

SEG

ACCELERATING GROWTH

Private Equity - Spring Edition



02 | Letter from CEO

03 | Client Profile: Dave Moore

04 | Accelerating Revenue with Lead Generation

09 | Science & Sales

11 | B2B Brand: Build an Industry Leader

14 | Partner Spotlight: Tony Lenhart

15 | Traits of a Great Sales Rep

17 | You Bought Your CRM, Now What?

20 | Scripts Kill Deals

22 | The Danger in Dual Roles

24 | Identifying CRM Super Users

26 | The Millennial Corporate Culture

Letter from CEO



Brian O'Neil
CEO and Founder

We are excited to release Sales Empowerment Group's magazine – Accelerating Growth. Over the past decade SEG has been navigating the maze of business success through marketing and sales for Private Equity Firms. The ever-changing world of sales and marketing has us all trying to keep pace with what to adopt for the fastest path for growth. The maze looks something like this:



We will spend each quarter on best practices for sales and marketing and how to navigate the maze in the most efficient manner. In this edition we will focus on best practices we have implemented alongside Private Equity Firms. We have learned a lot from our Private Equity partners and continue to be amazed with the different techniques and best practices we have implemented alongside them. We love brainstorming the best possible ways to navigate the ever-changing world of marketing/sales and how to accelerate revenue growth. Please do not hesitate to reach out to SEG to strategize on how to accelerate revenue growth for your portfolio companies.

Thank you,
Brian O'Neil



A Conversation on Accelerating Revenue Growth with **Dave Moore**, Senior VP of North American Sales for Businessolver

Q: How do you think about revenue growth at Businessolver?

A: It's about responsible revenue growth, which means it's a balance between growing at the right pace and achieving our goals. Growth needs to be planned and intentional. Revenue growth should be exciting and should benefit your customers.

Q: How do you achieve that balance?

A: We have a tightly aligned management team and we rely on each other to manage expectations on what we expect our growth rate to be each year. We operate in both short and long-range strategic planning cycles that allow us to be agile and nimble, yet stay ahead of the market trends.

Q: What are your most important levers for accelerating revenue growth?

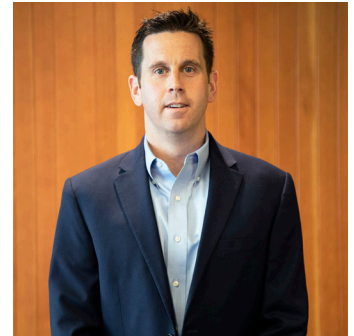
A: Appropriately assessing the markets and segments we want to serve and ensuring we have our resources focused on the right activities. Another lever is ensuring our demand generation programs are fully aligned to our customer's buying journey. Take our content strategy, for example. Our content needs to be focused on helping our customers think differently about their programs to deliver actionable insight that they can apply quickly.

Q: What is the secret to creating good content?

A: First, you need to truly understand the types of buyers you engage. Content needs to be very specific to the individual's buying persona. In today's landscape, there are several generations in the workforce that all bring their unique perspective to the table. One size doesn't fit all. It's also important to be in the right channels – we need to be where our buyers go to get fresh and innovative ideas.

Q: How do the sales and marketing teams work together at Businessolver?

A: We have a shared responsibility, so we need to have a “no ego” mindset. We are effectively driving towards the same outcome. We don't succumb to the age-old adage of sales and marketing don't get along. We don't clash over who generated a lead, because in the end we are dependent on each other. The motion between marketing and sales is imperative for continued success.



Q: How would you describe an ideal prospect for your business?

A: I'm not sure there is a one size fits all or ideal prospect. Leveraging data and segmentation allows us to identify and understand our best prospects. What is our buyer's persona – what ERP or HCM are they using? Are they using a competitor? How many employees are in their organization? Once we understand these data points we can develop a meaningful sales strategy.

Q: What key insight have you learned and applied to improve your sales process?

A: Listen to your customers and make sure you are appropriately building a sales process that focuses on the customer. They are the only ones who matter. If your customers can't connect the value of the service you're offering, they'll go somewhere else in search of it. It's your job to align with the customer.

Q: What does your sales enablement roadmap look like in 2019?

A: Education, education, and more education. We are going to continue to focus on having the most well-trained sales force in the business.

