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Have you ever been so close to a situation when you knew there was a problem, but couldn't, for the life of you, figure out what it was?

If you are a CEO or sales manager, you can probably relate. Sometimes we can be so close to a situation, that we lose our objectivity. It's a common to need an outside perspective to give us the paradigm shift we need to make the necessary changes.

We have worked with sales teams across the world and in all industries and we see them repeatedly struggle with the very same challenges. The faces, names, and geographies change, but the challenges remain – fundamentally – the same.

Although on first glance, the challenges may seem intimidating and overwhelming, they are actually easily be solved if tackled one at a time. It first takes identifying the challenges, acknowledging them, and then being willing to make the sometimes difficult changes required to address them.

The other good news is; the more of these challenges you recognize in your organization, the bigger your potential payoff ... and the more you have to gain!

The bigger the challenge, the bigger the payoff!

Let's dive into some of the most common challenges:

1. Follow Up Failure.

65% of business managers surveyed cited "Follow up" as their #1 failure, according to a recent survey. Follow up failure is the biggest reason for lost sales. And leaving follow up to a sales person's memory is a hit or miss proposition – at best. Even those who follow up do not sustain it long enough – it now takes at least 7 touches to make a sale.

Automating entire follow up and work flow processes (not just a single task) will all **alone** improve your sales conversion rates by at least double.

Create a follow up *sequence* of events that corresponds with your prospects ranking (A, B, C, etc.) and that transpires over the course of several months to touch your targets. After determining the follow up sequence, automate it (specifically email and print) to ensure that it happens consistently, frequently, and flawlessly.

2. Weak Leadership.

Despite how it sounds, it's really not always leadership's fault when results are not where they should be. Most managers (even in Fortune 500 companies) do not have information, tools, or accurate statistics on their sales team's performance to manage properly.

You can't manage what you can't measure!

Surprisingly, they almost never have an objective measuring stick to measure performance – only subjective "gut feelings" and sales revenue or contracts to go by.

Take a look at these overwhelming statistics.

257 of the Fortune 500 companies were surveyed:

- 75% did not have a system for classifying prospects based on sales opportunity
- 76% did not set sales objectives for their departments or sales people
- 81% did not use a call reporting system to track their sales productivity

You wouldn't expect a surgeon to get great results without a scalpel, why would you expect your sales management to get great results without access to the right tools? Give your management clearly defined objectives and the tools to measure their team's success with – and watch their results soar.

3. Disorganization in Time Management.

Sales teams would greatly benefit from organization and an “action plan” every day. Most of them will readily admit that what they really want is a “Sales Assistant” to keep them focused and on target.

Only the most disciplined of people create a plan every morning (including follow ups, to-do’s, and appointments) for the day. And for those who do, it is a time consuming task and requires some type of paper “system” for tracking and follow through. The rest don’t have a system or processes – they just tackle the “fires” that come up during the day, only to get to the end of the day without accomplishing their most important job – follow up. Can you relate?

Give your team the gift of organization – a system that is shared by everyone to exchange “to dos”, plan their day, provide follow up tools, gain access to important customer details, and a “sales assistant” to keep them on target.

4. Distractions. Distractions. Distractions.

Whether it’s Twitter, Instant Messaging, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, or good old fashioned email, all those pop-ups serve to distract and pull even the most disciplined person away from their high value tasks – the ones that have the biggest payoff.

And before you know it, the day (or “money hours”) is gone and the “to-do’s” list hasn’t been completed. No wonder people are so frustrated!

While such social media and communication tools can be useful business resources, find ways to limit times (quiet hours) or access (especially on the sales floor) or otherwise minimize all distractions from getting in the way of priority tasks – such as speaking with prospects and closing deals. Because, if you’re not focused on selling, who is?

Keep the first thing the first thing!

5. Cumbersome Communication Process.

Stop leaving voicemails that no one returns or sending out emails that don’t provide your buyers an easy way to respond. Your prospects and clients are as busy as you are.

They don't wake up every morning wondering how to make you a priority!

Allow your prospects and clients to respond to you and place requests at their convenience and on their terms (even if it's midnight). Make it easy to respond to you – that doesn't involve any effort on their part – using interactive technologies. WOW them with your communications and provide a feedback method that makes them want to do business with you. Check out our interactive “Sticky Point” communication technology to see how you can make communication smart and effective!

“Revive” dormant prospects using interactive communications to uncover latent sales opportunities and find out what your prospects have interest in learning more about.

6. Unavailable Follow Up & Marketing Resources.

Do you have a library of marketing resources, testimonials, answers to objections and discovery questions? And if so, are they available as resources to your sales team for 24/7 access when they need to grab one for a follow up or to address a specific issue?

If not, you are not optimizing your sales team's efficiency and worse yet, even handicapping their ability to sell your products and services.

Make the tools and information that your sales teams need to engage their prospects available, accessible, updated, and easy to distribute!

If you can relate to these challenges, don't be alarmed. You are not alone. Thankfully, they are all quite fixable. The more challenges you face, the more you have to gain – in revenue – by addressing them!

What if you could have a perfect system for the sales process that increased your sales conversion rates by 9% or more and solved all of these 6 challenges?

You can improve your sales, marketing and follow up processes with one easy to use solution. Find out how at www.AdvantageAnywhere or by calling 239-337-2667. We offer consultations for many different business verticals, from large corporations, medical companies (HIPAA compliant), senior living facilities, real estate developers, community developers, builders, sales coaches and consultants, as well as mid-size companies looking to expand their sales forces.