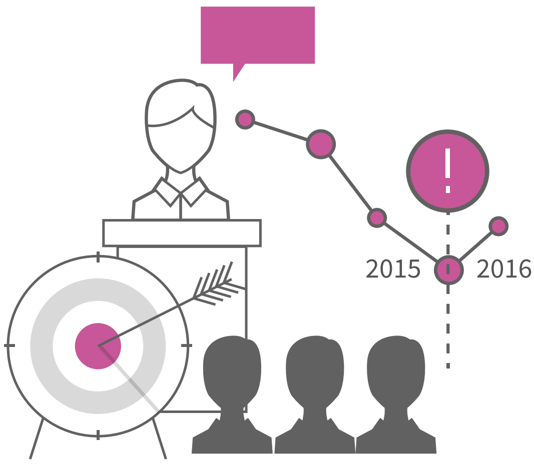
The 2016 Sales Framework:
Set your sales team up for success by guiding them to results

Introduction

Recent research has shown that the sales process is getting longer and more complex. The window for sales reps to impact the decision process is becoming smaller. They are faced by an informed buyer, while being bogged down with administrative tasks leaving them with little time to actively approach and try to make an impact on this buyer.

In 2016, it's absolutely critical that sales leadership guides their organizations to become more productive and successful in their newly-defined roles as consultants.



This eBook was specifically **created for sales leaders who recognize and embrace the mission-critical need to make significant improvements in productivity and performance in 2016** and want actionable advice on how to do so. We've put together five chapters that cover everything from how to optimize your sales kickoff to a roundup of freshly-forged tech tools that will help your team become better at finding and engaging with prospects.

60%

of the **purchase decision** is now completed before the buyer ever engages a supplier's sales rep.

78%

of a **sales rep's time** is spent on tasks other than selling.

43%

of **buyers reported** that there were more team members involved in a B2B purchase than the previous year.

13%

of **executive buyers** believe that a salesperson can clearly show they understand their business issues and articulate a way to solve them.

Overview

HERE'S A SAMPLING OF HOW EACH CHAPTER WILL HELP MAKE YOUR TEAM MORE NIMBLE AND IMPACTFUL:

1. In "**Elements Of An Explosive Sales Kickoff**" you'll discover elements that you can incorporate into your annual sales kickoff to set the stage for 2016 performance that will obliterate your sales goals.

2. "**The New Buyer Behavior: How To Adapt Your Sales Enablement Strategy**" offers statistical insights into the sweeping changes in today's buyer behavior and offers pragmatic advice about what your team can do to not only adapt but take full advantage of this shift.

3. In "**Scaling Your Team: Best Practices for Ramping Up New Sales Recruits**" we offer actionable advice on how (and why) to optimize your onboarding and sales ramp processes as you hire new recruits in Q1. You'll shorten the time it takes to get your new employees ramped to full potential while increasing overall performance and retention.

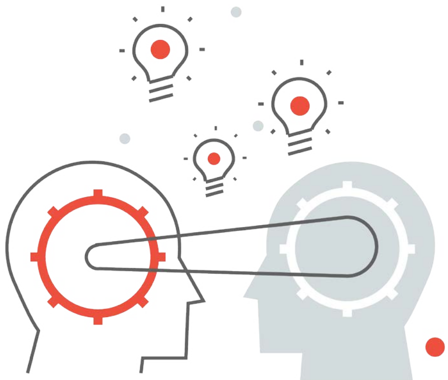
4. **Mobilize & Enable: How To Equip Inside & Field Sales Reps For A Blowout Year.**

5. Our roundup of "**2016's Must-Have Sales Tools To Train and Enable Your Team**" offers a first look at cutting-edge sales technologies that will help your sales team become more effective in prospecting, develop stronger connections with leads and become more efficient and productive in their day-to-day lives as sales pros.

1. Elements Of An Explosive Sales Kickoff

Zig Ziglar once said, “Expect the best. Prepare for the worst. Capitalize on what comes.” That’s exactly why sales organizations have continued the tradition of the annual sales kickoff — to foster optimism and **motivate the sales organization**, to equip and enable teams to perform and to help them learn to make the most out of the situations that arise.

