SALES ENABLEMENT PILLAR
GO-TO-MARKET

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ENABLEMENT
MASTERY

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

Go-to-Market

Enablement professionals are super talented and creative individuals. We always want to help everyone. It's in our nature. We don't know how to say no. Sometimes we create training, content, and enablement programs without truly understanding the "why." That's the purpose of this chapter. The Enablement Process Map sits on top of the assumption that we have a clear understanding of the go-to-market. We need to understand our company's metrics, revenue, and profitability. We are clear on geographic expansion and hiring goals, and we also know where to spend time. We focus on segments and teams that drive the most revenue, and we focus opportunistically on groups and geographies that represent growth potential.

I have put a lot of thought into why we as an industry aren't leaning into the analytics to create a data-driven enablement culture. After speaking with hundreds of sales enablement professionals, I've concluded that there are three reasons why we are uncomfortable with the enablement metrics causing misalignment with the company's go-to-market priorities:

- Not having access to the data
- Not knowing the metrics that matter
- Not knowing how to present the "so what" of the data

Every company looks at metrics a little differently. Some use Salesforce. Others use Excel. Others use analytics tools. Each leader has their own scorecard. Enablement professionals need to be part of the conversation about what is working and what is not. We need to connect the dots between the great work we do and the results. We want to be able to walk into our leadership's office and show the correlation between performance by seller and by team and enablement activity. We need to be able to turn a subjective dialogue into a fact-based and analytical conversation. We need to be able to provide answers to the most important question: What can we do to improve performance and achieve our go-to-market goals?

Missing the C-Suite with Metrics

I remember in the summer of 2012, six months before I left Salesforce, preparing for an executive-level review of Salesforce's sales enablement strategy. Invited to Hawaii to present to the president's committee and about a hundred senior leaders, my team and I created a presentation to show-case our priorities for the coming year. It missed the mark.

After my second slide, Marc said: "Show us a progress report by territory and role of our team's messaging certification accomplishments compared to attainment." I had a plan to get that, but I didn't have it ready. Marc was not happy.

"Why are we not systematically certifying our teams on the latest messaging?" he asked.

We were, but the answer did not matter. I did not come

prepared with the data showing it and showing the correlation. It did not matter that we had done it year over year and quarter over quarter. What mattered was that I was focused on a different agenda than Marc and not focused on data and attainment.

It did not take long for me to realize how awkward this meeting was going to be. I remember being so uncomfortable and hot that the sweat came through my Hawaiian shirt. I half-jokingly asked if I could go jump in the ocean and Marc said yes. I learned a lot from this experience.

Marc and I met later that day and worked on a plan for me to share the right information. He also shared his goal to reinforce the importance of measuring the right success metrics and ensuring that we had alignment across all teams.

Guidance on Enablement Metrics

We can spend a lot of money and use a lot of resources to run sales enablement initiatives and programs without knowing what is working and what is not. Since you are an enablement professional always willing to do what it takes, you often end up doing too much. Burnout is a real concern. But you can use data to set expectations and do the right work at the right time. Data does not lie.

Here is a typical conversation I have with enablement leaders that indicates why we need to elevate this discussion and revise our thinking.

Enablement Professional: We have an onboarding problem. How can you help us?

Me: Why do you think you have an onboarding problem?

Enablement Professional: We have to onboard ten new salespeople this year, and our track record is far less than stellar. We have not been able to get new hires ramped up and productive fast enough.

Me: How many total salespeople do you have?

Enablement Professional: We have over one thousand salespeople.

Me: What is their sales attainment year-to-date?

Enablement Professional: We are seeing about 40 percent of our sellers hitting quota. [For the record, most enablement professionals know they have a problem, but they are not prepared to discuss the details of the data because they are not part of the data conversations.]

Me: You do not have an onboarding problem; you have a sales attainment problem.

I have this conversation three to four times a day. We often are not focused on the right metrics, and we do not know where to look for answers. Data and initiatives that drive change remain siloed.

As sales enablement professionals, we need to have clarity about the problems we are solving. Access to performance data and transparency around attainment metrics help us to get aligned with senior leaders. Clarity stops us from doing busywork instead of the work that really matters. It helps us be better enablers. It helps us justify the work we and our team do.

