LinkedIn

The Sales Productivity Challenge

Improved sales productivity is a win-win for both companies and salespeople: sales teams get to spend more time doing what they do best – selling – and the business grows as a result.

But boosting productivity in today's virtual world can be a challenge. In the UK, salespeople spend half a day less talking to potential customers each week than their counterparts in Europe. And that was before Covid-19 altered the landscape irrevocably.

There's no doubt the latest technology can help when it comes to interacting with buyers. But what factors should you consider when trying to address the sales productivity puzzle?

1. Remote working poses new challenges for sales teams and their clients

In-person deal-making is much less prevalent because of the pandemic and technology has changed how we interact with buyers. Tools such as Microsoft Teams have altered the way we work forever, both internally and with customers. There's less travel, freeing up time for selling. And contacts are more likely to agree to a call because there's no need to go to the effort and expense of a face-to-face meeting.

But remote working is a double-edged sword. The personal touch may be lacking and lining up online meetings can come at the expense of nurturing quality relationships.

Then there's the dangers of burn-out. With salespeople balancing work and home life like never before, it's crucial that sales leaders coach their staff and check in with them to make sure they're doing OK on a regular basis, or motivation – and productivity – may suffer.

2. Investing in technology for technology's sake won't improve things

There's no doubt there's some great sales technology out there, but we need to ensure the tech we invest in empowers our teams. To do this, begin with the outcome you want to achieve and work backwards – don't begin with the tech. If it doesn't allow you to achieve the desired outcome, there's simply no point deploying it.

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Don't forget to use your 'TQ', or 'technology quotient'. Are you making the best of existing systems and exploiting their functionality? You may have tools that can improve productivity to hand already. LinkedIn Sales Navigator can help users make 2.5X as many connections with key accounts, for example, and LinkedIn itself gives you access to a global audience of 800 million users.

3. Prioritise, focus and measure

Perhaps the best driver of improved productivity is better focus. By following up with priority leads and customers, it's possible to generate quality connections and conversations, which is where the best salespeople tend to shine. Sales Navigator is a great tool for understanding customer needs and who you should be speaking to.

But remember, it's crucial that your CRM system records all contact with prospects and the outcomes. Without that, it's difficult to assess which strategies are working – and which ones will make the team more productive in the future.

4. When it comes to productivity, think smarter

Technology should not just monitor sales activity but empower your salespeople, too. Of course, management needs visibility of reps' activities, but improved productivity is not so much about monitoring but rather thinking about causal relationships, connections and best practice.

The best technologies already automate some important CRM functions such as write-backs to free up time for reps to focus on developing relationships. These innovations improve productivity but they're nothing compared to the capability of artificial intelligence to identify the right connections and buyers in the marketplace.

Contact us and speak to your Account Manager today to get started finding bigger opportunities!