But a sales kickoff (sko) also sets the stage for the coming quarter or year. It’s a pep rally, a boot camp and a retreat all rolled into one. Avoid the all-too-common rigamarole of empty “rah-rah” speeches and snooze-worthy product demos and skip right to the programming that’ll spark an inferno in your sales organization. Those elements that will ignite your sales kickoff.



Here are some unique programming ideas to put the “sizzle” into your sales kickoff:

MENTOR MATCHING

Develop a formal mentorship program and host a special session to match mentors and mentees.

SOCIAL SELLING 101

Invite one of your sales organization’s top social sellers to present a quick session on how to leverage social media.

TECHNOLOGY TOOLKIT

Train your team on new tools they should have in their sales arsenal.

COMEDY CLUB

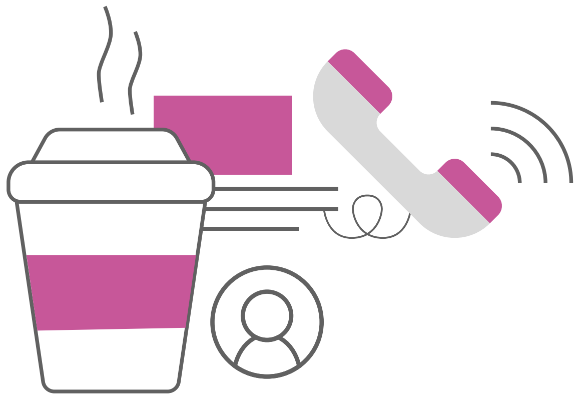
Hire a local comedian to entertain over lunch or happy hour. Laughter is a great way to break the ice.

ENCOURAGE FAVORABLE CONDITIONS FOR MAKING FIRE

In order to make a fire, you typically need certain conditions to be successful. The same goes for your sales kickoff. You're looking for a high energy location off-site. Many global companies choose destinations like Vegas or Barcelona that are known for their energy.

By **getting your team out of the office and into a fresh and exciting location**, you're getting them out of their typical day-to-day mindset and helping them break away from the thought patterns and behaviors that they've built within that space. You'll also want to be sensitive to the structure of your agenda. Try to keep sessions short and varied in nature; consecutive motivational speeches can be draining. The same goes for highly-interactive sessions that include role playing or group discussion. Mix up your schedule and make an effort to keep the collective energy level sustainable.

It's also important to remember that it's not easy for your salesforce to go "offline" for a full day, let alone multiple days. When building out your agenda, **think about adding in separate communications breaks** or extended coffee breaks that will give your team time to check in on email and voicemail. By supporting their day-to-day responsibilities with set time-periods, you'll help alleviate some of the pressure that can otherwise cause a distraction from the purpose of the kickoff.



EQUIP YOUR TEAM WITH ACCELERANTS

What's the number one thing you can do to feed a fire? Throw fuel on it! Your team can already make fire or else they wouldn't be on your team, right?

One of the primary goals of your sales kickoff should be to **equip your already-effective team with tools and knowledge to become explosive**. So, what sales accelerants can you make available to your team?

1. CUSTOMER INSIGHT – Enlist your marketing team to provide an update on data insights about your different prospect and customer personas' behavior throughout the sales process that can be invaluable to your sales team. Knowing what pieces of messaging, pain points, product features and content resonate best with which personas and when will help make your sales team more effective.

2. PRODUCT UPDATES AND REFRESHERS – Product training and update announcements are stalwarts in the traditional sales kickoff agenda. Spice things up by breaking them into ten to fifteen-minute product updates and bite-sized refresher trainings that you splice into your schedule at different points during the day. A survey by Vorsight revealed that **71% of sales kickoff attendees** reported that "company vision and/or new information on products and services" was the most useful thing they learned at their last sales kickoff. This type of material can be fairly dense, so the more you can break it up, the better so that your salespeople can digest the information as it's served up.

3. CUTTING-EDGE BEST PRACTICES – 39% of respondents from the **Vorsight survey** said that they wished that there had been more content around "sales skills for taking qualified opportunities through to close." This is more important than ever, with the evolution of the sales role from order-taker to subject matter expert. Covering areas like social selling and prospecting, email best practices and technology training will benefit your sales organization by helping them hone their skills as well as offer professional development on an individual basis. Think about specifically focusing on a single new technology that will help your team become proactive and is a productivity booster that will help your organization cut down on time spent on administrative tasks. Helping your team move faster and be more efficient on a day-to-day basis.