Accelerating Revenue with Lead Generation for Your Portfolio Companies



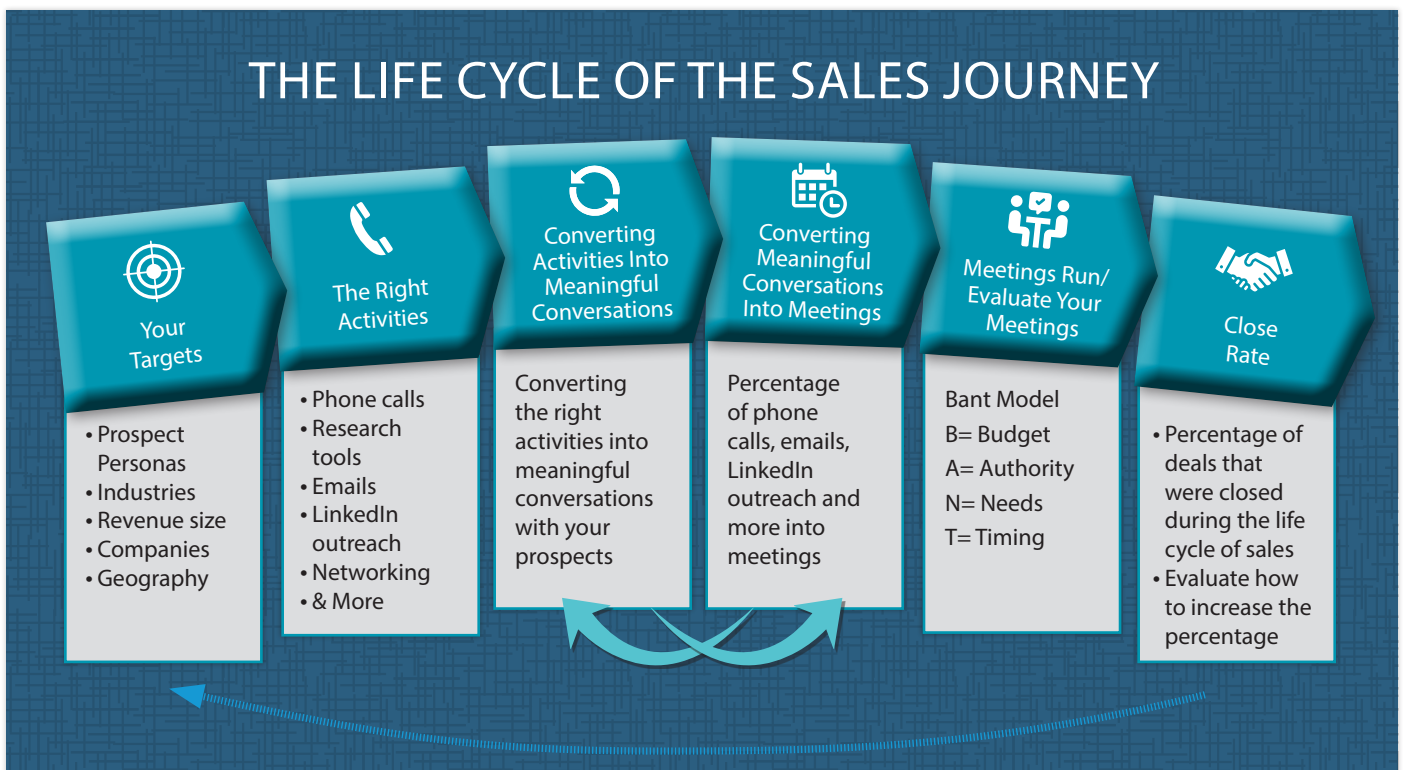
The evolution of sales continues to be ever-changing, however, one thing stays very consistent – how do you fill the frontend of the sales funnel with leads? Most of the time your sales team is your company's biggest asset and it is crucial for the Sales Leader to build a predictable revenue model and it all starts with creating leads that turn into meaningful conversations/meetings.

When looking at the life cycle of the sales journey we divide it into six simple steps – below. The front-end of the funnel will be the first four boxes – Your Targets, The Right Activities, Converting Your Activities Into Meaningful Conversations, and Converting Meaningful Conversations Into Meetings. The first four steps are key for the inside/outside sales team to attend qualified meetings. Lastly, it is very important that the inside/outside sales team gives feedback on the meetings ran.

Since the frontend of the funnel is so key to the sales journey let's spend time focusing on the right steps to accelerate revenue by building an effective lead generation team.

#1 – Creating Prospect Personas

Start with identifying what your top existing clients' decision makers had in common. We highly recommend involving your marketing team, top sales producers, sales leadership and key executives in this conversation. It should only take a half-day and it amazes us what comes out of a half-day session like this. During that session you should ask questions that will lead to your answers before you ever purchase your lead generation lists (companies with those individuals that are your ideal future clients). The questions you should start with: What did your top 20 customers have in common? What did the decision makers have in common? Why did the decision makers buy? Did anyone else along the way get you in front of the decision maker (influencers in the buying journey)? If so, who are they? What titles did they have? What are the common features/benefits that typically intrigue them before buying from you/your organization? This step is usually skipped, and organizations jump into acquiring large lists with gut instincts and very little interaction. If done right, this will save you a lot of time and money!



#2 – Purchasing or Enhancing Your Database

Now that you have determined your Prospect Personas/ Companies to call on- **you want to be crisp and sharp!** We usually have found this is the fun part of the process. Since you have spent many hours determining the ideal buyers/companies you can now investigate utilizing different tools/providers to build your exact database (e.g., ZoomInfo, Data.com, LinkedIn, Hoovers and many more). This will include areas such as revenue size, segmentation by states or territories, industries and titles that you want to focus on (C-Level, VP, Plant Managers). Also, you should have in mind your ultimate goals – meetings, pipeline and revenue goals. **Now, you can build the lists based on your KPIs (Key Performance Indicators).** For example, if your goal is to close an additional 50 deals in 2019 you will more than likely need thousands of prospects to get to that goal (not hundreds of prospects). A friendly reminder that if you have 500 accounts and the average account has 5 influencers/decision makers, you have 2,500 people to focus on for lead generation. Make sure you spend time with multiple providers to investigate what type of

lists you can create and what tools can help get the best information. This is like buying a car: You may have to look at multiple dealerships to get the best car for you.

#3 – CRM & Marketing Automation

In step #3 you want to make sure you have a system to track all your lists so you can track your KPIs. Managing and analyzing prospect connections through customer relationship management software (integrated marketing and tools) will allow you/your organization to pinpoint coaching opportunities and strategic changes to yield a better output. Also, the more you can optimize your CRM to integrate marketing will increase your chances of setting more meetings. Please refer to Dave Moore's article on page 3.

Like the traditional sales funnel, the more granular you can break down the lead generation process, the more strategic you can be. Analyzing each level of the funnel throughout the sales process can support your sales team and drive more sales. Goals are set and expectations are clear.





DAILY ACTIVITY TARGET

How to measure: Business Development Reps (BDRs) should be measured by the metrics in your CRM and therefore, be extremely diligent with their data entry. Further, your sales team should be able to classify activities in the graph above. Of course, you can adjust these according to your organization.

