



AIM Consulting, LLC

Bringing “Quality” to Sales

Are sales flat? Are costs increasing faster than profits? Do incentives produce short term sales lifts? Are turnover and motivation a problem in your sales force? Are customers calling to complain vs. asking for assistance in growing their business?

If the above questions describe your current situation, you may need to bring “quality” to your sales operation.

In any sales organization, what the customer “sees” is a function of both product and process quality. *What the customer “experiences” is not the average performance of your organization, but the wide variation in everything from on-time delivery to your organization’s ability to “do what they say.”*

Bringing “quality” to sales is much more than quality products... it is consistent quality in everything that you do. Quality products are a basic expectation of your customers. Without a quality product delivered at a fair value, you won’t need a sales organization for very long.

Customers are not asking for much. They want consistent quality delivered error-free at a value. You must define customer requirements specifically for your business and design processes that deliver the desired product and process quality.

How do you get started? Follow these nine steps:

1. Communicate your company’s mission, vision, and values... define the employee attitudes and behaviors that will drive long-term success.
2. Identify customer needs and their business objectives.
3. Develop measurable standards of performance for meeting the customer requirements.
4. Design structured processes to achieve the standards of performance.
5. Provide sales and sales management employees with the skills, knowledge, time, tools, and information to achieve the standards.
6. Track and measure achievement of the standards and adherence to the structured processes.
7. Recognize and reward employees to motivate them to higher levels of performance.
8. Measure customer satisfaction to ensure the performance standards are meeting their needs and that their needs have not changed.
9. Continuously improve the processes to enhance employee satisfaction, customer satisfaction, sales, and profits.

What’s different about this approach? Notice it doesn’t start with setting a sales objective. In many organizations, that’s where sales planning starts and stops. The focus is on guessing the right number and hoping everyone hits it.

What we are talking about is giving your sales force the knowledge, tools, and a process to continuously identify and meet/exceed customer needs;

thus, improving the sales and profits of both organizations.

This structure and focus is not just for the sales force... it’s also for sales management. Sales leaders must coach, reinforce, and reward adherence to the structured processes and achievement of the performance standards. The resulting sales are lagging indicators of the effectiveness of your internal process performance.

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As your process quality improves, so will employee satisfaction, customer satisfaction, sales and profits. That’s right, sales and profits. Not only will customers buy more, you will make more money because the processes will be more efficient ... less errors, rework, and non-value added steps. Think about it. It’s a win on both sides of the income statement and with your organization and your customers.

Quality has worked in every industry, every sector, and with companies of all sizes. Try bringing quality processes to your sales organization and watch your bottom line grow!