4. TABLETS FOR MOBILE ENABLEMENT – The annual sales kickoff is an excellent time to mobilize your salesforce. You can power their mobile devices with a **sales enablement software**, to push all of the kickoff content to your team en masse so that they're equipped with digital versions of the material for easy access to re-visit and refer to in the future. For a relatively low investment, your team will benefit from instant delivery of new sales materials and convey a smart, innovative image for your brand.

STOKE THE FIRE WITH SWAG

Every person in your sales organization **needs to feel proud of your company**, its brand and what they're selling every day. They also need to feel like they're part of something bigger. This is especially true of the millennials in your sales organization. Skip the embossed leatherette (read: plastic) padfolio and choose swag that's not cheesy or trite. Big winners are subtly-branded and customer-facing backpacks, track jackets and even customized shoes.

MAKE TIME FOR KUMBAYA

Don't actually try to make your team sing campfire songs. Do build activities into your schedule that will allow your team time to get to know each other outside of the office and in a casual setting. Camaraderie is an oft-overlooked element in the sales kickoff because of its intangible quality. But the Harvard Business Review reported that "**close work friendships boost employee satisfaction by 50%** and people with a best friend at work are seven times more likely to engage fully in their work."

ANNOUNCING NEW TECHNOLOGY AT YOUR KICKOFF

If you're planning to announce a new technology deployment during your kickoff, be upfront about the metrics you expect to be impacted.

Let's say that your organization is planning to deploy a new sales technology like **Showpad** in Q1. By announcing the new technology at your sales kickoff, you can begin a soft roll-out soon after. At the kickoff, leadership can show a demo of the product as well as walk through the expected quantitative effect on the organization.

Using your kickoff is a great way to introduce new technology as it not only conveys the "why" of why your organization is rolling out new technology but it also sets a shared expectation that everyone has a stake in the success of the implementation and its impact on key metrics.

IGNITE Q1 WITH SALES ENABLEMENT TECHNOLOGY

Here's a quick look at how sales enablement technology like **Showpad** can impact your sales organization's key metrics.

- Reduce sales reps' prep time before a meeting
- Elimination of printed materials
- Increase sales productivity and revenue

By sharing data like this during a new technology implementation announcement, you'll provide context for the deployment and at the same time, establish a measurable goal for your team's adoption of the new product.

Interested in a **demo or deployment consultation** for Showpad's Sales Enablement Platform?

SCHEDULE A DEMO »

RECOGNIZE FIRE-STARTERS

Another classic element of the sales kickoff is the **public recognition of top producers**. It serves its purpose to highlight the organization's winners as well as to provide an aspirational element for salespeople to shoot for. Also think about recognizing team members who go above and beyond in other areas like client service, technology adoption and subject matter expertise.

SEND SMOKE SIGNALS AFTER THE KICKOFF

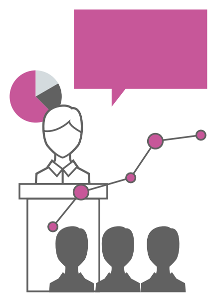
Give everyone a heads up (and don't hesitate to reiterate) that you'll be **sharing all of the kickoff slides and handouts** following the kickoff. If possible, also record the kickoff so that new recruits can check it out as they join your organization as well as anyone who may have been unable to attend.

MEASURE THE SUCCESS OF YOUR KICKOFF

Your sales kickoff is a chance to not only motivate and impassion your salesforce but also to equip them with tools, technology and information that will help them set their own goals ablaze in 2016. It's critical for the long term success of your sales organization that you measure the value of your kickoff. During the planning stages for your kickoff, set goals for which specific information, messaging and training you want your organization to take away from the event.

Immediately **following your SKO, solicit feedback from your salespeople** while the event is still fresh in their minds, utilizing surveys that combine quantitative and qualitative elements to see if those same goals were met by what they recall and what resonated the most with them. Ask your team what they felt worked, what didn't work and what they wished there was more of. Over the course of the year, re-measure the kickoff's impact on those same areas by surveying both employees and managers to determine the long-term success of your kickoff in terms of skills and behaviors, technology adoption and personal development.

