



# How to Increase Efficiency in Your Sales Team

Ebook



## **Hello, and thank you for downloading the latest ebook from the Clarity Stack Sales Academy.**

Over the last few years we've worked with some of the biggest companies in the world and understand the challenges associated with not only lead generation, but converting those leads into pitch opportunities and, ultimately, new business through the door on either one-off or long-term contracts.

That is why we've put our heads together and compiled this particular ebook, which is designed to help you improve efficiencies within your sales team. We all know how busy it can get in sales so it's vital that any time that can be saved away from the phone or laptop is free'd up to enable the team to do what they do best - sell!

This eBook is suitable for sales teams of all sizes whether you're a small in-house team, a freelancer or a dedicated department of salespeople. Each tip can be taken, discussed and adapted to suit your own needs and to improve efficiencies across your team.

## Contents

**Page 4** - What is sales efficiency, and why is it important?

**Page 5** - How is sales efficiency calculated?

**Page 6** - 5 ways to improve sales efficiency

**Page 10** - What happens next?

## What is sales efficiency, and why is it important?

**Sales teams are always busy, or at least, we want them to be! A busy sales team means that everyone has plenty to be working on in their pipeline and that all of their prospects are at different stages in the funnel and, hopefully, on their way towards buying your product or service.**

The problem with a busy sales team is that sometimes hurdles appear that prevent you from doing what you do best, selling. Every business and every department is desperate to improve efficiencies and processes as it means that people are focussed on their main duties rather than additional tasks that have somehow fallen on them, impeding their progress on what they are actually paid to do and affecting their ability to give their duties their full time and attention.

Sales is no different in that respect, and sales managers know all-too-well about the importance of sales efficiency, which is a way of measuring the speed, capability and skill of their department. It's a way of showing the conversion rate of prospects to leads, and monitoring the all-important return on investment in the department. After all, sales teams have budgets just like everyone else, and it's a do-or-die sector to work in as we all know.

A sales team that is falling behind on its targets and unable to convert their prospects into leads - and sales - needs to be assessed and sales efficiency is a highly effective way of doing this. It might not necessarily be 100 percent accurate, but it provides managers with a rough guide to establish how efficient the team currently is, and where further efficiencies could be made.

This might involve taking duties away from certain personnel who are falling behind on personal targets, or it might mean liaising with other departments in the business to see how they can assist them with non-sales specific tasks that free the team up to work on their prospects.

**Of course, it doesn't just focus on the negative performances in the sales team. This way of measuring performance can also identify the successful areas and those who are working well towards their individual and team targets, or even those who have capacity to take on more work while the rest of the department catches up.**

## How is sales efficiency calculated?

As with most departments, sales team performance and efficiency comes down to money, so it's important that it is closely monitored and calculated correctly in order to provide a true reflection of performance and efficiency across the team.

Whether you're looking at a small section of the team working on a specific sales project or you're monitoring sales efficiency for the department as a whole, calculating is fairly straightforward:

### **Sales efficiency =**

gross revenue generated by the sales team divided by costs incurred

### **Or as a percentage:**

(gross revenue divided by sales expenses) multiplied by 100 = sales efficiency.

What this means is that the team's performance is determined by the money brought in, divided by how much the department spent to make that money, including salaries, bonuses and generic team costs.

For example, if a sales team generates \$6 million in revenue and spent \$2 million to do it, the sales efficiency would be 300 per cent.

## 5 ways to improve sales efficiency

So now you have a good understanding of what sales efficiency is, why it's important and how to calculate and measure it, let's have a look at a number of ways in which you can implement it into your team in order to improve your own efficiencies.

Whether you work with a small team of people tasked with turning leads into sales or you have a dedicated, experienced sales department at your disposal, each of these techniques is tried, tested and highly effective in saving time and money - and making sales!