Daily targets: Daily activity targets will depend on your cadence. This involves phone calls, emails, research, LinkedIn outreach, providing educational pieces to your targets and more. The cadence (tempo) should be determined before you start your outreach.

How to improve: If BDRs are struggling to reach a reasonable daily activity goal, explore opportunities to reduce the amount of time spent on data entry and research. Tools like email to CRM plugins and dialers can help automate the logging of activities and allow reps more dialing time each day. Further, work with your reps to instill an efficient method of working through sales cadences within your CRM.



CONTACT RATE

What it is: A simple equation used to determine the average number of activities it will take before getting in touch with a decision maker at one of your target prospects.

How to measure: A CRM report can break down all completed activities by BDR and activity type for a certain time period. The contact rate will be the percentage of completed activities that resulted in contact made with a decision maker.

EXAMPLE: 1,000 completed activities which included 50 contacts made = contact rate of 5%

Target: 5-7%

How to improve: If your contact rate is below that 5-7% range, you may consider analyzing your outreach

methods to ensure you have a good cadence and make appropriate adjustments to increase your contact rate. You can also use CRM software to dissect the different methods that are most helpful in creating a contact.



CONVERSION RATE

What it is: Conversion rate is used to measure the rate of success from advancing a contact made to a meeting set.

How to measure: From your CRM, run a report that includes all completed activities where activity type equals contact made or meeting set. The conversion rate will be the percentage of all contacts made which resulted in a meeting.

EXAMPLE: 50 contacts made and 10 meetings set = 20% conversion rate

Target: 20%

How to improve: There's a lot to consider when analyzing what a successful conversion rate might look like for your business. For example, what does the meeting that you're attempting to schedule look like and who are you reaching out to? An on-site meeting is harder to set than a phone call and a CEO may have a tighter schedule than a purchasing employee. Pinpoint key areas of improvement when listening to your sellers' calls, such as the value in messaging, clear product attributes, and tailoring the conversation to each individual buyer.



MEETINGS SET

What it is: Total number of meetings scheduled by each sales rep, most often meaning a set appointment with an outside sales person.

How to measure: After assigning the meeting to a specific outside rep, create that task in the CRM software, and leave it open. Once the meeting has occurred, the outside rep can change the status to complete.

Target: 3-4 meetings/week

How to improve: As we move down the funnel, room for improvement is often described in a higher section of the funnel. Look to conversion rate, contact rate and daily activities to see where the team might be falling short.



CLOSE RATE

What it is: Determination if the sale was made.

How to measure: Take the sum of all completed tasks where type equals meeting/demo or cancelled/rescheduled and bucket by "created by". The percentage of this sum represented by the meeting/demo tasks will be your close rate.

EXAMPLE: With a total of 20 meetings scheduled, 16 ran (4 cancelled or rescheduled to a later time), representing an 80% close rate.

Target: 80%

How to improve: When prospects are not following through on scheduled meetings, it's wise to explore factors that would cause that meeting to be cancelled. Can they not recall the product you are selling or is it difficult to pinpoint what value your product will bring to their company? To help ensure your prospect shows:

- Don't schedule meetings three months out without a few touchpoints in between
- Ask at least three discovery questions (with follow-ups) during your initial interaction so you can cater your service/offering to their needs

- Include an agenda in the meeting invite
- Send over marketing collateral and/or an applicable case study after you have scheduled the meeting



MEETINGS RUN

What it is: Total number of meetings scheduled by a rep that occurred between the prospect and a member of your sales team.

How to measure: If using the process outlined above (How to measure – Meetings Set) you will be able to report on meetings run by pulling all **completed** activities where type equals meeting/demo and created by is segmented by rep.

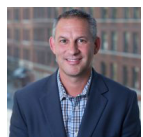
Target: 2-3 meetings/week

How to improve: Meetings run is the goal of most Business Development Reps and the reason for examining the sales Funnel. If a BDR is not hitting their quota, using the techniques discussed in this article can help you pinpoint areas of improvement.

PUTTING THE FUNNEL TO WORK

Using the technology and data from CRM software and working with your BDR team can greatly improve your company's sales numbers. Look at the goal for each BDR, and work backwards up the funnel to reach targeted sales. This will allow your portfolio companies to increase their growth faster which in-turn usually increases the valuation.

In SEG's next edition we will focus on the last two steps of the Sales Cycle – Evaluating Meetings Run and Close Rates.



Brian O'Neil
CEO AND FOUNDER



SCIENCE & SALES - Do They Go Together?

Investing into Your Portfolio Companies Talent

Developing your people and working through a learning and development plan can often be a coaching experience that requires time, energy, and deep thought. As a sales leader, if you have traveled with your reps and provided coaching and guidance after each sales call, then the year-end task of doing succession planning can be a bit easier. The key is saving your coaching notes, feedback emails or memos so you have a track record of what has been communicated. If you haven't done this, then other tools and corporate resources, like training observations, can be very helpful aids for you as you look to complete a

succession planning exercise.

This past year I have worked with several clients as a sales trainer and coach, often providing input for their succession planning effort. At one client, I used a tracking document to track the training and development progress of their sales team, every 90 days.