With careful planning and emphasis on enabling your team with practical training, tools and technology, your kickoff is sure to provide your team with an explosive start to the new year.



IS YOUR ORGANIZATION READY FOR AN EXPLOSIVE 2016 SALES KICKOFF?

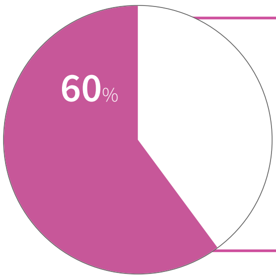
Check out this report covering how 300+ companies enable their sales force for greater results:

"Sales Enablement Optimization Study 2015 Key Trends Analysis"

GET THE REPORT »

2. The New Buyer Behavior: How To Adapt Your Sales Enablement Strategy

Buyer behavior has changed drastically in the past decade, and even more so in the past three to five years. The Corporate Executive Board (CEB) made headlines a few years ago when they published research reporting that "the average B2B buyer has already completed 60% of the **purchase decision** before engaging a supplier sales rep," raising concerns that the role of the sales professional was moving toward obsolescence. That's obviously not the case, although the role of the sales professional *has* changed dramatically in subsequent years–and will continue to do so as technology advances and information becomes ever more easily accessible. Let's take a look at some of the buyer's behavioral changes and what your team can do to not only adapt but capitalize on these changes.



"The average B2B buyer has already completed **60% of the purchase decision before engaging a supplier's sales rep."**

- CEB

HOW HAS BUYER BEHAVIOR CHANGED BEFORE THE FIRST CONTACT IS MADE WITH THE SUPPLIER'S SALES TEAM?

Buyers are coming to the table prepared. Not only have they already done their homework and completed preliminary research, but **CEB cites** that buyers have completed, on average, nearly 60% of the purchase decision before engaging a supplier's sales rep. They've already traversed more than half of the decision-making process before you even get a chance to engage. So, how can your team turn what appears to be a very clear disadvantage into an opportunity?

This is a huge opportunity for the sales professional to position themselves as a consultant. For starters, hit the 'pause' button on the prospect's process and start by **asking smart questions** to help the prospect be totally sure that they understand their own needs and pain points. By doing so, you'll help your prospect be sure they've defined their most important needs and pains which will allow you to be able to identify a solution, together, that will best fit their needs.

After you've clearly outlined the prospect's pains and requirements, next **make sure that the prospect is properly educated** on the competitive landscape as well as on your own solution. Just because your prospect has completed what they perceive to be more than half of the buyer's journey doesn't mean that they've completed research. There's very likely an opportunity to fill in the gaps in their research. Offer up content that accurately illustrates the competitive set as well as potential strengths and weaknesses of your solution along with your competitors. In this type of educational approach, it's critical that you don't undermine the findings that your prospect has already made but instead offer them additional resources that they can incorporate into their own research. These resources might be competitive landscape quadrants, third-party research and reports or a features comparison chart that matches up your solution's features alongside top competitors' features. If the later, be sure it doesn't come across as self serving and is instead an honest comparison.

TIP

Two very important buyer personas to engage are the **Economic Buyer** (EB) and the **Champion**. The Economic Buyer is typically regarded as the most important player in the buying landscape and has the power to make the ultimate purchase decision. However, the Champion is also very important. He will have significant influence within the organization and will guide you to the EB. The Champion is so important in today's buyer journey that without one, you'll likely lose the deal to a competitor who does have a Champion. If multiple competitors have a Champion, the vendor with the strongest Champion will almost always win.

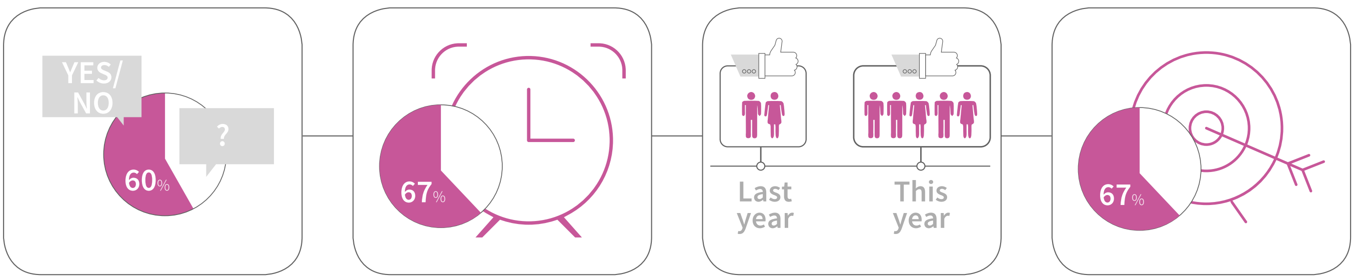
HOW HAS BUYER BEHAVIOR CHANGED DURING THE SALES PROCESS?

