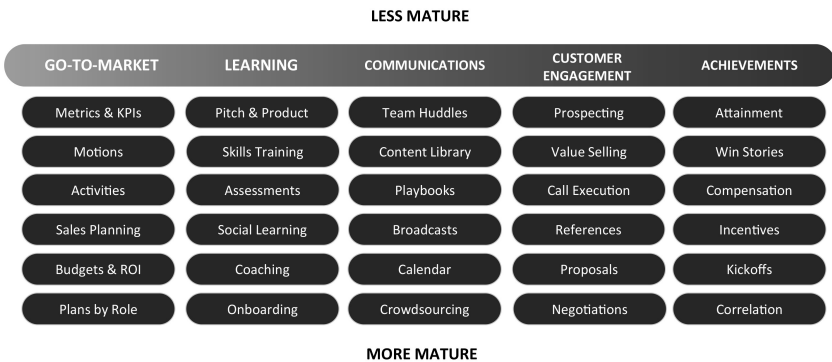


Figure 5.1: The Enablement Process Map

Go-to-Market

A well-thought-out and executed enablement strategy happens when we have everyone in our go-to-market teams aligned on the same messages, metrics, and motions. You need to know what your vertical strategy is, too. It all starts with intimate knowledge of why your customers are buying and why you're losing deals. Win and loss analysis serve as the foundation for all go-to-market enablement processes. The metrics and key performance indicators of the business follow. They must be documented and agreed to by all stakeholders and measured and shared frequently.

There is no way to deliver a scalable and repeatable enablement program without a well-documented sales process and sales methodology. It is important to codify motions, such as the sales process, territory planning, account planning, and quote to cash. It is critical these are available for teams to review, approve, learn, and execute. The processes need to leverage best practices and consider the uniqueness of company culture and go-to-market. The most fundamental motion is the sales methodology. You need to document it if it isn't already written down.

From the sales process will emerge activities that everyone will execute together.

Before embarking on a new enablement initiative, ask the question: What problem are we solving and why? Get clarity around key performance indicators (KPIs) like win rates, deal sizes, time to close, time to first deal, time to ramp, attainment, pipeline generations, and bookings, to name a few.

It is important to be clear on how much investment is being made and how much is needed to achieve the goals that are core to the business. When I was at Salesforce, we spent

more than forty million dollars a year on enablement. We were investing heavily during the hypergrowth years. Understanding the spend and resource allocation will help prioritize what metrics and KPIs are prioritized. We cannot enable every one equally, so we must decide how best to allocate funds and budgets. An extension of the budgeting process is systems. What systems are needed to support the growth and goals?

The more mature organization will take all this information and begin creating plans by role, which looks at the needs and requirements of all employees and stakeholders. An advanced organization with complex geo-distribution and segmentation and many products will need to have plans by role or they will not achieve their go-to-market goals.

Learning

It's proven that people learn from the best. Create a culture of teams learning together and from each other. Share win stories and winning sales presentations regularly. Use technology to do this at scale with peer reviews, and use old-fashioned round-table conversations to facilitate the sharing of ideas.

Partner with subject-matter experts to build the right training and onboarding to educate, energize, and enable your employees. Improve the competency and confidence of your teams by creating learning paths by role. Map job expectations, learning curriculum, and career progression. The learning paths should be introduced in new-hire onboarding and refreshed as career milestones are hit or missed.

Active learning is a surefire way to get teams to internalize new content. Make learning relevant and impactful by applying learning to real-life scenarios and real deals. If you roll out

a new product playbook, then why not have your teams practice and apply the new product positioning to existing deals? Why not do some persona prospecting and position the new offering to active prospecting accounts? That's how we apply learning by doing.

The first step in creating a scalable, revenue-generating sales onboarding plan is to align on metrics. We all want to front-end the process with metrics that help sales to focus on the right behaviors and actions. For example, we want to measure pipeline generated, time to first deal, and time to quota attainment. We should create new-hire onboarding programs that blend self-paced work with certifications, team-based exercises, and role plays. Focus all activity around what is most important to be productive and successful in an employee's first thirty days.

A big part of an employee's development is to have the right skills. As enablement leaders, our job is to help our teams be the best they can be by giving them the skills training they need to be successful. Every employee has their own set of skills needed to do their jobs and develop their careers. Create a skills map that is tied to job descriptions and career pathing. Salespeople need more foundational sales training from prospecting to asking open-ended questions to negotiations. Developers need more from coding to development languages to quality assurance. Each employee and role have their own skills needs.

Coaching should happen between managers and their teams and between peers all the time. Ongoing training is sometimes called coaching too. As enablement leaders, you want to help your managers do more and better coaching.

Communications

Keep content engaging, bite-sized, and rich with storytelling. It's important to have a clear inventory of the content that exists and needs to be created. The list includes personal playbooks, product briefs, corporate presentations, customer stories, and competitive battle cards. The corporate pitch and company overview presentation are important to document and make readily available to teams. There should be different versions depending on the role and how much customer-facing time the employee has in their day-to-day job. This content forms the foundation of training and onboarding.