Top Sales Enablement Metrics

We need to understand and use the following metrics to align our people, processes, and priorities and achieve our go-to-market goals.

QUOTA ATTAINMENT

Quota attainment is a measure of sales rep performance. The top deliverable of sales enablement is to help bring salespeople to peak performance. We measure whether our teams reach their sales targets in a given period. If they have reached their goal, they have attained quota, or if the team has only achieved 50 percent quota attainment, then half have reached their quotas. Any time our sales enablement program lifts our team's ability to hit quota, top-line will be massively impacted.

Know this number, and know where you stand as an organization.

The way this number is calculated is by looking at attainment by role. A quota-carrying sales professional should measure new revenue closed in a given period of time. Account managers should measure upsell revenue closed and renewal business. A sales development person should measure leads converted to new qualified opportunities or meetings scheduled with qualified buyers. The way to calculate these numbers is to look in your sales system of record.

The next step is to correlate attainment with activities. Look at the teams and people that have hit their quota or not hit their quota. Look at their respective coaching and consumption enablement activity. Look for patterns and trends. If your teams that hit their quota numbers also did the most coaching and consumed the most content, then you will prove your work is making an impact.

In your process, I recommend reviewing these numbers monthly, quarterly, and annually by seller, manager, segment, and tenure. Pay attention to the distribution of people who attain their quotas. The percentage of salespeople who hit quota is an important metric. It highlights a healthy business if the numbers of people hitting their quota sales attainment is greater than the people who are falling behind. What you want to avoid is a small number of people crushing their numbers and carrying the team. That is not a healthy state of a business.

WIN/LOSS RATIO

We want to help our teams always beat their external competitors. Know the win/loss ratios of the deals you pursue against those of your competitors by team, manager, and seller.

WIN/LOSS RATES

To calculate your winning percentage, add your wins and losses together to get the total number of deals closed. Then divide your number of wins by the total number of deals. Know deal-win rates to better predict resources, leads, and deals your sales team may need to hit quota.

SALES-CYCLE TIME

The number of days in a sales cycle helps a company accurately predict revenue and forecast. When deals take longer than expected, look for clues as to why. Perhaps the seller is not executing the sales process effectively or not following the sales playbook. It is good to look at sales-cycle time in aggregate and by sales stage conversion to uncover where

salespeople are struggling in the sales process. It is your job as an enablement professional to recommend coaching and content to your salespeople. Knowing where in the sales process your teams are getting stuck or need help is a great way to prioritize where to start resourcing more enablement.

DEAL SIZE

When salespeople sell value by taking their customers through the sales process and the buyer's journey, they close bigger deals. Why? The questions and relationship building results in higher values and less discounting. Knowing the winning actions of the team members that accomplish these steps is another enablement metric to measure and influence. Look at deal size and average selling price to gauge the sales skills of selling value and negotiating. Great sales content and sales training are both key levers you want to influence with targeted coaching and content.

TIME TO RAMP

Cutting down the time to ramp, or how long it takes to train new hires to perform independently, is one of the primary parameters that can help to prove the effectiveness of onboarding efforts. This onboarding metric is a critical one to clearly measure and define. It is broadly measured by the amount of time it takes new hires to be fully productive. For salespeople, time to ramp means the amount of time it takes to hit quota. Other metrics measure leading indicators, such as off-ramp quota and time to first deal and time to second deal. I suggest looking for early indicators to avoid finding out too late that your teams are not being productive.

EMPLOYEE ATTRITION

Employee turnover is a big, costly problem in corporations today. Employee retention should be a top metric and priority. Organizations spend billions of dollars hiring, recruiting, and developing people. You need to know how many employees are leaving your company each year to understand the true cost of employee attrition. Do not forget to include the opportunity cost of deals not closed during that time period.

