



How to Measure Successful Sales Management?

Sales management is probably the most critical role that influences the success of any organization. So, it's often tempting for sales managers to step in and close the sale themselves. I would submit that this is not the best use of a sales manager's time. High-performing sales organizations win business by putting processes in place that allow the sales manager to produce results not by doing things themselves, but through their sales team. I like to refer to this as driving from the back seat. It is important for sales managers to:

- ✓ Know when and where to get involved in deals
- ✓ Know that their sales team needs sales leadership, not "sales doer-ship"
- ✓ Rely heavily on their CRM systems to support their organization's growth initiatives

Sales managers must understand that their role is not about their own performance. It's about helping everyone else on their team raise their level of performance. This is where effective sales coaching replaces many counterproductive activities performed by sales managers i.e. reporting numbers instead of improving numbers or improving capability to achieve numbers. It focuses on developing talent through one-on-one coaching with their sales professionals. Coaching is all about helping sales professionals gain the competencies they need to close sales, capitalizing on best practices (yours and others) and leveraging it across the group.

The best sales managers begin by asking questions, not by telling their team members what they need to do but asking questions so that the sales professional can properly frame the issues. One last point I would make is for sales managers to focus on early-stage deals as much as on late-stage deals in order to determine where optimal value can be created in the sales cycle and then direct resources towards that value.

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