For one thing, the buyer adamantly wants to be in control of the cadence of the dialogue. In a report published by Base One and B2B Marketing, 62% of respondents reported that the winning supplier's sales representative responded more quickly than the other supplier candidates. However, only 54% of respondents said the winning supplier communicated more frequently than the competing suppliers. Thus, the quality and responsiveness of sales-to-buyer communication carries a lot more weight than the frequency of seller-initiated communication. **Every communication should be of value to the prospect**, not the salesperson. Skip the self-serving "just checking in" emails to stay top of mind in favor of valuable information that will actually benefit the prospect such as relevant blog posts, research reports, or access to executives.

Another major shift in buyer behavior during the sales process is the propensity for companies to **include more personnel in the process** than in years past, highlighting a shift toward a more complex buying journey. According to DemandGen's 2015 B2B Buyer's Survey Report, "almost half of respondents said there were more team members involved in a B2B purchase than the previous year." As such, it's more important than ever for sales professionals to identify and engage buyer-side advocates who can help the salesperson navigate the committee of influencers as well as provide discovery insights as quickly as possible into the process so that the sales professional can make it clear that she understands the buyer's needs and address any pain points or potential objections early on.

Understanding and navigating the process from the buyer's side of the table is critical. This level of proactiveness pays off in a big way, with 67% of buyers reporting that they believed their chosen supplier had a better understanding of their needs than the other suppliers (Base One/B2B Marketing).

BUYER'S BEHAVIORAL CHANGES BY THE NUMBERS



Completed purchase decision

Winning supplier responded more quickly

More team members involved

Winning supplier better understands needs

THE KEYS TO MANAGING THE SHIFT IN BUYER BEHAVIOR ARE:

1. Be respectful of buyers' communication preferences and time. Be responsive, but only communicate when you have value to add to the dialogue.

2. Empower the buyer to take on the role of information-gatherer by making sure that they have access to accurate information that's relevant to where they are in the buyer journey. Act as a resource and offer any missing or supportive information from the supplier itself or third parties to further inform the buyer's decision.

3. Assume a heavily consultative role in the sales process by presenting a clear understanding of their needs as well as positioning the product or service as a real solution to the buyer's very specific pains.

Overall, the trend for buyers to be more educated prior to contacting sales has allowed buyers to be more particular about communication as they no longer rely on a vendor's sales representative for information. If sales professionals don't leverage buyer relationships to promote advocacy of the deal, they can easily slip into a more transactional role instead of a consultative role, further distancing them from winning the deal.

3. Scaling Your Team

BEST PRACTICES FOR RAMPING UP NEW SALES RECRUITS.

A steep tick in sales employee "time to ramp" over the past five years and an overwhelming shift toward a longer sales cycle combine to form a dangerous trend: it's taking longer to get your new recruits up to speed. And even once they're fully-ramped, it's taking them longer to close each deal. Mitigate this trend and set a solid foundation for your team's growth in 2016 by leveraging our best practices for getting new recruits up and running in record time.

ONBOARDING VS. RAMPING

Differentiate between onboarding and ramp up phases.

Onboarding is the time it takes to take your new recruit through an initial orientation program that you've developed that will imbue them with knowledge and training necessary for day-to-day life in their new role.

Ramping comes after onboarding and refers to the amount of time it takes for a new recruit to reach their full potential as a member of your sales organization.