### Create SMART targets for the team/department

A mnemonic anagram that just seems to work for every department in every sector, SMART targets are:

- Specific to each task: what are you looking to achieve?
- Measurable: how is performance tracked? E.g. sales, calls, etc.
- Achievable: how are you going to hit the goals?
- Realistic: you know it can be achieved
- and Time-based: when should you achieve it by

These targets are great for sales teams because they provide a clear plan for every member of the team, along with how their performance is going to be measured and when they need to be achieved by. A lot of businesses provide their teams with targets of simply achieving numbers, or completing a task by a certain time, but by using SMART targets you have the ability to keep everyone on track and enable them to reflect on their own performance as they go.

## Do your research into each client

Researching every client you work on in depth enables you to provide a tailored, personal approach that is much more likely to prove effective in the long term. When working on efficiencies it might seem strange to suggest spending more time on research, rather than jumping on the phones or sending another email, but by researching a prospect you can learn about what they do, who they are and what they're looking for.

This allows you to make each pitch specific to them and their business needs, thereby increasing your chance of converting them.

## Work according to a sales process or model

A set process that maps out a route from converting a prospect into a lead and then a closed customer enables everyone to follow similar steps to achieve their goals, allowing the department to help each other and understand what comes next in the process.

When you have a prospect who is unsure on whether or not they wish to proceed, having a clear process in place that indicates how to speak to them and persuade them to continue can be key in getting them to the lead and conversion stages.

To give you an idea, a typical sales process might look like this:

- **Preparation and research.** Know the scope of the product, your USP and your target audience, along with what they want and need.
- **Prospecting.** Search for those who meet your criteria so that progress through the sales funnel is more efficient.
- **Needs assessment.** This is where the sales team can go into more depth and detail researching what the client's needs are and how your product or service can solve that problem. You can then tailor your approach or response accordingly.
- **Pitch and presentation.** Here the salesperson can communicate the unique value of the product, service or brand, and its benefit to the customer. By finding some common ground and trust early in the conversation you can learn more about the client's needs and this pitch can be tailored, becoming much more effective.
- **Objection handling.** There may be questions or concerns from the customer or client and it's important that you handle these professionally. This is another chance for you to communicate the value of your product and how you differ, as well as building trust with a clear, reliable and honest answer.
- **Closing.** This is where the sale is made, or the final proposal is sent to the lead. Attention to detail is key at this stage.
- **Follow-up.** Referrals are among the highest converting leads and it's important to follow-up with customers after closing to ensure they are satisfied, and to encourage referrals or repeat business.

## **Conduct effective coaching and training sessions for the team.**

Constructive feedback and training sessions can prove vital in improving performances of individuals and teams as a whole. Supporting those who are struggling with tangible advice and encouraging them towards their goals can make a huge difference, while tailored training sessions can help to improve certain skills where experience may be lacking, giving them the confidence to go it alone and hit their targets.

## **Liaise with other departments to improve feedback and processes.**

When your sales team works with the wider business it can be particularly valuable to speak regularly with other departments. For instance, liaising with the marketing department about feedback from prospects can help both departments to improve their messaging or to adapt their strategies to be more effective.

## What happens next?

When you've had the opportunity to discuss your current sales efficiencies it's vital that you work out a way to implement new strategies as seamlessly as possible. If you bring in new approaches in one go it can be overwhelming for some members of the department who need time to adjust to new working methods, but it's important that you do consider how and when to bring in these new sales efficiencies.

By paying close attention to the methods that are working for you, and those areas that require improvement, you can find a happy medium that enables you to adapt certain strategies to improve efficiency and to phase other improvements in more gradually so as not to affect performance across the whole department and across all campaigns.

Your sales team are at their best when they are equipped with the best processes and feel the support of the whole business, so if you can show that they have your backing and these new efficiencies are being introduced to make their life easier and increase their chances of converting prospects into leads and converted customers, you're sure to have a high-performing and very happy sales team at your disposal.