Additionally, customer stories are great to bring the company pitch to life with a strong customer voice. Customers describe value better than we ever could. Injecting customer stories early and often into the enablement plan of employees sheds light on value and creates real emotional loyalty. It is helpful in explaining to your employees why they are working so hard and why they're doing what we're training them to do.

Customer Engagement

The customer engagement processes are important for teams to follow. They are a direct extension of the go-to-market processes. Our teams should be trained and coached on them. They should have full access to content and assets so they can spend more time selling and less time searching.

We help our teams self-source more pipeline with best practices on reaching out to the right prospects with the right messages at the right time. Our job is to make this process more efficient. We help our teams build relationships and uncover new business with storytelling, discovery, and flawless sales execution. We help our teams close deals faster

with winning proposals and instruction on how to make their executive presentations more compelling. In more advanced organizations, we'll formalize the deal-review process and the account-planning processes to build more predictability and consistency across every step in our customer's buying journey. We want to enable our people to be more curious, better storytellers, and more empathic to ultimately elevate customer engagement.

Achievements

The enablement processes that matter the most and are forgotten all too often relate to achievements. We tend to not celebrate the wins enough. We do not invest the time to correlate achievements to activity so we have a better sense of what is working and what is not.

Achievements are about aligning behaviors and activities with rewards and compensation. It's about taking your team out to dinner to celebrate a big win, and it's about showing gratitude with simple things like saying thank you. How achievements are communicated and celebrated say a lot about the culture of your company. As an enablement leader, it's your job to keep this top of mind and make sure the rewards and recognition are flowing at the right times and in the right quantity.

How and When to Use the Enablement Process Map

We created the Enablement Process Map to help drive more cross-team collaboration and conversation. It is a great resource to use in a kickoff project involving cross-company departments. Pull it up on a big screen, or share screens

during a video conference and engage the team in a conversation. You can also print it out for everyone meeting in person. Talk about what each box means and who owns which box. Use it as a map to define role and responsibilities. Use it as a map to hold teams accountable for deliverables. Color code if certain teams like marketing or sales or products or human resources own different boxes. Use it to spread the work and ownership of enablement tasks so everyone has a part to play.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

The Enablement Process Map is a blueprint of the key activities needed to create a company-wide culture of enablement. Each pillar represents how we achieve our enablement goals.

The pillars include—

1. Align Go-to-Market
2. Nurture Learning
3. Share Compelling Communications
4. Elevate Customer Engagement
5. Celebrate and Correlate Achievements

About the Author



Elay Cohen is the CEO and cofounder of SalesHood. He is the former senior vice president of sales productivity at Salesforce. Elay was recognized as the “2011 Top Executive” by Marc Benioff and credited for creating and executing all of Salesforce’s sales training and coaching programs that accelerated its growth from a 500 million-dollar business to an enterprise worth more than 3 billion dollars. The innovative sales training and support delivered over these years by Elay’s team to thousands of sales professionals resulted in unprecedented hypergrowth.

Elay authored the book *SalesHood: How Winning Sales Managers Inspire Sales Teams To Succeed*. Elay is a thought leader in the discipline of sales management and is sought after by the most successful CEOs. He is also recognized as a top innovative “Mover and Shaker” in sales leadership by *Entrepreneur* magazine and also recognized by LinkedIn as one of the world’s top sales experts.

Elay is on a mission to improve and modernize how companies enable their people. Elay is working closely with the world’s most innovative companies and most forward thinking educational institutions. Together, they are changing the future of work.

“Elay Cohen, one of the greatest minds in sales enablement, has captured a vast amount of knowledge from his experience over the years to give us the what, the why, and the how of this exciting industry. *Enablement Mastery* has valuable insights and ideas on every page. A home run!”

↳ **HOWARD DOVER**, PhD; Director, Center for Professional Sales,
Naveen Jindal School of Management, University of Texas at Dallas

“Elay is hands down the best enablement leader I’ve worked with over the years. *Enablement Mastery* is a proven playbook for CEOs and leadership teams to embrace if you want to transform culture by aligning and enabling teams to scale. Well done, Elay!”

↳ **ROB ACKER**, CEO, Salesforce.com

“As a CFO, enablement as a percentage of revenue is something I think about a lot and I believe every C-suite member should be an evangelist of enablement. *Enablement Mastery* is a great roadmap for companies to tie enablement strategies with company strategies versus being an afterthought.”

↳ **ELENA GOMEZ**, Chief Financial Officer, Zendesk

“Elay Cohen is a legend in the sales enablement industry, and I wholeheartedly endorse *Enablement Mastery*. Anyone starting, or looking to improve their sales learning function needs to read this book first.”

↳ **BRIAN FRANK**, Vice President, Global Sales Operations, LinkedIn

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