DAY ONE CHECKLIST

- Personal welcome note from the CEO
- Floor map of your office or department
- Laptop and tablet with onboarding agenda and materials
- Cheat sheet with login directions for computer, local network and key technology platforms
- Team or 1-1 lunch

DEVELOP A TWO-WEEK ONBOARDING TEMPLATE

During your new employee's first two weeks, it's critical that you provide them with the tools to do the job, institutional knowledge, product training and support they need to succeed. Invest time into **creating a robust onboarding program** to help your new employees develop strong foundations. An onboarding agenda can be standardized to include product/operations training, marketing sessions and sales operations onboarding but it should also allow for time to accommodate specific training tailored for specific roles like inside sales reps or field reps.

DON'T NEGLECT CULTURAL ONBOARDING

Match your new sales recruit with a seasoned **mentor** within the sales organization that can help them negotiate the new cultural and social norms of the organization. Make cultural onboarding a part of their onboarding agenda by scheduling multiple 1-1 lunches and a team lunch to help break the ice.

ONBOARDING MATERIAL

Development of **sales onboarding reference materials** will serve two purposes: first, reference material will relieve some of the stress new employees feel of trying to keep up with note-taking during onboarding (which can also cause them to miss out on the most important parts of training) and second, it will provide a resource to revisit after onboarding is complete before circling back directly to trainers with general questions. Pre-load digital copies of these materials onto a sales enablement tool that is accessible via any device so that all the information is available to them at any time.

FORMALIZE THE RAMP UP

Now that your new sales rockstar has a handle on the day-to-day information and skills they need to do their job, they'll begin to focus on finding their "groove" as a performer in your sales organization and eventually, reaching their full potential. Welcome to the ramp up period. For too many companies, this is where formal training ends, leaving the new employee to negotiate the ramp up phase by themselves which, according to Bridge Group, is now **taking new sales recruits an average of 5.3 months** – a whole 25% longer than in 2014.

SALES ONBOARDING MATERIALS

- **SALES OPS**
- Cheat sheets with definitions for stages such as prospects, suspects, leads, MQLs and SQLs
- Also include a table that outlines your sales process "triggers" to let them know when (and how!) to create opportunities, close opportunities, etc.
- Cheat sheets for how your organization uses technology platforms such as…
  - CRM
  - Sales Enablement
  - Email/Prospecting
- **MARKETING**
- Sales material
  - Presentations
  - Collateral
- Target persona profiles
- Behavioral insights/trends
- Industry thought leadership
- Diagram(s) for marketing funnel & lead lifecycle

HOW SHOULD THE RAMP PROGRAM BE STRUCTURED?

Your ramp up program should act as a specialized sales training program specifically aligned with your business, industry and customers. The goal of the ramp is to teach your sales recruits **how to become self-sufficient** in their daily life so starting with proven best practices will provide them with a healthy launch pad to build on with their own techniques, style and strategy.

Structure your ramp program less linearly than onboarding and more as a self-directed program with check-ins along the way so that you can coach your employee to the next milestone. Utilize sales enablement technology (like **Showpad**) to distribute content and **gain visibility into their training progress** to see which materials they're reviewing and which they are not. You'll be able to spot trends in successful content as new cohorts of reps ramp, as is likely in the new year. Then apply those learnings to your training content as later cohorts ramp.

PRODUCT/OPERATIONS

- Any training materials you have produced such as video or guides, link(s) to your internal wiki or knowledge base.
- Quick reference for which departments do what within your company. Provide this in a central platform or tool that can be both easily accessed and updated.

SAMPLE RAMP ACTIVITIES

- Regular check-ins to discuss progress and develop strategy
- Prospecting best practices
- Qualifying leads role play
- In-depth product/service training
- Objections role play
- Sales call planning
- Sales pitch training/roleplay

During the ramp period...

- Revisit the insights about customer behavior and industry trends that you have provided the new employee and ask them to come up with performance strategies that utilize those insights.
- Role play is crucial to developing your new employee's confidence in a variety of situations: sales pitches, lead qualification and handling objections in real-time. Don't hesitate to get seasoned sales team members involved in the ramp program, especially with mutually beneficial practices like role play.
- Make sure that your ramp program is geared toward incremental increases in measurable performance and not solely behavioral. Prospecting best practices are only as good as the numbers they help the new employee put "on the board".

Onboarding and ramping up new employees is a combination of art and science. Not every employee will need to focus on the same areas, nor will every employee find value in the same types of activities.

