

Sales Management

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INTRODUCTION

Every managerial process is a chain of tasks dependent on human resources for its completion. The success of the whole process in the form of increased sales revenue and profits depends on the efficient execution of tasks at every level. Let us see the various steps involved in a generic sales management process, irrespective of the product or service being sold.

Good sales management is one of the simplest ways to increase your revenue and profitability. A sales management process includes all the aspects, resources, and procedures involved in selling. The sales management process begins where the manufacturing process ends. It involves every transaction, from the deployment of product from the assembly line to its delivery to the customer and its followup service. It also involves reverse feedback from the customers to the company with a purpose of making the product better, and of course, increase revenue! Sales management is about leading the people and the process your company uses to sell prospects and service customers.

The responsibilities vested with sales management include:

- Building the right sales' strategy
- Hiring the right team
- Creating the right compensation plans, territories and quotas
- Setting the right projections
- Motivating the team
- Tracking revenue against goals
- Resolving conflicts
- Training and coaching sales reps
- Managing processes
- Getting the sale

Need for a proper system of sales management

- The sales team is the voice of the company. In fact, the representatives may be the only people

having direct customer interaction. They may be responsible for prospecting, selling and managing existing customers. They control the dialogue with your market, gather feedback, and deliver on your value proposition and brand promise.

- The sales team will make or break your marketing efforts. Even if you're not personally responsible for the sales team, it's important to understand their role and draw on that knowledge to create better marketing programs.
- Sales and marketing serve one purpose: to generate revenue. They should be completely aligned with their understanding of customer needs, their messages, and the process they use to identify prospects, sell, close and manage. They should work together as a unit, providing valuable feedback to improve all of their strategies.
- When departments aren't aligned, your company wastes time and opportunity. For example, when salespeople rewrite literature and tools to their liking, your messages are diluted and salespeople are doing something other than selling.

Educational qualification required for a sales manager

One needs to possess analytical and judgmental skills. One also needs to be good at communicating, multitasking, handling stress related situations and, most importantly, leadership. As far as the educational requirements for this job are concerned, in order to have a fair chance for selection, it is a must to have at least a Bachelor's Degree in Marketing and Sales. A course in subjects related to marketing, sales and administration is also acceptable in some organizations. But only educational qualification is not enough. You are also expected to have a minimum of five years of work experience in the related industry. As this is a very demanding job, people want to hire the highly qualified person.

A regional sales manager (RSM) salary ranges from anywhere between Rs.75,000 to Rs.2,00,000 per month.. The more qualified and experienced you are, the better and bigger organizations will hire you.

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This is why there is a huge salary range in this job. According to sources, the demand for a RSM is going to increase in the future. So start preparing yourself from now on and increase your chances to be counted among the best managers in the corporate WORLD.

Sales Managers Responsibilities

The responsibilities of a sales manager are mostly set according to the employment setting. However, there are some generic sales manager responsibilities that are to be carried out, no matter the type of company or employment setting.

Sales Resource Management

One important responsibility of a sales manager is to recruit well-qualified resources for contributing to the company's sales development. He has to work with the human resources manager and arrange for interviews, conduct interviews of eligible candidates, and recruit efficient sales workforce.

Sales Training to Subordinates

After the recruitment is done, a sales manager has to again work with the human resources department of the company to conduct training sessions for the newly recruited sales executives. A sales manager's job description includes imparting sales training sessions to sales professionals regarding how the company business can be improved.

Managing Sales Executives

A sales manager has to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of his team members for the purpose of assigning tasks to sales and marketing executives. He has to handle all administrative issues of his team members. A sales manager is also supposed to keep a record of the employee productivity of his team members.

Preparing Sales Policies and Marketing Strategies

He has to consult with the top management of the company and the sales director, and draft sales policies and marketing strategies for approval from the management. After the strategies have been finalized, he has to explain them to the team members. Guiding sales executives and planning ways to go according to the sales strategies is also a very important responsibility of a sales manager.

Handling Important Sales Deals

If there are deals which can get the company a substantial amount of business and profits, the company may require the sales manager to travel places, discuss with such clients, and attract more business. In such situations, the sales manager has to wield his full potential for finalizing the contract with the client. He also manages crucial aspects of the advertising and marketing processes.

Team Management

Maintaining a good teamwork spirit in the sales team is also a crucial part of the sales manager job description. A sales manager has to motivate the team to give their best and be true resources for the company. He has to address the difficulties that are faced by the executives in achieving their targets. Following is some information on a sales manager:

- You've got to be success minded. You've got to feel that things are coming your way when you're out selling; otherwise, you won't be able to sell anything. - Curtis Carlson In today's market, where there is a substantial amount of competition all around, companies are giving their level best to attract customers and make business. The only product that prevails is of the company which adopts effective sales techniques through its sales and marketing team. Be it through phone selling or door-to-door selling, you necessarily need to have a positive approach towards your target.
- Small improvements in the team's skills and processes can often produce substantial results. Even great salespeople can benefit from coaching, and with the right attention to pipeline the goals, one can make every existing company to sell some kind of product or service to make profits. That is how our system of capitalism works. Sales management process is the most important of all managerial processes that sustain a business.

Process I: Sales Training

This step is reached after one is through with the initial field testing of the product where it has been sold in limited amount in select localities to test its response. Necessary improvements have been made according to field test feedback and now the product is ready to be sold along with a full fledged marketing campaign ready to boost sales.

The important task that remains is training the sales representatives about the product. They are educated about all the pros and cons associated with the product and taught what to say and what not to say when selling the product. They are given sales goals for a month and assigned to different regional sales divisions. An important part of their sales training is learning selling techniques through various distribution channels.