CONTENT EFFECTIVENESS

Knowing which content is working and which is not is important to sales and marketing leadership. Tying knowledge and content consumption back to closed or lost deals is the holy grail of content enablement metrics. Content consumption metrics, such as content views, file downloads, and user ratings, should be compared to revenue. This can help marketing and subject-matter experts know if their work is making an impact. The combination of content consumption data with revenue data and CRM data will begin to tell a story around what content may have led to a closed or lost deal.

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

More and more, companies are realizing that their employees are not engaged in their professional and career development and, worse, may feel as if their managers are not engaged either. There are a couple of ways to measure this kind of engagement. You can measure employee satisfaction or net promoter score. You can also measure coaching activity by employee and manager. The correlation of employee engagement to attainment and results is a great way to profile top performers.

With metrics in hand and go-to-market clarity, the sales processes can be defined to create more consistency in coaching, selling, closing, and forecasting.

Sales Motions

Enablement professionals must lean into the sales processes and be a partner to sales operations and sales leaders. Who champions and sponsors the sales processes differs by company. What is for sure is that the vice president of sales is the ultimate executive sponsor of the processes, templates, and cadence.

It is up to you, the enablement professional, to wrestle down the vice president of sales, and any other stakeholders, to choose and customize the sales process. It is up to you to get the sales methodology codified in a sales system of record. The manager enablement and reinforcement training must be built on an agreed-upon sales process. In addition to the sales methodology, you need to look at quarterly business reviews, territory planning, pipeline reviews, deal reviews, and account-planning processes, too.

When processes aren't documented and communicated, expectations are not fully understood and embraced. The result is an organization that is not aligned, and key performance metrics are missed.

Choosing a Sales Methodology

Choosing a sales methodology is one of the most important decisions a company and vice president of sales can make to execute a successful go-to-market. A sales methodology is invaluable to grow predictable revenue faster by aligning sales

and marketing, training sales professionals, executing deals consistently, and making this part of the sales culture.

Every company should have a documented sales methodology that's understood by each customer-facing employee, part of training/onboarding, and reinforced by front-line managers and VPs. I believe all established methodologies are created equal, and they are all great. Pick one (Selling Through Curiosity™, Target Account Selling, MEDDIC, The Challenger Sale, Value Selling, SPIN Selling, SNAP Selling, Miller Heiman, etc.) and make it your own.

Some leaders take a bit of each one and create their own. That's a good strategy too. It needs to map to your business values and go-to-market. The customization of a sales methodology is one of the key factors to make it stick and see business results.

The foundation of a sales methodology is the sales stages to follow and the sales-process questions to answer at each stage of the sales process. Everything flows from the stages and process. A typical set of stages for a technology company selling business-to-business (B2B) software is—

- Step 1: Qualification
- Step 2: Discovery
- Step 3: Demo/Trial
- Step 4: Mutual Plan
- Step 5: Proposal

Some companies add a couple more steps, and others shorten some steps. The name of the stages should map to the business. You'll find that most methodologies have a set

of steps and questions. Review them and make sure they map to your values and culture.

Here are five operational questions to consider when selecting a sales methodology.

Question #1: How detailed are the coaching and input questions?

The sales methodology should have a list of questions that are a guide for a salesperson to answer during their sales pursuits. The questions should map to the company's go-to-market and take into consideration the buyer's journey.

Here are a few sales coaching questions that are thought provoking and great for running constructive deal conversations:

- How was the compelling event validated with top executives?

- How was value quantified and documented?

- How did we build relationships with our champion, executive sponsor, and influencers?

- What was known about the decision-making process?

- How were mutual plan expectations communicated and executed?

The aim of these questions is to give you and your team a framework to have a constructive sales coaching conversation in one-on-ones and team huddles.

Question #2: How does the methodology work with a sales automation system?

A methodology should come to life in a sales system like Salesforce CRM or Microsoft Dynamics. There are many

different sales systems in the market. Choose one that maps to your business and will grow with you as you scale up your team.

Question #3: What do the reporting and forecasting processes look like?

The sales methodology should be reinforced by managers and leaders. Weekly reporting, one-on-ones, and business reviews should be informed by the data in the system. The conversations that happen should be based on the data that is being presented in the reports and forecast.

Question #4: How effective are the sales tools at building scale?

