



If Your Sales People Are Relying On A Low Price To Close  
The Deal...

*Their Training Didn't Have These Nine Steps*

## No time to build a training program for your salespeople? Here are the steps you'll need to get started - *quickly*.

### Why we felt you need to know this...

One of the first things that sales and company executives ask us when we meet them is; “We need to grow our sales, what can you do for us?” To that we always respond, “If you’d share with us some of the processes that you have in place now for the sales team to follow – we can

“It’s a huge undertaking and I know I should (Don’t you just love that word *should*?) be doing something – but where would I start?”

When you look at the big picture of building a process for the sales team – they’re absolutely right - where would one start? It seems pretty scary. Training and motivating salespeople and

*The secret of getting ahead is getting started. The secret of getting started is breaking your complex, overwhelming tasks into small manageable tasks, and then starting on the first one.*

~Mark Twain

then take a look at them and see if there might be a way that we can help.”

What we’ve found is that most of the time the issue is always the same: *There simply isn’t a process in place for us to look at - period.* The salespeople almost always seem to be autonomous from the rest of the company. There are well thought out processes in place for finance, personnel and administration - but not for sales. When we ask the question of why the building of a business development process for the salespeople seemed to be pushed to the wayside, we almost always got the same response:

account managers to effectively represent and sell services or products is probably one of the biggest challenges facing businesses today. Whether you hire “experienced” business development professionals or novices, the need for a well thought out, structured and easy to follow business development process is not a luxury – *but an absolute necessity.*

Far too often, the “process” of training for the business development staff is nothing more than riding with and/or looking over someone’s

(usually the best salesperson's) shoulder for a week. This as we all know is simply never enough to pick up everything necessary to represent a company either on the phone or in the field.

Let's look at the scenario another way. What's the cost of *not training* your business development professionals properly? Be honest - how much money is left on the table *every single month* because your sales team can't talk about another reason to buy from your company besides

price and that wonderful "great service" line? You and I both know that nobody wins when the decision to buy from you is based only on price.

Anyway, enough about what can go wrong - here's what you can do to get an effective business development training program off the ground...

## So Where Do We Go From Here?

### Section 1: Starting Out

It's one thing to realize the necessity of a business development training program. It's something entirely different to get one started. As with any enterprise, you need to have a plan – how does that saying go? When you fail to plan you plan to fail? Truer words were never spoken. In order to begin, you have to determine what skills and knowledge are needed to produce an effective business development professional (a model) and then you can establish criteria to include in the training program.

## Section 2: The Steps

“A leader is someone who steps back from the entire system and tries to build a more collaborative, more innovative system that will work over the long term.”

**Robert Reich**

### Step 1: Scope of Training

We've found that the most important factor in creating an effective business development training program is making sure that we're training on all of the elements necessary – not just some (What does our model call for?) You'd be surprised how many businesses overlook some of the basic criteria a good business development professional needs to know to be effective. Below, we've compiled a short list of training categories that we've seen many growth oriented companies use to continually build increasing revenue through their salespeople:

#### Company Knowledge

- Company history
- Its experience serving the marketplace
- The company's Unique Selling Proposition(s)
- Staff directory and responsibilities
- Staff assistance — who can help with what
- All the products that the company sells and to whom

#### Getting “Stuff” Done

- Time management - (this is a “biggie”)
- Organization Skills

#### Technology

- Salesforce Automation/CRM software
- Word Processing, Spreadsheet, PowerPoint (or equivalent)
- Company specific software applicable and/or industry specific
- Email Do's and Don'ts

#### Competition

- Who are they?
- Competition strengths and weaknesses
- Comparing the company vs. competition – techniques/strategies, case studies

#### Selling Tools – Market Knowledge

- Pricing Policy
- Knowledge of customer – professional, distributor, trade, mfg.
- Hot buttons and issues important to the customer
- Face to face selling scripts, personal scripts for tele-marketing/e-marketing
- Building an attaché with the proper tools in it



### **Presentations**

Building an effective Pitchbook – what it does, how it works  
Using a PowerPoint presentation to close deals and not just for show  
Customizing/updating different versions for different customers/vertical markets  
Follow up process

### **Proposals**

When we should write them and when we shouldn't  
Sample proposals in binders for review  
Writing a proposal using company template

### **Marketing Materials**

Web-based tools and information – what it does and doesn't have  
Printed Material – brochures, branded items, etc.  
E-marketing templates

### **Terms/Conditions**

Payment policy  
Handling client-based expenses (if appropriate)  
Credit terms – net 30 Days, credit cards, COD, etc.  
Policy on updating accounts  
RMAs (a.k.a. return policies)

### **Sales Process Equipment**

Laptop Computers  
Computer Projector  
PDA  
Cell Phone

### **Reporting**

Filling out sales reports  
Reviewing of reports expected from the business development team  
Meetings with business development managers

