

# Track your success

Assessing productivity can lead your team to greater profits.

**Y**esterday, I focused on the importance of becoming a sales coach, improving compensation plans, as well as recruiting and retaining the best talent. Today, I will identify and expound the remaining two fundamentals that will ultimately determine the success of your sales team.

## Measuring performance

The purpose of measuring performance is to have clarity on the profitability of the sales volume brought in by each sales team member.

With that seemingly attainable outcome in mind, why do companies struggle with assessing sales force productivity? They sometimes find measuring sales performance challenging because they have failed to incorporate quantitative and qualitative criteria.

- Quantitative criteria includes sales volume in dollars or units, growth over previous years, new accounts and profitability.

- Qualitative criteria includes attitude, product knowledge, communication skills, personal appearance, customer feedback, selling skills and personal initiative.

When assessing the productivity and profitability of your sales team, be sure to differentiate between aptitude and attitude. When in doubt, train a poor aptitude and fire a bad attitude.

Ultimately, your sales team must be assessed according to clearly defined (and clearly understood) objectives. As a great sales coach, it is your responsibility to communicate your objectives as far as sales volume, sales revenue, profitability, return-on-investment, market penetration and market share.

Be specific and set deadlines. Coach your sales team members by rewarding them for achieving their objectives and helping them come up with solutions to improve the results from their activities.

## Sales force automation

Sales force automation (SFA) is typically part of a company's customer relationship management (CRM) system and uses software to help automate some of the business tasks of sales.



Encourage the use of automating processes, not just within your sales department, but among all departments that deal with customers. - Reuters

These include order processing, contact management, information sharing, inventory monitoring and control, order tracking, customer management, sales lead tracking, sales forecast analysis and employee performance evaluation.

One of the benefits of SFA is being able to track the productivity of your sales force automatically such as revenue per salesman, number of calls per day, time spent per contact, revenue per call, cost per call, ratio of orders to calls, number of new customers per period, number of lost customers per period and number of customer complaints.

The key to making SFA work is to encourage its use, not just within your sales department, but among all departments that deal with customers. Demonstrate how these systems help improve inter-departmental communication, which benefits the customer by delivering the best quality service.

People often use the terms SFA and CRM synonymously but there is an important distinction. CRM does not necessarily mean the sales tasks are truly automated. Be sure to do your research, try an online demo or use a trial version before deciding on the best tool for you to automate your sales force.

When I'm coaching sales managers and delivering in-house sales training, I focus on the importance of quantitative and qualitative criteria as well as sales force automation.

Adopting and implementing these sales coaching fundamentals can help you better assess productivity and profitability, and ultimately help you save time and money. - Singapore Straits Times/Asia News Network

■ **ARTICLE** by Tom Abbott, a Singapore-based Canadian sales coach at Soho Sales Coaching and author of *The SOHO Solution: 25 Selling Strategies For Growing Your Business*.