Create tools that reinforce the sales methodology. Educate product managers and product marketers about your sales methodology so they can create tools that are relevant and aligned with the sales methodology.

Question #5: What reinforcement training and onboarding tools are provided?

Create training that reinforces best practices and sales methodology learning outcomes. The training should be action oriented and include a dialogue about real deals. It's a great best practice to introduce the sales methodology early in the onboarding journey of new hires. Include deal-win stories that map to how your teams successfully executed the methodology.

There is a lot to do to choose, create, and execute following a sales methodology. I'll say it again and again: Choose one, and then customize it to your business to deliver the

results you need to grow your business in a scalable and repeatable fashion.

Measure Sales Activities

There's a shortage of people who have the discipline to measure sales activity daily, weekly, and monthly. This happens because enablement professionals haven't done a great job explicitly communicating the right sales activity metrics and why they're important. Across the board (yes, I'm generalizing), we're not effectively connecting sales activity to revenue outcomes. We don't share expectations with our teams. It's time to realize that we can share our frustrations with our teams, or we can hold ourselves accountable.

Ask yourself what you have done to define, document, communicate, coach, measure, and celebrate the most important sales activities that are proven to close more deals in your business.

It's amazing to me how many sales leaders don't have the answers to foundational questions like the following: How many calls are my teams making a week? How many discovery meetings are happening each week? How many executive presentations are we doing each month?

Activity-Based Alignment

Inspired by Nick Sarles, our vice president of sales at Sales-Hood, our executive team spent time together looking at our historical deal data. We came up with our own sales activity metrics. We codified what we did to win and how we won. Tools and coaching were also created and shared to reinforce

the activities. Nick also instituted a more disciplined way to execute our sales pursuits.

He recorded a weekly video broadcast that tallied the week's activities and reinforced our repeatable sales playbook. Nick's videos drove up the competitive spirit, too. Everyone in the company watched the videos and appreciated the visibility to the health of the business.

If you don't have your own sales activities documented and communicated, I encourage you to invest the time getting your list done. It'll give you more predictability and forecast accuracy. You'll also quickly know who is doing what on your teams. Data doesn't lie, and when you measure daily, weekly, and monthly activities, everything is open and transparent.

Sample Sales Activity Metrics

All too often, folks create a sales process but forget to get specific about sales activity metrics. For example, we see discovery as a step or a box on a sales process map. What we don't often see is the evidence to verify that a discovery call was completed. A good activity to track would be discovery call summaries that are written and shared with customers. These can easily be documented and tracked using any sales system.

More examples of metrics: number of demonstrations, number of meetings with executive sponsors and decision makers, number of proposals submitted, number of mutual plans shared, and number of order forms submitted. When you create your own list, look for proven activities that can be verified with evidence.

Build Discipline

Here are the steps required to build sales activity metrics discipline:

1. **Define Activities:** Look at the data and come up with a short list of sales activities that represent best practices. These are the activities that need to happen to win.

2. **Document Activities and Expectations:** Write down the sales activity metrics including expectations around the number of activities per deal, per day, per week, and per month.

3. **Communicate:** Don't wait. Tell your team sooner than later. Communicate often.

4. **Coach Your Team:** Make sure your team understands the activities and knows the steps to complete each one. Create tools and templates to keep your people focused on execution.

5. **Measure Activity:** Track accomplishments using whatever tool makes the most sense to you. Share leaderboards.

6. **Celebrate Successes:** As the activity increases, share stories and wins. Have teams highlight accomplishments, referencing the benefits of the sales activities executed.

7. **Iterate Activities:** Learn from the progress you're seeing (and not seeing), and make changes to the activities and expectations. Base decisions and updates on what's working and what's not.

We can't expect our teams to have the right quality and quantity of sales activities unless we invest the time to define, document, communicate, coach, measure, and celebrate a proven list of sales activities.

Sales Planning

As we begin executing our go-to-market, sales strategy and sales planning become increasingly more important. Planning takes many forms, from sales plans for sales leaders, and product plans for product managers, to territory plans for salespeople and sales managers. We will focus on territory planning since it is never quite done right.

