

7 Ways Sales Leaders Can Get the Most Out of Salesforce

Improved Apps
White Paper

Helping customers get the most out of their Salesforce investment



What lies behind the results that your employees achieve, and upon which your company depends for its business success?

Answer:

Your people and specifically, the behaviour of your people.

Providing them with great customer engagement tools such as Salesforce.com is only a part of the solution. Unless your people have internal belief and take ownership of the values of your company, they will not exhibit behaviour that drives appropriate actions to get positive results.

Let's take a look at your sales force:

The purpose of a salesperson is to win business. They do two things: manage a sales opportunity to closure and prospect for new opportunities. That's it.

It's well known that 80% of your revenue will come from the top 20% of your salespeople. These people are exemplars in combining the knowledge and sales tools your company creates around product, case studies, competition, etc. with a sales process your company has honed over time to win business. These sales exemplars have the skills and abilities to do the right things at the right time using the right information in the right way. They exude confidence, believe in your company and exhibit a behaviour that drives action to get positive results. Imagine if you could bottle this!

The next 60% of your sales people are either aspiring toward exemplar, or simply stuck in the middle. They often don't know where the right sales tools are or how to use them at the right time. They may not know how to quickly access your company's knowledge to respond to situations 'in the moment', especially if they are still ramping up their skills – and that's why you invest in tools and coaching to nurture them to be the next wave of exemplars. Imagine if you had a way to help this (largest) group of salespeople to mimic the behaviour of your exemplars!

The bottom 20% of your sales people are either new-hires or struggling to gain the skills and abilities to do the job. They need a lot of help and you will be investing time and money on them. Again, imagine if you had a way to help this group of salespeople mimic the behaviour of your exemplars! If they have the ability to improve, then you need to accelerate the program, otherwise it may be time to let them go.

So, as a sales leader, what can you do?

"So often the effort produces an opposite result: rupturing the relationship, diminishing job performance, or causing the person to dig in their heels", Jack Zenger and Joseph Folkman of leadership development consultancy Zenger/Folkman [write in Harvard Business Review](#).

Zenger and Folkman decided to find out how good leaders effect change, so they conducted a study of 2,852 direct reports to 559 leaders and 49 behaviours. They found that some behaviours were less helpful in changing others, and that two that had little to no impact, thereby providing useful guidance on what not to do.

These were:

Being nice. Nice guys finish last in the change game. It might be easier if all it took to bring about change was to have a warm, positive relationship with others. But that isn't the case.

Giving others incessant requests, suggestions, and advice. This is commonly called nagging. For most recipients this is highly annoying and only serves to irritate them rather than change them. (This is the approach many tend to adopt first, despite its lack of success.)

Zenger and Folkman then analysed the behaviours that did correlate with an exceptional ability to drive change. In order of most to least effective, they are:

1. Inspiring others

The most effective leadership behaviour in driving change is to inspire your employees. There are two common approaches that most of us default to when trying to motivate others to change. Broadly, we could label them Push and Pull. "Push" is the classic "hand in your back" approach to motivating change. (They noted that classic "Push" doesn't work well.)

"The alternative approach is "Pull," which we can employ in a variety of ways. These include working with the individual to set an aspirational goal, exploring alternative avenues to reach an objective, and seeking other's ideas for the best methods to use going forward" wrote Zenger and Folkman.

Improved Apps enables you to embed the methods and knowledge used by your exemplars directly into Salesforce at the point of need.

2. Noticing problems

The second-most effective behaviour is the ability to recognise problems in your company's systems and in your employees so you can help drive positive change. Do your exemplars even use your sales systems in the way they were designed? Do they use their own 'local' island of knowledge gained over time? Is it easy for them to share this knowledge and for others to access it to improve their behaviour?

As an example, Zenger and Folkman write that when they were working with one company, employees were being recognized for their *"heroic crisis management"* for helping get products out on time. When a new manager came on board, she found that that the heroic crisis management was in fact a *"symptom of a broken process."* The Early Warning System (EWS) within Improved Apps provides information to help you avoid these issues with the Salesforce application.

3. Providing clear goals

Providing clear goals for the entire team will help you guide employees into positive behaviour. *"Change initiatives work best when everyone's sight is fixed on the same goal,"* Zenger and Folkman write. *"Therefore, the most productive discussions about any change being proposed are those that start with the strategy that it serves."* Communicating goals and targets in an effective way is critical to ensuring a successful sales team. If changes need to be made, communicating those changes quickly and consistently can be the difference between a positive result and failure. Improved Noticeboard, as a live communication mechanism can target users with specific messages.

