

## Is Your Sales Team Ready for 2021?



If you haven't made adjustments in your selling tactics in 2020, don't wait any longer! Now is the time to adjust and prepare for the upcoming year. We continue to be optimistic about the economy and know that those that are planning in advance are ahead of the sales game and will thrive in 2021. Be ready, the New Year is right around the corner! 2020 was full of surprises and disappointments, but also offered many people opportunity, as they adjusted their business and focused on what they could control. These are difficult times and it calls for a strong tactical plan for the New Year.

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### 10 Questions to ask your Sales & Marketing Managers before the Year Begins.

1. Is your Ideal Client Profile properly defined?
2. Does the Market need your product or service?
3. Have you established a Sales Training Program?
4. Do you have a Winning Sales Strategy?
5. Is your Selling Process Defined?
6. Is your Sales Support Structure in Place?
7. Do you have the Right People on your Sales Team?
8. Are your Sales Goals Aligned with the Corporate Goals?
9. Are you doing what's necessary to keep your existing clients?
10. Have you implemented a sales training program aligned with your sales strategy?

**1. Is your Ideal Client Profile (ICP) Properly Defined?** Defining or profiling your organizations ideal client is extremely important to ensure focus and consistency. By defining your target, sales people can have a laser-like direction in pursuing new business and managers know what is good business and bad business. In down economic times, taking on business is important but taking good business is more important. Many companies in an effort to survive deviate from their targets, this may work in the short run, but without a focus, sales people may drift away from profitable business or management may take too many risks in trying to achieve growth. Stay within your profile, the company and your sales people will find success much more rewarding.

**2. Does the Market need your product or service?** Over the years we've been approached by many entrepreneurs knowing they had the best idea ever. Some ideas do seem to be great, but others are just too advanced for the average user to understand. Many ideas are strong but the application to the targeted market wouldn't bear fruit. Even if you've been in business for years, you must evaluate your position in the market. You must know if your customers still demand your product or has the competition grown beyond your capabilities.

**3. Have you established a Sales Training Program?** Sales Training programs need to develop consistency throughout the sales team. Each sales professional typically has nuances that make them successful, which I would never change, but delivering the message consistently and touching all the key points in the sales process is essential. Sales training should reinforce the positives and work towards strengthening their weaknesses. Focus on specific areas of concern, then make immediate corrective actions so bad habits don't formulate. Even the top sales professionals should welcome new ideas and look forward to gaining tips and ideas to win new business. Use your top sales people as guides to help your underperforming reps. Remember training is a lifetime event, not a weekend seminar!

**4. Do you have a Winning Sales Strategy?** Before each year the sales strategy needs to be analyzed for 5 key elements – Target, Direction, Methods, Management and Success. Are you aiming at the right target, has your direction been laid out and is it understood? Have you prepared your team with the right methods and tools? Do you have methods of measurement to monitor success and have you hired the right people? Can you verify where you've been successful and are you celebrating your success! Selling is difficult enough, so remember to find your target, align your goals, measure your success and celebrate your victories.

**5. Is your Selling Process Defined?** Managers need to align their processes to meet corporate expectations. In order to effectively manage sales and grow an organization, selling process must be properly communicated and educated to the front line and the support team. I've seen 24 step sales processes and 4 step sales processes within organizations. Neither is right unless the end result can be effectively and efficiently communicated and managed. Managers, Executives and Board Members rely on the consistency and accuracy of the sales team, so properly alignment is essential to growth and stability.

**6. Is your Sales Support Structure in Place?** Sales professionals are only as successful as the support team around them. Sales support includes finance for pricing, technical assistance for the bits and bytes talk, marketing for lead generation and communication, proposal and research teamwork along with executive support to get the deals closed. Sales will not be effective if the team is not complete. Working as a team is the key to future success.

**7. Do you have the Right Sales Team in Place?** Have you spent the necessary time evaluating the hiring process within your organization? Have you formally reviewed each sales person's performance on a semi and annual basis? Have you implemented a sales training program that is continual throughout the year and reinforces the selling process you've established? Hiring the right people eliminates struggles further down the road. If you have dedicated professionals with a targeted focus, you'll be ready to succeed.

**8. Are your Sales Goals Aligned with the Corporate Goals?** Review and verify your sales incentives. Many times, sales goals are not aligned to meet the real corporate requirements. If your company needs to achieve a higher result in a specific area then confirm you've placed enough performance-based incentive on the targeted area. Sales people sell where they make money, it's that simple. If incentives are weighed towards achieving financial success versus corporate requirements, sales will lean towards individual financial success. Each year quotas and commission plans should be evaluated and tested.

**9. Keeping clients is less expensive than acquiring new clients.** It is imperative to work directly with your existing clients and make sure you are exceeding their expectations. Working closely right now is the most important time you can spend.

**10. Sales training is not something that comes in a can! It is not something that is done in a week!** Proper sales training is ongoing and focused on what your company, your client, your product and your process. Beware of sales training that fits every company. Training a team of sales professionals depends on many factors and must be ongoing and reinforced throughout the year.

**Making adjustments to your team will ensure earlier success for next year. Reducing sales cycles and eliminating non-selling activity should be a focus for the management team. Increasing effectiveness through proper hiring practices, targeted marketing campaigns and ongoing training programs will result in success for 2021 that can't wait until next month.**

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**Sales Focus Inc:** We are the Sales Outsourcing pioneers and have developed the most effective and proven process in the industry. Our repeatable **S.O.L.D.<sup>™</sup>** methodology has been implemented in many Fortune 500 companies as well as within small and mid-sized organizations across the globe. Our success speaks for itself and has resulted in well over \$15B in revenue generated for our clients since our founding in 1998.

**Intelligent Sales Solutions:** Focusing on client acquisition, building and launching dedicated sales teams on a national level, all while reducing the cost of sales is what makes Sales Focus Inc. (SFI) unique. We create repeatable and sustainable business processes designed to maximize sales results in a short period of time. SFI is able to provide dedicated sales teams across the country or across the globe to meet the needs of each individual client. Our sales representatives are thoroughly trained using our **Sales Master Training Program** for both tactical and strategic solution-based selling.

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