Territory Planning

The goal of territory planning is to motivate your teams to prospect and self-source more pipeline. You need to help your sellers be more strategic about how and where they spend their time in their territories. I believe there's nothing better than old-school, back-to-basics territory planning and prospecting.

Think about what would happen if every salesperson documented their own territory plan and then video recorded a short and thoughtful five-minute version of it. Turn territory planning into an illuminating experience for your sales teams by making everyone part of the process and accountable for results. I believe quota-carrying sales executives need to own their self-sourcing pipeline.

Here are the secrets to making territory planning and prospecting a revenue-generating peer activity that is appreciated instead of criticized:

- Have vision and leadership to make it part of the sales culture.
- Make territory plans relevant, short, and accessible to share best practices.

• Do territory planning quarterly or monthly.

Companies that embrace the idea of video recording territory planning on a regular basis—with peer reviews—see tremendous increases in self-sourced pipeline and improvements in new-hire time to ramp. Think about it. Imagine if every new hire had access to stack-ranked video recordings of territory plans grouped by tenure. What would happen to your team's time-to-first-deal and time-to-ramp metrics?

The power and value of crowdsourcing is incredible. We all know that some of us are great at planning and others aren't. Making territory planning a team sport is a chance to get everyone to learn how to plan like those who do it best.

It takes vision to turn crowdsourcing territory plans into culture. It takes work to align teams on expectations. It takes discipline to make it stick.

Here are the basics of a territory plan proven to create pipeline and generate revenue fast. Make the plan relevant, short, and accessible. Share a territory-planning template that's relevant and short. Document the facts of the territory and goals in the first slide. Next, have your salespeople turn the territory plan into a business review by asking—

• What's my quota?
• What's my quota stretch goal?
• What's my closed business YTD?
• What's my gap?
• How much pipeline do I have today?
• What's my pipeline gap?
• What are my goals for the year?

Then move into top accounts. On the second slide, list out the names of the top accounts and explain why they are chosen (e.g., relationships, industry fit, target profile). For each, in one sentence, be clear and focused on the outreach strategy.

On a third slide, create an opportunity map, and make sure opportunity plans are thorough. Having a plan in place doesn't take much effort. What's the compelling event? Why now? What's the strategy to engage with a champion and economic buyer? What's the mutual success plan? Why now? We're not doing deep, detailed reviews.

Finally, for the last slide, close out with strategies to build pipeline.

Given that the template is short, forward-thinking leaders can build monthly and quarterly territory-planning cadence. The short plans get sellers to focus on strategy and execution instead of spending too much time filling out slides that aren't relevant. You want to see more sellers take the time to be thoughtful about their plan and business.

What I love most about this process is getting everyone to limit their territory planning to five minutes. Less is more. Fewer slides and fewer words is hard. We've learned when territory-planning video recordings are five minutes or less (and accessible), sellers will invest the time to watch up to fifteen peer territory plans. Let's push ourselves to get out of our comfort zone and answer the question, What do we have to do to achieve greatness?

ACCOUNT PLANNING

The same principles can be applied to account planning, which is another part of sales planning. Account planning

isn't something you need to do with every account you're selling to or in every segment. For example, you're unlikely to drive a strategic account-planning program in your small business segments. On the bigger accounts, though, this is a mandatory practice. Many different processes out there can help align your sales teams and shape the right behaviors. While all the account-planning methodologies vary a bit, fundamentally they are grounded in similar principles. Account planning should include the following process steps:

1. Do research.
2. Build department or business-unit maps.
3. Build a political-influence map.
4. Create an account-based strategy.
5. Create a team-based action list.
6. Meet regularly as a team to review account strategies and progress.
7. Convert strategies into qualified opportunities.

Sales Planning Best Practices

I was working with a company to help roll out territory planning and account planning to their teams. We needed a way to make the activity relevant to everyone regardless of performance and tenure. We decided to create a three-level territory-planning initiative based on tenure. We outlined expectations and goals based on each salesperson's length of time in their role. We benchmarked their performance by

looking at historical data like win rates, deal sizes, and pipe-line generation. We asked each salesperson to create a terri-tory plan and account plan. What we did that was unique was vary the scope of effort depending on the tenure. Each group completed relevant plans. The teams appreciated the exercise because it was personalized to them.