With this same client, we settled on a very simple Heat Map that had scoring elements of 1-5. We measured the sales personnel progress in four areas. The tracker used below was meant to coach their progress every 90

PEOPLE AND TRAINING ASSESSMENT

Training Topics	Attitude				Skills				Activity				Knowledge				Summary				Assessment Notes / Recommended Development				
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T		U	V	W	X
Terry	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	3	4	3	5	3	3	5	5	5	4.10	3.88	7.98	82.00	Pipeline Management, Relationship Development for Accounts
Fred	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	5	4	4	3	5	4	3	5	5	5	4.10	3.63	7.73	82.00	Time Management as a Sales Manager and Selling too
Joe	2.5	4	4.5	4.5	4	4.5	2.5	3.5	4.5	4	2.5	2	5	2.5	4.5	2	3.5	4.5	4	3.5	3.65	3.5	7.15	72.50	Presentation Skills
Mary	3.3	4	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	3	3	3.3	3	3	3	4	3	3	2	3	3.5	3.5	4	3.46	3.26	6.72	69.10	Pre Call Planning, LinkedIn
Jane	4	5	5	4	4	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	4	4	4	3.70	3.25	6.95	74.00	Strategic Selling Skills

days. What made it really easy was that we used the tracker as a scientific tool for rating ranges on the 9-Box Succession Planner.

When we got to the 9-Box, (right) we also factored in the sales performance history so as to have one more lens to rate them, more scientifically versus gut. This helped tremendously. It enabled the client to have even more scientific data as they approached the difficult decision of – do we keep the sales personnel on our books that might not be worth investing in this upcoming year? This can be a very difficult sales leadership decision and one to be taken with careful thought.

I recently began working with another client, in a similar capacity. The sales leadership team also embarked on using the 9-Box for succession planning. The challenge for this particular client

Using and leveraging some science or history of that sales person over time is a good best practice.

was that without the other data inputs from learning and development, the 9-Box became a gut or subjective input.

In closing, there are no easy ways to “rate” or “score” a sales professional. But using and leveraging some science or history of that sales person over time is a good best practice. We suggest a type of tracking mechanism that could incorporate how they are doing against your mission, vision, values, or their attitude. This makes the decision of “are they worth keeping or not” more fact-based than relying on gut or guesswork.

THE 9-BOX TALENT FRAMEWORK DEFINED

Potential	These employees are not high performers , but hold the potential to do great things for the company if developed properly. 3.5-4	Meets expectations and has ability to adapt to new challenges. Can go on to be a star. Meets performance expectations. 4-4.5	A consistent star, these employees are hitting 4 and/or 5 in their scores and have the potential to keep improving. Performance over 100%. 4.3-5
	Inconsistent in their performance , may be in the wrong position or uncomfortable, however they show potential. 2.3-3.5	These people are the ones who do their job and just that. They don't typically go above and beyond, but with right development could become a star. 3.0-4.0	This employee performs very well , and could possibly be groomed to have a more versatile role with the right development. 4-4.5
	This person's performance is sub-par and their potential to make contributions is not high. Development will provide low returns <2.5	Meets performance expectations, but really no drive or potential to do much more beyond that. 2.5-3.5	This person is an expert in their current area, but does not have the potential to expand beyond that. 3.5-4
	Performance		



Jennifer Hogberg
VP, SALES ADVISORY

With over 30 years of sales and sales management experience at a Fortune 500 company and 35 years in the sales profession, Jennifer Hogberg has proven success in mentoring, coaching, and leading sales and business professionals to meet and exceed their business and personal goals.

How to Build a B2B Brand Strong Enough to Be Considered an Industry Leader

Marketing is about improving your odds of success, and successfully branding your product or service is a powerful way of doing just that. Our Private Equity customers and their portfolio companies are consistently looking for ways to generate demand and stand out in crowded categories.

Hello Moto!

For several years I worked on the marketing team at Motorola. When I joined the company all of our cell phones were named after numbers. The first project I worked on was the exciting-sounding T-720. That all changed quickly as we introduced a slim phone that slid easily from the palm of your hand to your pocket called the RAZR.

In addition to the product branding we also introduced a corporate campaign titled "Hello Moto" which helped provide a simple brand position that could be understood in markets around the globe. This was a product category begging for branding and differentiation, and the launch of the RAZR resulted in Motorola vaulting over several competitors to become the number one volume cell phone in the U.S. The combination of a winning product and a compelling brand helped Motorola sell over 100 million units worldwide and won the hearts and minds of both retailers and customers.

Why do B2B brands require effective branding?

Many B2B CEOs view marketing as the domain of consumer goods brands. They are wrong. Among Interbrand's 10 most valuable global brands we find Microsoft, Intel, IBM, and GE. All generate far more B2B revenue than sales

to end consumers. A research team from Harvard Business School recently conducted a study of top B2B global brands.

They shared the following characteristics:

- The CEO is a willing brand cheerleader, loves the brand heritage, and is a great storyteller.
- The CEO understands that building brand reputation reduces commercial risk, insulates the company in a crisis, and provides the common purpose that can bond all the company's stakeholders.
- Efforts are focused on a single, global corporate brand rather than individual product brands.

Why should brand-building be important to B2B CEOs?

In today's global, highly competitive world, product features and designs, manufacturing processes, and services can easily be duplicated often for less somewhere else.

On the other hand, strongly held beliefs, associations, and attitudes in your customer's minds are not so easily copied. A strong brand can give you the competitive edge you need.

Strong brands can:

- Create greater customer loyalty
- Make you less sensitive to competitive pricing
- Increase trials of new products
- Provide focus to marketing efforts
- Allow you to attract the resources you need such as talent and capital





The ultimate goal is to position your brand as a unique solution that can ease your customer's recurring pain points. It's more important to be different than better, as the bar for better keeps moving. But being different and relevant is a winning combination and a brand position you can own for a long time that will propel you to become an industry leader.

Does your business have a strong enough brand to succeed in today's super competitive marketplace?

If you have a product or service that everyone needs and no one else offers, it's easy to be the best. Unfortunately, that's not a reality for most businesses today.

Many products are considered by prospective customers to be very similar to one another. There is a short list of acceptable choices in every product category that is defined uniquely by each prospective customer.