Process Step 2: Sales Plan Execution

This is the execution part of various sales management strategies. It involves various modes of selling which are coupled with marketing campaigns for the product sale. This is the toughest part of the

whole process and is upto the sales representatives and sales managers to make the sales happen. It all depends upon the salesmanship talents of the people who actually interact with the end customers. It involves taking in product inquiries from potential customers, following them up with personal calls or visits, and, ultimately, closing the deal. The ratio of sales inquiries to closed deals or sales is called the 'Conversion Rate'. More the conversion rate, more is the probability of the sales team actually meeting targets.

Process Step 3: Feedback and Analysis

This step involves review and feedback of the sales performance. The sales force management has a huge impact on the sales performance. Sales targets, if achieved, are applauded while sales targets which fall short are examined. Both cases are explored and the data for this evaluation is retrieved from sales representatives and studied by sales managers. The reason has been examined right from shortcomings in the product or incompetence on the part of sales representatives. The feedback is used to make changes in sales management techniques.

This article aims to give you a rough idea of what it takes to make a successful sales management process that delivers consistent results and meets targets. The most important element that makes a sales management process stand out is an experienced sales manager with an excellent understanding of ground realities and knowledge of what the customers really want.

A few of the most important sales manager responsibilities include maintaining the inventory, mentoring the sales executives in meeting the targets, and preparing sales and marketing strategies for the company. In this article, we have discussed few of such job responsibilities.

Today, in every manufacturing company, profit making is one of the most significant goals. And to drive the company towards profits, the company largely focuses on sales development and business generation. Typically, you will find that there is a separate department, altogether, for running the sales and marketing processes a sales manager is appointed who is an expert in handling and managing the sales development processes of a company. Let us take a look at a sales manager's responsibilities.

Techniques adopted in sales management

If you are currently doing a marketing job, you would certainly have realized the importance of sales techniques. It is well said that you can sell anything, if you have the right approach to make the consumer agree to what you are offering. Good sales techniques

are only to be developed by complete sales training, experience, logical and prompt thinking and decision-making abilities. However, getting to know the basics of sales is also as important as practicing it in person. Let us now take a look at the phone sales techniques and door-to-door sales techniques.

Phone Sales Techniques

The first thing that you need to pay attention to is your level of confidence in your tone. If the customer feels that your confidence is low, he will not be interested in listening to you. Know what you have to say at first, but do not let the customer feel that you are just saying a sales script. Remember that every customer is different, so be prepared for dealing with their response and tone. When you start the conversation, smiling a bit will have a good effect on your tone.

Before proceeding further with the conversation, ask if it is fine to talk. You can even request for an appointment at some other time. Do not talk much about yourself, and also do not criticize your competitor's products. Do not be in a hurry for ending the call, and do not force the customer to agree to your statements.

Door-to-Door Sales Techniques

Consider the primary requirements first which consist of a good posture, a cheerful smile, clean and ironed clothes, and a confident voice. Do not wear caps, hats, sunglasses, or other accessories which will look unprofessional. It is good idea to wear a badge that has the company name and your identity on it. Be confident and always keep eye contact with the potential customer. Before ringing the door bell, do not try to peep in the house through the window.

After the door is opened to you, stand at a distance, but not too far. While speaking to the customer, do not try to speak too much but do speak to the point. Before convincing him with your strategy, realize what the customer has, what more does he require, and what will be good for him. Obtain extensive knowledge of your product and be prepared for cross questions from the customers. Stress more on the benefits of the product and the subsequent customer service instead of the product itself.

Be it for selling products, services, insurance, sales techniques really play a very important role in making a successful sale. Remember, that in every sales technique, confidence and communication is the key to get the job done successfully.

Duties and Responsibilities

In order to be a successful SM, the person should have the skills of a 'marketing expert'. Though the

statement may seem to be a little exaggerating to you right now, you would understand why I said so when you enter the corporate world and understand the demands of this job. The following points explain the nature of work that a RSM is expected to do.

- Planning and implementing a competitive strategy to bring about a substantial growth in the sales margin.
- Identify the new and emerging opportunities in the market and strategically tap those opportunities to promote a new product line.
- Guiding and mentoring the sales representatives working under you to meet the set targets on time so that the overall sales objectives can be met, as scheduled.
- Recruiting, orienting, training and counseling new sales employees and distributing the workforce in the districts that come under you.
- Acting as the source of contact between the sales leaders and the sales representatives in terms of communicating the appraisals, performance evaluation, and changes in the policies and procedures.
- Preparing monthly reports and annual marketing budget by using one's forecasting and analytical skills through carefully studying the market trends.
- Demonstrating the products during regional level trade shows and attracting more and more customers towards the products. This duty comes along with the responsibility of meeting customer expectations and doing all that is possible to retain customer loyalty.
- Encouraging and motivating future sales leaders by keeping the sales representatives updated about the current market requirements and ensuring that they perform to their best of capabilities.
- Conducting and attending weekly meetings to make sure that all the concerns and issues are addressed and that everything in the pipeline is scheduled the way it is planned.

CONCLUSION

Though there are various departments in an organization, the very existence of an organization can be achieved only through a proper system of sales management. In the present scenario of cut-throat competition, managing sales and maintaining the demand for the brand is a really challenging task for the sales managers of today. The survival of a product in the market can be ensured only by having a clear picture of the taste and preference of the consumers as well as properly planning , coordinating and controlling the activities of the sales team.