

## MFB News – December 2008

### How to Avoid the Pitfalls of Sales Improvisation

In today's intensely competitive markets, there is a pressing need for high performance, process-driven organizations. That is why many top managers are taking a critical look at their sales organizations and asking whether they are equipped to face today's challenges.

Sales organizations can often appear like a 'black box' where it is hard to see exactly who does what, why and how. To achieve the best possible market results, companies often want to optimize their own operations. But the question is, how?

#### **Process-Oriented vs. Event-Driven**

Sales reps are often event-driven, impulsive egos who focus on the day-to-day routine of closing and quotas. Yet, aside from impulse buys or necessary purchases, sales typically take place over a period of time and a series of steps. Customers are cost-conscious. They look for value before they make significant purchases, particularly during a sluggish economy. Following up is an important aspect of closing a sale. Many businesses either neglect it or do not have an established plan. What they need is a process-oriented strategy as well as highly targeted offer and lead management systems which will allow their salespeople to systematically improve their efficiency. Furthermore, successful organizations need structured *sales controlling systems with readily available figures to supervise and to optimize their sales force.*

#### ***The Solution: A Transparent Sales Controlling System***

The experts of MFB Resultants suggest the implementation of a low-cost, easy-to-establish, transparent "Sales Controlling System" based on existing office applications. Being able to measure and track the efforts of a sales force is a fundamental sales practice. Forecasting and budget projections are an important part of every successful sales system. Sales metrics not only measure performance, but also create incentives and goals to be achieved. Setting sales activity goals that are logically and realistically aligned with the sales system ensures that appropriate expectations are being placed on the sales force. Further, the gathering of customer information will be comparable to a "Key-Account-Management" to steer and support the sales force in order to establish long-term, collaborative customer relationships.

#### **Customer Benefit**

Together with a process-driven, customer-oriented strategy, a tailored controlling system might increase your sales by up to 30% – depending on the current state of the sales force organization, the market and the willingness to apply a new sales strategy. Good controlling is however a key factor to success.

The implementation of a process-driven sales culture and a powerful controlling system is certainly not done overnight. Experienced outside experts will ensure a smooth transaction enabling your organization to identify chances and shortcomings and to optimize the employment of your sales force to achieve higher efficiency and effectiveness. Thus, your sales reps no longer have to operate in an environment of improvisation and speculation.

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