However, certain commonalities will arise around which specific onboarding practices and content contribute to the most success in ramping up. Those highly-impactful practices and content can be surfaced by using data-driven platforms in conjunction with qualitative feedback. By continually evaluating and optimizing your orientation practices, you'll help adapt your program for each type of learner that joins your organization.

And in doing so, you'll see long-term benefits in terms of both decreased time to ramp as well as employee retention: a recent report by SHRM states that "new employees who attended a structured orientation program were about **70 percent more likely to remain at the company up to three years**". Meaning that your investment in your new team member's orientation is likely to benefit your organization longer.

COST OF CHURN

Average churn rate = 30% * 100 reps = 30

6 months lost (1 month to hire + 5 to ramp)

6 months * 30 reps = 180 unproductive months

5 years of productive selling time lost

Conservatively at **over $5M** in potential revenue

4. Sales Enablement to Equip Inside & Field Reps for a Blowout Year

All too often, companies use a one-size-fits-all approach to sales enablement. While there is certainly overlap in terms of universal best practices, by tailoring your sales enablement strategy to each role within your team, you'll see higher return on your investment when reps will benefit from specific trainings, process improvements and role-specific features in your technology platforms. The following **sales enablement strategies** will equip your sales organization with what they need to make 2016 a blowout year.

ESTABLISH A SALES ENABLEMENT FUNCTION FOR YOUR SALES ORGANIZATION

A recent research study performed by CSO Insights revealed that companies which have a dedicated sales enablement function are proven to be more successful in top line growth by outperforming companies lacking this dedicated function by 8.2%.

Most often, the sales enablement function rolls up to sales leadership or in some cases, sales operations. By establishing this function, you'll increase the "bandwidth" of the headcount that you already have,, rather than continually adding more salespeople to see incremental performance growth.

According to the aforementioned research, the three most common areas of focus for sales enablement are **sales training, process improvements and sales tools**. By having a sales enablement function focus on these areas, it provides a necessary, holistic view of the sales organization and helps alleviate some of the misconceptions held by department heads from silo-driven organizations that each function is the most important thing that salespeople need.

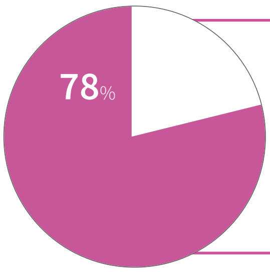
Let's walk through the **three core responsibilities of this function** and how they can benefit from differentiation to Inside and Field sales reps.

SALES ENABLEMENT FUNCTION #1: SALES TRAINING

Sales training can encompass a wide variety of subject areas and is often associated with principles and methodologies, such as Challenger selling or the Sandler method. It's important to also train your team on other areas like relevant market research and any sales technologies they'll use. Tailor training specifically to your organization's individual disciplines. For Field sales reps, focus training on mobile productivity and role-playing client visits. For inside sales reps, cover objection handling and new approaches to prospecting.

SALES ENABLEMENT FUNCTION #2: PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS

78% of a sales rep's time is spent on administrative tasks other than selling. Work with all involved teams to identify bottlenecks and resource-hogging activities. By reducing the average of 78% of time spent on administrative tasks, you'll see an organization-wide increase in the amount of time reps have to focus on actually selling. Inside sales reps may find value in making the lead qualification process more efficient, while field reps will benefit from anything that helps increase productivity while on the road.



"**78% of a sales rep's time is spent on administrative tasks** other than selling"

- American Marketing Association

SALES ENABLEMENT FUNCTION #3: TOOLS

Your sales organization will likely share a common set of tools like a sales enablement platform, CRM and prospecting technology. A core sales enablement responsibility is to take ownership of the sales technology "stack" of tools and platforms and make sure different teams are supported accordingly. For example, a Field sales rep may require their sales enablement technology to facilitate both "on-the-road" as well as "in-office" scenarios. The Inside sales rep may require the same sales enablement platform to support screen sharing so that she can seamlessly give a virtual demonstration of the product, while still having access to all of their content that they want to share with the prospect and have the ability to track their interaction in order to identify key next steps.