How can you make sure you are on that short list? You can cultivate and invest in a strong brand that has a clearly defined and defensible point-of-difference versus competitive offerings.

What can the CEO of a mid-sized B2B company do to strengthen their brand?

You can begin by understanding what a brand is. A logo is not a brand. Your business has a name, a logo, and maybe you advertise, but do you have a brand? Successful CEOs and business owners know that branding goes deeper than a name and a logo. Logos, tag lines, and ad campaigns are traditional marketing tactics that merely scratch the surface.

- Brands connect with customers
- Branding a product or service differentiates you from your competitors. It's the key to turning prospects into loyal customers
- A brand is more than what your product or service does or what you communicate. A brand is what you stand for in the mind of your customer, including an implied promise to your customers that your product or service will consistently meet expectations every time they interact with your brand



- Brands evoke emotions, delight us, and feel familiar and reliable

How do I get started?

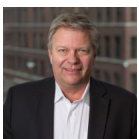
First, most B2B marketers have to address and appeal to thousands of small businesses as well as enterprise customers. They cannot do so economically using the traditional direct sales force.

Second, if left unattended, individual managers will each do their own ad hoc marketing. The result will be a

hodgepodge of corporate logos, taglines, and packaging. Customers will be confused, and the company will look disorganized.

Third, B2B marketers are realizing that developing brand awareness among their client's customers can capture a larger share of channel margins and build loyalty that can protect them against lower-priced competitors.

Defining your brand identity and implementing a well thought out brand strategy is one of the most important business objectives a company can have.



Geoff Kehoe
CHIEF MARKETING OFFICER

Geoff has spent 25+ years as a data-driven, fact-based marketer with a range of experience that includes a global marketing leadership role with Motorola Mobility leading a team that launched the RAZR cell phone to highly entrepreneurial startups. He has 15 years of agency management experience in consumer packaged goods, professional services and retail clients developing unique and sustainable market and brand positions based on consumer insights for brands such as Mercedes, Farmers Insurance, Sprint, Oscar Mayer, Hyatt, Walgreens and Home Depot. He was also the co-founder of a database marketing company.

Tony Lenhart, Sales Drummer

Consulting with nearly 4,000 small-to-mid-sized companies, Tony has provided solutions that encompass the entire employee life cycle and technology habits of the executive team.

As one of our Interim VPs of Sales (and resident 'Sales Drummer'), Tony has gained vast experience in the world of financial services, technology, professional services, and distribution at companies big and small. Prior to SEG, Tony was Head of Channel Development at Precision Payroll from 2010 to 2014, focused on expanding new partner relationships across the country. Prior to Precision, Tony spent 10 years at Automatic Data Processing (ADP) in numerous roles: earning his stripes as an intern, succeeding in direct sales, gaining tenure as a Regional Sales Manager, launching the Health Insurance Services group, and working in their PEO division, TotalSource. This vast array of roles took him on a path of consulting with nearly 4,000 small-to-mid-sized companies. Prior to that, Tony graduated from Purdue University, majoring in selling & sales management. He now spends his free time trying to keep up with his daughters, sneaking out for nine holes, or gigging out around Chicagoland playing drums.



“Sales is a culmination of doing hundreds and hundreds of small things – doing them consistently, the right way. The art and science of professional sales is nuanced, ever-changing, and a learning process. While I’ve led close to 50 engagements now during my tenure with SEG (many PE backed companies), there is not a week that goes by that I don’t learn something new through tackling a new challenge that a client presents. While all these engagements have had their own challenges, I have found consistently that a client normally needs three things: to improve communication (both internally within the organization and outwardly, client-facing), to remove roadblocks (so the sales people can sell more efficiently), and help in adopting the needed changes that all sales teams must go adopt to reach a mature state.”

The Four Traits of a Great Sales Rep

Recently I had the pleasure of speaking at [SalesHacker Midwest](#) here in Chicago. It was a dynamic mix of sales people and sales leaders – B2B sellers in a variety of industries. All were there to learn and hone their craft, and it was great to see a group of people so dedicated to the task.

While I spoke about LinkedIn Hacks for 2017 and its updated, trimmed-down platform, I learned a number of things that day about relationship-building, scaling sales teams, and more. But I wanted to discuss one idea that really resonated.

People are always asking me, “What do you look for in a great sales rep?”



“Selling isn’t telling. Selling is asking questions.” – Brian Tracy

Communication Skills

One of my first responses is always written and verbal communication skills. Ask to see prospecting and sales-writing samples, and ask them to role-play their current company overview with you as the prospect. Would you buy from them?



After that, my answers tend to vary depending on the role, industry, etc. One of the speakers at the conference had three more must-haves. Going forward, I will include the following in my list of desired attributes of strong sales representatives:

- Curiosity
- Self-awareness
- Humility

Curiosity

You want people who are still hungry to learn and who show this by asking questions. One of my favorite sales sayings has always been, “Selling isn’t telling. Selling is asking questions.” – Brian Tracy. You don’t want a show-and-tell exercise from someone who has seen and heard it all.



In the age of social media, selfies and self-interest are at an all-time high. During the interview, is the candidate droning on about themselves, or are they creating a genuine dialogue with you? Did they come with a list of questions to ask about the job?

Self-Awareness

Self-awareness is an important component of emotional intelligence. Try asking, “Can you give me three words to describe yourself?” and piggyback it with, “What is a common misconception people have about you?” Contemplate the answers as this self-perceived misconception could end up ringing true and shining through in the end, in a good way or a bad way.



Humility

There’s a gray area in sales between confidence and cockiness, and humility is an important quality to have. If you consider the last two traits, they go hand-in-hand. If a candidate is asking good questions, they are showing interest in others, not just themselves. Being self-aware allows someone to recognize when they overstep the line toward arrogance and keep themselves in check.



