

Getting Your Team on Board: Using a Sales Strategy to Promote Internal Harmony

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If your sales process is stuck in neutral, maybe it's not the client—maybe it's an internal engine problem. Too often, many of the barriers organizations encounter happen within the organization. Selling your strategy to your team, from the top down, is the first step to realizing external sales success.

Take the temperature of your internal environment.

First, assess what's happening inside your organization. Does the culture support a sales-oriented strategy? How does leadership react to your strategy? Are there a growing number of internal barriers—and, if so, why?

Remember that internal credibility is about accountability.

An effective sales and service strategy must be a core part of an organization's strategic initiatives. And within that strategy need to be defined expectations. Your goals should include ways to:

- Focus on outcomes that deliver results.
- Identify internal and external customers.
- Understand their roles and yours.
- Define expectations and measures to achieve them by customer group—both qualitatively and quantitatively.

Brand your message for internal buy-in, too.

You need to create a brand image that works inside and outside. To do that, take some time to step away from the details and re-focus on your core business.

- Assess your current customers. Use research to determine what they want and need, prioritize those with what you're actually offering, address gaps in the market, and prioritize the value of the customer to your purchasing levels and the time spent selling.
- Assess your offerings. Prioritize their value to the organization, pre-define the sales role in determining your product or service readiness, and, again, address gaps in the market and in your product.
- Build the plan. Make sure it encompasses the internal communication, market interest, sales and marketing roles. And divide your sales plan by territory, ensuring that it's tactical and can achieve desired outcomes.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of your plan. First, develop an internal baseline—test it well and then make the necessary changes. After the external rollout, put into place outcome measurement tools. Then use them!

Keep it consistent.

Say it three times—sales, service, satisfaction. This is your mantra for staying on track. But you've got to walk the talk:

- ❑ Your team is your greatest asset. Develop their role in getting the message out and making it a way of life at work.
- ❑ Coordinate sales and operations to maintain a high level of continuity throughout the organization. Focus on regular staff assessments, as well as development and training.
- ❑ Set standards for your strategy. For every assigned outcome, build a plan that matches it. Track, measure and report your progress. And reward team members for a job well done.

Create an action plan.

After you've decided on your strategy, don't hurry it. Take the time to work through each step of the process: research and planning, creating a customer-focused culture and approach, developing a staff and program assessment, designing an internal customer assessment (with a plan to achieve your strategy), collecting data and outcomes, and focusing on ongoing training.



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