4. Challenging standard practice

Leaders who challenge the company's standard practices are successful at driving change. The forces that hold teams back from effective change are "old practice and policies - even sacred cows," Zenger and Folkman write. *"Leaders who excel at driving change will challenge even the rules that seem carved in stone."*

If Salesforce isn't proving to be the answer to all your problems and isn't working as you'd hoped - change something! Without a change nothing will improve. The analytics and reports provided by Improved Apps will give you objective information on what's working and what's not, to uncover the changes needed to drive the effectiveness of your salesforce and its users.

5. Building trust in your judgment

Making judgment calls after collecting evidence from both sides of an issue is a big part of leadership and driving change. But you need your employees to trust your judgment. Good leaders *"recognize that asking others for advice is evidence of their confidence and strength, not a sign of weakness,"* say Zenger and Folkman. *"Because of their ability to build trust in the decisions they make, their ability to change the organization skyrockets. If others do not trust your judgment it will be difficult to get them to make the changes you want them to make."*



6. Courage

Everything you will do as a leader requires courage. *"Indeed, every initiative you begin as a leader, every new hire you make, every change in process you implement, every new product idea you pursue, every reorganization you implement, every speech you deliver, every conversation in which you give difficult feedback to a colleague, and every investment in a new piece of equipment requires courage,"* Zenger and Folkman write.

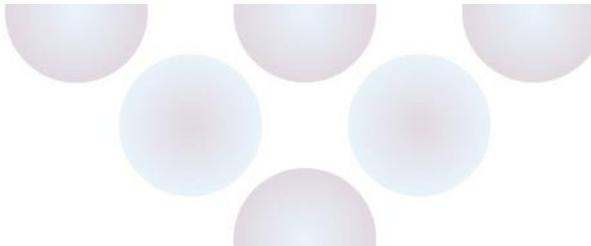
7. Making change a top priority

Successful businesses do not stand still; they constantly adapt to and exploit the market drivers; new products, more competition, new-hires into the company, and so on. *"One of Newton's Laws of Thermodynamics was that a body at rest tends to stay at rest. Slowing down, stopping, and staying at rest does not require effort. It happens very naturally"* wrote Zenger and Folkman *"To make a change effort successful you need to clear away the competing priorities and shine a spotlight on this one change effort. Leaders who do this well, have a daily focus on the change effort, track its progress carefully and encourage others."*

[Improved Help](#) and [Improved Noticeboard](#) help with communicating and managing change across the board in relation to the Salesforce application and the processes that run through it.

Eliciting good behaviour works through a combination of good leadership and the tools that you employ

Creating more exemplars is naturally the way forward for any organisation that wants to increase revenue. Capturing the behaviour of exemplars and sharing that knowledge enables your entire sales team to do the right thing, at the right time, in the right place... It's all about sharing knowledge for shared success.



In summary

As a leader, your success is lock-tied to the success of your people, and the behaviour you consistently exhibit will have the greatest influence on them.

As discussed, sales tools are used to provide access to information and sales processes. First, your people need to acquire the appropriate skills and abilities, and this requires education. Next comes critical steps of instilling belief and taking ownership of the values of your company, only then will your salespeople exhibit the right behaviour to drive the appropriate actions that get positive results.

Best practice for utilising knowledge and behaviour can be modelled on your exemplars.

Where tools help you to make salespeople be the best that they can be:

- ⦿ Understand your user's behavior and then share the behaviours of exemplars with the rest of your sales team
- ⦿ Speed up onboarding and then provide on-going help to maintain skills and abilities
- ⦿ Reduce support costs by providing help at the point of need rather than at the end of a phone
- ⦿ Run analytics reports to identify barriers to effective use, and share best practice with all users
- ⦿ Benchmark success/failure and remove hidden effectiveness drains
- ⦿ Identify and prioritise improvements based on objective analytics rather than subjective gut-feel and guesswork
- ⦿ Benchmark adoption against departments or other similar companies or markets
- ⦿ Spot where things might go wrong via an Early Warning System (EWS) and avoid the time and expense of fixing problems after the horse has bolted



Sharing knowledge for shared success

“Improved Apps – Improved Help and Improved Noticeboard – will be a game changer”

Alicia Walters, Kerry Inc. - CRM Global Data Lead

“We were able to roll out the first version of this to our global users after a couple of days”

Ulrika Grahn, Qlik - Senior Global Operations Training Manager

“I’m now confident that our Salesforce users get the help that they need”

Sam Copley, Alere Toxicology – Online Development Manager



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