The newer salespeople, rookies, recorded territory plans focused on building pipeline and planning their business. The salespeople with a year or two under their belts were focused on opportunity planning because they had already invested the time to build their territory and pipeline and had deals in play. The more seasoned sales professionals were focused on just one or two accounts, and they went deep on account planning. We used benchmark data to find the top perform-ers and share best practices.

With these best practices in hand, we could now work toward creating quarterly business reviews that were more collaborative and efficient.

Quarterly Business Reviews

It's no secret that most quarterly business reviews (QBRs) aren't well managed because they lack structure and engage-ment. Usually what happens is a manager sends out a QBR slide template used in a previous job. The team races to get it done with each person presenting their plan. The QBR turns into a glorified one-on-one coaching session between the manager and rep because everyone else in the room is updating or thinking about their plan. Most check out when it's not their turn. And it gets worse: There's no way to institu-tionalize the knowledge and experiences from preview QBRs.

Imagine what would happen if you had a library of previously submitted QBR plans with commentary and reviews sorted by rep tenure.

I'm confident if sales managers focus on making QBRs more collaborative and engaging, we'd realize better attainment and more best-practice sharing. The aim of the QBR is to create a plan that's going to get you to your commit and crush your number.

QUARTERLY BUSINESS REVIEW TEMPLATE

Here's a proven template and QBR meeting flow for sales managers to use with their teams.

Section 1: Sales Plan Activity

This section identifies priorities for the upcoming quarter. Get everyone on the team to answer the following questions:

1. What five opportunities are you most confident will close this quarter?
2. How much pipeline do you need to generate to hit your commit?
3. What are your personal development goals for the quarter?

Section 2: Big Deal Reviews

Systematically dive into top deals. Have teams give feedback and "score" deal review strategies. Here's a proven list of deal review questions:

1. What's the customer's current situation?

2. What are the customer's top problems and issues?

3. What are the financial impacts of the issues?

4. What are their ideals? What will their future look like if they solve these challenges?

5. What's the executive alignment strategy? How is it aligning with our champion, economic buyer, and influencers?

6. What's the company's compelling event?

7. What's the decision-making process? Who is involved? What are the evaluation criteria?

8. What are the quantifiable benefits of moving forward with a solution?

9. What's the competitive strategy? Who are we competing with, and how are we crushing the competition?

10. What are your next steps? What's your mutual plan?

Section 3: Loss Reviews

Review top losses from the previous quarter. Here are some questions to use when doing a competitive loss review with your team:

1. Why did you lose?

2. What would your customer say about why you lost?

3. What can you do to turn this deal around in the future?

Section 4: Win Reviews

Let's learn from our wins. Use this time to celebrate deal wins. Here are some best-practice deal-win questions:

1. Why did we win?
2. What business value did we create for our prospect?
3. How did we win?
4. What objections did you face during the evaluation, and how did we overcome them?
5. What did you learn from this win that will influence future deals?

Section 5: Prospecting Plan

Building pipeline is the key to closing deals. As our pipeline grows and we work more deals, the time we have to develop future pipeline decreases.

Use this section to plan out where you are going to dedicate your time to ensure pipeline growth is consistent.

Here are the questions to have teams answer:

1. Identify your ten priority accounts for the quarter.
2. Within these accounts, who are you going to target? Who is the economic buyer to target?
3. What's your value pitch in two or three sentences?
4. Identify one customer story that you will leverage to pique curiosity in the above accounts.
5. What are the key points from the above customer story that will resonate with your prospect accounts?
6. Share your outbound prospecting cadence.

Section 6: Support

Use this section to surface any challenges, obstacles, questions and/or comments. Give teams a chance to openly ask about support and/or questions they have.

Section 7: Action Items

Centralize and prioritize team action items to keep your teams focused and accountable.