### **Company, Department and Individual Sales Goals**

What they are  
How they're arrived at  
Feedback system

### **Networking**

Why it's effective  
Company expectations  
Suggested networking events  
How to maximize each event  
Preparing for the event  
Receiving a ROI from the event

### **Prospecting**

Prospect sources (lists, Internet, trade associations, etc.)  
Utilizing trade associations to get business  
Prospecting plan - telemarketing and/or door to door skills

### **Compensation**

When and how you get paid  
Emphasis on profit levels  
Understanding matrix pricing  
Understanding the job description is the compensation plan  
Focus on achievable goals – not “pie in the sky”

## **Step 2 – Assign Responsibility**

Take each category of the above and determine who would be the best person to provide training on each subject. Sometimes it'll be an OEM sales rep, other times, it'll be an internal manager or an outstanding member of the sales team. Assign each category on your list of topics to the chosen manager/sales team member. This is now your training team and each member will be responsible for developing his/her portion of the training program.

### Step 3 – Assemble the Team

Have a meeting with the training team and present the overall goal for training. Schedule a private one-on-one meeting with each person within three to five days to go over his or her specific training program criteria. Detail what you expect them to do and give them guidance as to what form of training is to be used (PowerPoint slides, purchased program, one to be developed internally by the training team or some combination of these). Set a drop-dead date when their training program must be complete. It's very important that each training team member understands what format the training is to take – so that when the programs are complete and delivered – that they're all trying to accomplish the same thing – increased sales.

### Step 4 – Get the Business Development Team Involved

It's very important to get the business development people who will be trained involved in the process of building the training. When they have a say in that process, they're far more likely to "buy in". Have any interested salespeople pair up with a training team member. You'll find that the salespeople who "get it" will generally be excited about helping out.

### Step 5 – Check It Out

On the scheduled meeting dates, review their training programs and fine-tune them as necessary with the other training team members present so they can offer their own input. Keep in mind that each team member has put a lot of time and energy into the process, so be thoughtful if major changes are necessary.

### Step 6 – Assess Personnel

After each component of the training program is complete, meet with your managers and review all of the business development personnel to determine who will require what training module. Assign someone to coordinate the dates and times for specific training modules and then send invitations to those business development reps that need to attend each module.

*"To will is to select a goal, determine a course of action that will bring one to that goal, and then hold to that action till the goal is reached. The key is action."*

*Michael Hanson*

## Step 7 – Share It With Everyone

After existing personnel have gone through the necessary training, coordinate with human resources to develop a compressed version of the training program. This condensed version can be a great refresher course. It can also be an additional resource to train counter salespeople, account reps, etc. on what steps the business development staff is taking to bring in additional sales.

## Step 8 – Monitor the Process

Monitor the process to ensure that all members of the training team are doing their job effectively. Consider auditing trainees within each module until you're confident that the training is effective. Good work habits from training only come when the skills become automatic – a.k.a. a habit.

## Step 9 – Measure Results

Are your business development professionals generating better results after the training? If so - you're on the right track. If not, review how the training is being done and received so that it can be fine tuned to ensure that any holes in the program are plugged.

When all is said and done – will it be perfect? No. But is it always a work in progress – absolutely!

“Training salespeople and account managers to effectively represent and sell services or products is probably the biggest challenge facing businesses today.”

# Final Thoughts

Business owners and sales executives often lament that they are at a disadvantage because they don't have the capital and/or resources to train the sales staff the "right" way. To that we disagree. We have seen many, many small businesses grow because the people responsible for building revenue made a decision to make the training process happen and held themselves accountable to doing it – period. What we mean is that the successful executives *always found a way to make things happen* and the unsuccessful ones always found a reason why it couldn't be done. Getting started could be as simple as building a script for the business development team to follow while making a cold call or even training them on how to effectively utilize their time. More than likely, it's a combination of many of the things that we have already mentioned in this article. Whether you leave these things to happen by chance or actually implementing them is - as always - up to you.

## About Street Smart

Street Smart is a business development solutions company dedicated to giving you the tools to grow your business. While other business development companies tend to focus their training on "closing the deal," our philosophy targets filling your sales funnel.

Street Smart works with companies of all sizes to help them address growth objectives, enhance business development, grow revenue and build a healthy company.

If you would like to discuss whether or not we can be of any assistance to your company please contact Street Smart at: [781.245.6800](tel:781.245.6800) or [info@streetsmarttraining.com](mailto:info@streetsmarttraining.com)

## About the Authors

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**Craig Stimmel** – Executive Vice President and Founder. Since 1971, Craig has spoken before associations, conventions, trade shows and conferences worldwide. A dynamic speaker, Craig speaking engagements are typically focused on helping audiences understand market trends, recognize new market strategies and position themselves to take advantage of new business building opportunities. A published author, Craig writes for business & trade publications in Canada, Mexico, France, Germany, UK, Czech Republic, Russia, Turkey, Japan, Australia and New Zealand. Craig knows and understands the world of the large corporations as well as the entrepreneur.