Again, the SalesHacker Conference offered many lessons, but this is what stuck for me. If you have the time-consuming, difficult job of hiring sales people, focus on these four areas: Communication Skills, Curiosity, Self-Awareness, and Humility. If you ask good questions around these traits, you will get a feel for this person and how they may or may not fit into your culture and excel as one of your sales people.



Tony Lenhart
SALES DRUMMER

Tony Lenhart is the Sales Drummer for SEG. As one of our Interim VPs of Sales, Tony has gained vast experience in the world of financial services, technology, insurance, and human resources at companies big and small. He is also an active mentor at Chicago’s celebrated tech incubator, 1871.

You Bought Your CRM and Added Fields, NOW WHAT?

Do you know the number one reason CRM systems fail? Poor user adoption. In fact, Forrester Research says "lack of user adoption is responsible for 70% of failed CRM projects," and that's something no one has time for!

The good old "if you build it, they will come" philosophy doesn't hold up in the CRM world. It's more than the fields you add. The CRM culture you nurture and continue to grow takes a solid plan, a well-defined team, a mapped-out process, and a lot of training.

Follow these key points to make sure the fields that you add get traction.

Sponsorship from all levels

Executive sponsorship at the highest levels is critical to the success of your CRM, but having buy-in at all levels is important. Ensure CRM initiatives are closely aligned to business strategies to bridge any gaps to utilizing the system. Communicate the go-live date, and prepare individuals to be ready for the system.





Choosing your team

Of course, it's important to appoint a fabulous CRM administrator to maintain the system and implement changes, but equally as important are the stakeholders who rally and support the system. Be sure to select at least one key representative from each respective business unit.

Identifying respected, enthusiastic super users who can articulate their business processes will be your bread and butter for revving up other users. Including all respective departments and having a holistic understanding of how your process affects other business units will set you up for success.

Defining your processes and the fields

Map out a process to capture 99.9% of all situations that occur in that process. Of course, there will be exceptions and outliers. It's unrealistic to expect an error-free launch, especially when processes are complex. Defining each field and what is expected to be captured during that process is key.

If the user has a different understanding of a term or process that was not successfully defined, there is a chance data will be skewed. Don't forget to look into validation rules and workflow rules to assist with your processes.

Defining KPIs and expectations

Your CRM system can harness a wealth of data that can be analyzed in a variety of ways. To capitalize on your CRM investment, get buy-in from each stakeholder regarding what KPIs (key performance indicators) are imperative, and ensure you have added fields to capture those details.

Schedule reports and prepare dashboards to relay that information consistently. Ensure all users are fully aware of their expectations from the CRM, and do not devalue the system by speaking to them outside of it. Remember, "If it's not in the CRM, it doesn't exist."

Integrations

Do your research on the additional systems you're using and whether or not they can be integrated with your CRM. This can increase efficiencies and allow your CRM to boost valuable KPIs.

Testing

Make sure you allow time for your super users to test the system. Walk through the most complex situations while reviewing your processes, which you have mapped out based on the advice above. Have all super users and stakeholders sign off on the processes prior to go-live.

Training, training, training

Educating your staff on the CRM is not a one-and-done effort. Learning occurs at multiple levels and one training session on how to use the CRM will be ineffective. Training sessions, on-site and remote, as well as user guides should be established. Training can be conducted in smaller, bite-size learning sessions

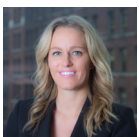
User adoption and support will increase if you solicit feedback, and allow users to have a voice.

which can be recorded for users unable to attend. Hold weekly or bi-weekly training sessions following your go-live date, and schedule monthly or quarterly refreshers down the road. Include ad hoc sessions to make users aware of updates or process changes.

Feedback

User adoption and support will increase if you solicit feedback, and allow users to have a voice. Some suggestions may be easy to implement, some feedback might have to wait until the next phase, and some might not be feasible at all. Keep users informed of all suggestions and the likelihood of implementation. Let them know you've heard what they have to say and that all solutions receive consideration.

As you can see, adding fields to a CRM is only one of the many important items to consider when successfully deploying the system. In addition to the key points above, there are many other factors to consider when building out your CRM, and these can change based on your industry, the size of your organization, your essential KPIs, and the expectations you have for the system. Always ensure you keep up with the latest CRM trends on the platform you've selected. Track effective usage of the system, and solicit and use the feedback from your users.



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DIRECTOR, SALES ENABLEMENT

Krystal brings over 10 years of CRM expertise in accessing, defining and setting up customized CRM applications. She has worked closely with leadership and sales management to create a clear understanding of how well the organization is meeting established KPIs as well as the likelihood of achieving future KPIs.

SCRIPTS KILL DEALS: The Real Reason Many SaaS Deals Fail

Employees within great SaaS companies adore their own technology—so much so that they seldom ask prospective clients what outcomes they need in order to view their investment as a success.

More importantly, most prospective clients leave meetings without a clear understanding of how to put your solutions to use in their world.

Enormous amounts of financial and human capital are applied every day by SaaS companies to create scripted presentations which focus on features of their technology and their companies' strengths.

Worse yet, significant amounts of capital are also dedicated to train and prepare their sales teams to deliver messaging using this scripted approach. What is even harder to believe is that these presentations are typically built by a combination of people within marketing, product management, sales operations, and even developers.

What's missing is insight from those employees with the best understanding of how your client's business will improve the day your solution becomes operational.

Your competition follows the same strategy, so if you change your ways, even if it is costly or hard to do, you will close more deals.