Run your quarterly business reviews the right way and see—

- Better manager coaching
- More best-practice sharing
- Peer mentoring
- Higher attainment

Using Data to Drive an Executive Conversation

Now that you have a clearer understanding of the metrics that matter, you're better prepared to have data-driven enablement conversations to drive your enablement strategies and tactics. Every enablement strategy meeting should start with a review of the metrics. Have the data handy, and be ready to look at attainment and productivity results by team. You should even come prepared with a printout for everyone to review and discuss together. Having this data will elevate your game.

Keep it simple. An easy-to-read yet comprehensive one-slide summary table will suffice. Showing the year-over-year change is great to do as well and gives good context. Do

not let the finance and operations team share summary slides that are difficult to understand and use. Push your peers to simplify the data. If you are still not getting the right information, walk into the office of your chief revenue officer or your chief executive officer and let them know you are not able to do your job because you do not have all the information you need to make decisions. Here are some of my lessons learned to engage the C-suite and earn your seat at the table:

- Be organized.
- Be strategic.
- Have a plan.
- Show the data.
- Clarify expected outcomes.
- Be clear on timelines.

Once you follow these guidelines, you can start reaping the benefits of mastering the data and promoting the results; you'll get universal buy-in for your sales enablement initiatives.

ROI and Budgets

Armed with data, budget and resource discussions are made easier. Enablement is all about math: the math to calculate the cost-benefit analysis of resource allocation. Equipped with these solid metrics, you can tie your sales enablement efforts to results in the field. This not only impacts revenue attainment, but it also boosts your ability to justify the right budget for sales enablement programs.

I was first introduced to this idea back in my early days at Salesforce. We looked at spreadsheets of attainment, win rates, and ramp times of the global sales organization. We made sure we were always making the right enablement bets. We calculated the ROI on every enablement resource and initiative. The calculation was based on revenue impact and was closely tied to attainment by region. We also created teams of shared services that would support sales teams in their sales pursuits. We were focused on increasing attainment and looking for ways to improve win rates, reduce sales-cycle time, increase deal sizes, and increase customer-facing selling time. It sounds almost impossible to be able to accomplish all the above at the same time.

One day at Salesforce we noticed a lot of inbound requests from our sales teams to help with business case development. The market was maturing, and customers were beginning to ask for help to build financial justifications. We had an analyst focus on helping the sales teams full time. We noticed trends. Every time we worked on a business case collaboratively with a customer, we won the deal. We noticed win rates skyrocketing, resulting in higher attainment. We also noticed that salespeople spent less time on the administration and calculations of business cases and more time selling. It was the trifecta of enablement multipliers. After running this for six months and measuring the impact, I went back to Linda and Frank and made an argument for a team of business case specialists. We calculated and justified the incremental based on improvements in attainment and win rates. The math was simple and straightforward.

Plans by Role

As a company's go-to-market matures, the enablement complexities increase. A one-size-fits-all approach to enablement will not work and will result in bad sales enablement. A helpful planning exercise to do in partnership with leadership is the following: Make a list of all the employee and partner roles in your company. For each role, list the tools and processes they need to be successful. Include a metric for each one. Identify the assessment required to check competence. Document the list. Share it with stakeholders. Get alignment of what tools and content need to be created.

The enablement planning matrix will become the contract that exists between teams that need to work together to achieve go-to-market goals. Your stakeholders, and specifically your individual employees, will appreciate the thoughtfulness of a plan that is tailored to their role and success criteria.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

With hundreds of sales enablement tools available in the sales technology stack and so many competing priorities, sales enablement leaders are struggling to figure out where to focus and what to do next. CROs have priorities. CMOs are asking for access and more product enablement. Sales managers are looking for answers. Salespeople are hungry for less noise.

Let's proclaim a sales attainment manifesto to help us collectively prioritize where we spend time:

- Have a data mindset, and don't be afraid to get the data.

- Get the data.

- Correlate coaching activity and enablement initiatives with attainment data.
- Work closely with sales operations to get this data. With the data correlated and hooked between data sources, it's finally possible to see what is working and what is not.

Anytime your sales enablement program lifts your team's ability to hit quota, top line will be massively impacted. Sales enablement and a maniacal focus on sales attainment data is the path to success.

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 on 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.