5. 2016's Must Have Sales Tools To Train and Enable Your Team

SiriusDecisions reports that 65% of respondents say that "our sales reps spend too much time on non-selling activities." Perhaps it is that collective frustration that's led to a new wave of sales productivity and enablement tools surfacing. 2015 saw the emergence of the "Sales Stack", a sales organization's fully-integrated arsenal of these new technologies, all designed to better enable the members of the sales team. Here are our top picks for 2016's must-have sales tools.

BECOME A MORE SUCCESSFUL PROSPECTOR

SALES INTELLIGENT

Prospect from social networks. Discover contact information.

Sales Intelligent is a prospect discovery tool. It will pull data from social networks and then automatically sync the resulting data to your CRM. Sales Intelligent boasts the ability to help you discover three times as many prospects as you could manually in the same amount of time.

LEADFUZE

Quickly Build a List of Prospects. Get Emails, Numbers, and Social Profiles.

While Sales Intelligent helps sales reps mine social networks for leads, LeadFuze can help you start completely from scratch. Use keywords and geography to quickly build rich lead lists for outreach. Each lead also includes whatever data can be associated with that lead: email address, phone number and even links to the lead's LinkedIn and Twitter profiles.

CONVERT PROSPECTS WITH SOCIAL SELLING

SOCIALBRO

Everything you need to optimise your Twitter strategy.

SocialBro is a powerful tool that sales professionals can use to build Twitter lead lists and then develop relationships with those individuals, and at the same time strategically build their own credibility by demonstrating subject matter expertise.

LINKEDIN SALES NAVIGATOR

You know the art of selling. We can help with the science.

We would be remiss to not mention LinkedIn's Sales Navigator. This is an upgrade to your standard LinkedIn account that helps you build your lead database, monitor those leads and engage directly with an increased allotment of InMail.

ENGAGE WITH YOUR PROSPECTS & LEADS

RAPPORTIVE

Get Linkedin Profiles Right Inside Gmail.

Surprisingly, there are still many sales professionals who aren't aware of Rapportive. It's a free Chrome extension that embeds LinkedIn profile information alongside your Gmail inbox so you can instantly see a snapshot of your email recipient's Linkedin profile. A little-known hack is that it's also a great tool for validating an email address by checking to see if there's a Linkedin profile associated with it.

SHOWPAD

Push the best-fit content and guide sales reps to results.

Shameless plug: Our sales enablement platform pushes the best-fit content in the right context to sales reps and partners — on any device so they can sell anytime and from anywhere. Its powerful reporting helps businesses understand content usage and productivity to align efforts toward revenue goals.

IMPROVE DAY-TO-DAY EFFICIENCIES

SALESFORCE SALES CLOUD

Sell smarter and faster with the world's #1 CRM.

Salesforce is the cornerstone of any sales ops program. It provides the framework to manage the sales pipeline and optimize your team's processes and tactics. It also acts as your sales organization's "operating system" as there are many different third-party solutions that integrate into Salesforce, making its functionality virtually limitless.

DOCUSIGN

Send, sign and approve documents from wherever life takes you.

It's not over until the contract is inked. So, the sooner you can capture that signature the sooner you can officially close the deal. DocuSign makes it easy to share documents and collect legally-binding signatures. It integrates with most major CRM systems for maximum paperwork-free efficiency.

CALENDLY

Simple, beautiful scheduling.

Who has time to schedule away their time? Calendly is a free tool that generates a link to your calendar which allows anyone with that link to schedule time within your open availability, eliminating the "calendar tag" that plagues too many salespeople.

When combined, these new technologies will equip your sales organization with functional tools to foster stronger connections with prospects and leads, gain more relevant insights from data and increase efficiencies at an individual contributor level.

Summary

The end of the calendar year and beginning of a new one serve as a universal benchmark for retrospection and a offers a chance to contemplate what we need to work on in the coming year. We often think, “This year, I’m going to do X differently than last year.” Or, “This year, we’re going to implement X.” Sometimes, that new year brings with it a pair of hindsight binoculars.

It’s easy to focus on what you should have done or could have done differently in the previous year. We hope that this guide has offered you a **practical framework to address the most critical areas for improvement** within your sales organization in 2016. We’d love to hear your feedback and thoughts and of course, if you’ve found our eBook to be beneficial, for you to share it with your colleagues and social media networks.

Wishing you a “show-stopping” 2016,
The Team at Showpad