THE 3-STEP GAME PLAN

Offense, Defense, and the 2-Minute Drill

More than 30 years of experience leading sales teams within the software industry shows that building messaging that excites clients right from the start, keeps them engaged in the middle, and ends in a flurry is a winning game plan. The good news is you can leverage a lot of the scripted messaging within this game plan, so your previous efforts are not wasted.



STEP 1 Start scoring points early

Have a clear understanding of the specific business issues that cause your prospect the most pain. Complete this discovery process prior to the meeting, so during your opening, you can demonstrate how you will solve those issues.

Ask the following:

- What are the most significant issues you are trying to address today?





- Can you share the most extreme examples of how these issues impact your business?
- How does this impact you personally?
- What are the most important takeaways you want from this discussion?

Your goal is to address these questions within the first 10 minutes of your meeting. Organizing your presentation this way will help clients visualize how your solution will address their problems. They will now view you as someone willing to put the customer's best interest before what you are trying to sell them.

STEP 2 Show them that you are more than just flash-defend your value

Now that you have their attention it's important to demonstrate how they can use your solution in their daily life. Take them on a virtual tour so they see themselves using the product to solve business, management, and executive issues. Practice this with your colleagues. If they can't see how it makes

someone's life and job more satisfying, your prospective client certainly won't see it.

STEP 3 Be ready to move fast and end strong

No matter how much time they give you, and even if they've committed to an agenda, prospects tend to end meetings in a hurry. The main reason is usually that all the scripted pitches end the same: "Let's discuss next steps," or "When are you going to buy my solution?"

This is not an uncommon problem, as you can see here: <http://firstround.com/review/Your-Product-Demos-Suck-Because-Theyre-Focused-on-Your-Product/>

Now is the time to go back and remind them how you addressed their issues in Step 1. But this time, make it fast, make your points very clear, and most importantly, build out the timeline from contract signing to implementation. This does not have to be a full project plan but should be visually clear enough to show them how daily life will improve for them and their company.



Kevin Potrzeba
PRESIDENT

Kevin brings over 32 years of software sales management experience to Sales Empowerment Group (SEG). Prior to SEG, he was an EVP of Channel IQ where he led all sales, account management and business development efforts and grew Channel IQ into the market leading provider of online channel management solutions.

PUT ME IN, COACH: The Danger in Dual Roles

Imagine you're watching Sunday Night Football. It's overtime, and your favorite team is down to one last play. In the huddle, they call the only one that makes sense: Send in the secret weapon with all the experience and skill to make the play. That secret weapon is the coach, naturally.

Who else knows more about what's happening on the field than the coach, right? This happens all the time in the NFL, right? Nope! It never happens, and the thought

of it, while potentially hilarious, is also ridiculous. Even if the coach was a former player and fully capable of putting on some pads, that's not their job. Their job is to coach the players whose job it is to make the plays. This may seem obvious; however, growing sales teams routinely consider making a new sales leader a coach or a player/coach.

Lead, Sell or Both

The question is should your skilled sales rep who was recently elevated to a leadership role focus on leading or continue selling alongside their new, direct reports?

When running a lean team, it may seem logical to have a new leader continue to leverage their proven sales skills to close more deals. After all, the new sales leader has tips, tricks, and techniques to share with their team and may perhaps even inspire them with an insatiable appetite for winning. Maybe, but not likely.

Imagine if that NFL coach had left the huddle, replaced his headset with a helmet and headed to the field for that critical play. Picture the coach reliving his glory days and making the play to win the game.

He'd be a hero, right? Maybe for a minute, but what message would that send to the rest of the team? Whose confidence would be boosted, that of the coach or the players? How about the rest of the team on the sidelines? Every time the coach stepped onto the field, who would be watching over them and making sure they were ready for their turn to shine?





Motivation and Compensation

Moreover, in most sales organizations, the sales leader is compensated based on the performance of the team, whereas the sales rep's compensation is mostly based on their own performance.

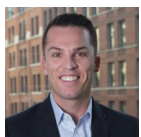
If you allow your sales leader to continue selling, you potentially take food off your reps' tables and set up a recipe for a toxic team environment. The dual role risks the misalignment of compensation and motivation, and can threaten progress and performance.

Assuming your newly crowned sales leader wants to take on the responsibility of coaching and inspiring others, it's best for them to trade in their helmet for a

clipboard so their team can play or sell, and the leader can focus on removing barriers to victory.

Of course, there are certainly ways for sales leaders to continue to add value to the pipeline and growth of the sales team, but that's a "Straight from the Street" topic for another day. In the meantime, what do you think? Can the idea of a player/coach work, or is it best to divide and conquer? We'd love to hear from you!

This article is part of the "Straight from the Street" content series highlighting real customer challenges from real customers heard, you guessed it, straight from the street. We invite you to join the conversation, add your thoughts, and be part of an active and vibrant community of dedicated sales professionals.



Mark Smyth
VP, SALES ADVISORY

Mark Smyth is an entrepreneurial sales leader, strategist and problem-solver who has turned his 18 years of experience in the proverbial 'sales trenches' into his passion for building high-growth sales teams and developing high-performing sales professionals.

Identifying and Preparing Your CRM Super Users. Super Users Can Accelerate Your Portfolio Companies Revenue Growth.

Super users are extremely important to your CRM ecosystem and a successful implementation. Don't wait until you roll out the system to include them in the project. Super users should be scouted and identified at the start of the project as key stakeholders, and they will offer great insight along the way.

Role of the Super User

These essential individuals should be allowed to use their voice and offer to fill any gaps between the team implementing the project and the end users. Have them conduct user testing throughout the implementation to allow you to identify areas where processes haven't been thought through.

Include representatives from all departments and you will gain a holistic understanding of how your processes affect other business units and set yourself up for success.

