

Goal Setting and Planning

Situation:

Plan: "A scheme, program, or method worked out beforehand for the accomplishment of an objective: a plan of attack."

Planning in sales is unfortunately often no more than a euphemism for "quota", or desired result. In most professions, engineering, accounting, manufacturing, etc the word "plan" has specific meaning and a well defined body of knowledge which fits the definition above, a plan of attack. Not in sales!

In the absence of a "plan" sales people are always busy. Their efforts and activities, although well meaning, can only be seen as making them busy, not necessarily effective. A workable plan is activity-based, measurable and priority setting. In its absence, sales people fall into the trap of addressing the most urgent, but not necessarily important tasks. Steven Covey, Author of "the Seven Habits of Highly Effective People" says these tasks lead to ineffectiveness because "they are usually visible; they press on us; they insist on action; they're often popular with others; they're usually right in front of us".

The selling process leads to results which can be measured in dollars, margin or revenue. However, sales people have only two principal activities which lead to results; hunting for new business and farming within existing accounts for additional business. Goal setting and planning encourages the rep to consider how to balance their only controllable resource, time, to these two principal activities.

Effective sales planning should also leverage insight from the organization's marketing function. Where marketing sets strategy (needs analysis, segmentation, targeting and solutions) sales people are assigned either a territory or account base in which to implement the strategy. Sales planning provides a methodology to consider marketing strategy within the specifics of their own patch, thus creating a plan of attack that best leverages available resources, likelihood of success and client satisfaction.

Learning Objectives/Outcomes:

- After attending this workshop session, participants will be able to:
- Recognize the linkage between their activities and sales results
 - Prioritize their activities within their assigned territories
 - Measure regularly their progress against their stated goals
 - Adapt their plans to changing market, organizational and competitive realities
 - Prioritize their time management to activities which are most important
 - Better balance their time spent in hunting and farming activities

Format:

One half-day, face-to-face, interactive workshop