Super users will have a valuable understanding of end users' pain points and can point out challenging aspects of a process the

implementation team may not see. Selecting key super users who are well-respected, can explain their business processes, and are excited and willing will be crucial to revving up other users. These rock stars should be enthusiastic and able to train others to utilize the system most effectively.

Do all of your departments have a voice? Include representatives from all departments and you will gain a holistic understanding of how your

processes affect other business units and set yourself up for success.

Selecting your Super Users

Often these individuals are already identified on your team. These are the top performers that take on more than their job description calls for and are willing to swoop in and offer help. At other times, you ask someone to step up, and they do.

Super users should be technically adept, comfortable troubleshooting and identifying errors, as well as extremely knowledgeable about respective processes they support. Having a can-do, positive attitude, excellent communication skills, and being solution-oriented are desirable qualities in the users for your CRM engagement.

Setting Expectations

Super users can't sign off once the CRM goes live. As integral as they are in the beginning stages of the project, their passion and enthusiasm will have a key



correlation to user adoption. They will remain vital members of the ecosystem and need to understand what they've signed up for.

Providing them guidance on hours they should dedicate to the project, initiatives they need to be involved in, and having a clear path to escalation will help you select those best suited for success.

It Takes a Village

We've all heard the saying, "it takes a village to raise a child." In this case, your CRM is the child. You've invested a wealth of time and resources to implement a CRM system to assist with aligning your business to your customers. Now make sure your investment pays off. With every child, you need to:

Create them: Choose the best CRM system for your organization and business initiatives, and develop a project plan for implementation.

Nurture them: Ensure your users conduct meetings around what data is in the CRM, and add valuable data to drive better business decisions.

Clean them: Prioritize the quality of your data to keep it clean.

Love them: Allow users to have a voice, and review reports generated outside the system. Work on ways

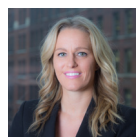
to incorporate that data into your CRM system to streamline it.

Grow them: As your business grows and changes, your CRM system will grow and change. Select a CRM administrator who will monitor and update the system, selecting integrations and upgrades to ensure the integrity and value of the system and the data it generates.

As essential as it is to have high-quality super users, they can't do it alone. Ensure they have executive buy-in and support from all levels of the business. With everyone working toward a common goal and utilizing the CRM effectively, you will have valuable data to drive better business decisions.

Select capable, rock star super users early. Ensure they know your expectations and provide them with the necessary support, and you're one step closer to having a successful CRM implementation. They will prove to be valuable assets that will assist with user adoption, eliminating the main factor causing CRMs to fail.

Select capable,
rock star super
users early.



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The Millennial Corporate Culture

As the demographics of the American workforce continue to change, we can expect to see a number of cultural shifts in the workplace. Corporate cultures have already begun to be influenced by the influx of young, pragmatic millennials, but as we approach 2025, the year in which Millennials will make up 75 percent of the workforce, we should expect, and be prepared for a widespread change in corporate culture.

Millennials are quickly becoming the largest demographic in the workforce and their values will further shape the future of the American economy. Some key millennial values to be aware of are a desire to do work that addresses societal concerns, a focus on, and respect for the environment, and a strong commitment to ethical causes and corporate responsibility.

Research suggests that millennials are in general more concerned with advancing the welfare of the group and less concerned with individual success than Gen-Xers

or baby boomers. The baby boomer generation has long been defined by strong ideological divides, and intense polarization, which contrasts with the more pragmatic approach to getting things done that millennials bring to the table. This has had an impact on the way in which millennials operate in the workforce, and the impact will only grow as millennials come to occupy more CEO and corporate leadership roles.

... millennials are in general more concerned with advancing the welfare of the group and less concerned with individual success...

In addition to changing corporate cultures from within, it's also important to take note of the ways in which millennials have, and will continue, to change the corporate landscape through their role as consumers. A 2013 survey found that millennials are

far more concerned with corporate responsibility, and have a desire to buy from companies that are socially responsible, and support specific social issues.

Corporations hoping to win the support of millennial consumers should take time to consider the ways in which they are active in their communities, and how




committed they are to positive societal change. Not only do millennials believe it's important to spend their money in a responsible way, and at companies whose values align with theirs but they have also shifted society's views on consumerism as a whole. As millennials continue to become a larger portion of the economy, trends have shifted away from a glorification of consumerism, to a more reasoned approach. Millennials do not believe money is the key measure of success, nor do they believe that things are the key to happiness.

One thing businesses definitely need to be aware of is the way in which as soon as millennials reached adulthood, they drastically changed the landscape around what it is that consumers are looking for from companies. For example, millennials tend to seek out companies that they feel show empathy, and kindness; and within four years of millennials reaching adulthood, these traits had seen a 400 percent spike in the level to which people valued them in a corporation. Empathy and kindness have quickly become huge factors in the

success of a company. If millennials view a company as empathetic, kind, and caring, they are more likely to shop there, spend time there, and when they're on the job market, want to work there.

As millennials continue to expand their influence in the marketplace, businesses should reflect on the ways in which they are portraying and acting on the values that matter most to a growing number of consumers, citizens, and potential employees. If you're looking for a vibrant and positive office culture, consider the ways in which you demonstrate kindness, empathy, and social responsibility. Companies that show their employees empathy, and take an interest in the causes that they care about, will see a growing level of trust and contentment from their employees. Millennials have taken the focus off of money, exclusivity, and consumerism, and placed the focus on community, responsibility, and kindness, all traits which corporations should take note of.



Helping Your Portfolio Companies Accelerate Revenue To Win the Race.

SEG supports the Private Equity Community and we have helped hundreds of companies accelerate revenue growth. Schedule some time with us to learn more – **773-818-5395** or contact us at **info@salesempowermentgroup.com**

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