

How is Sales Enablement Different from Sales Training?

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Sales training and sales enablement are two of the most important tools business leaders have when it comes to ensuring their teams are ready to close deals, and generate revenue.

Sales is a complex, and multi-faceted world. Professionals need to use a variety of skills, strategies, and tools to generate results. When hiring new sales reps, hiring managers and business leaders often look for evidence their candidates already have some of the assets they need to thrive in the workplace. However, they also invest in ongoing sales enablement and sales training strategies, to constantly boost the win rate and results of their employees.

While both sales training and sales enablement empower salespeople to close more deals, they're not exactly the same. Sales training and sales enablement strategies work together to serve slightly different purposes. Here's everything you need to know about sales training, and sales enablement.

What is Sales Training? Training Teams

Let's start with the term most sales managers and professionals will already be familiar with: sales training. Sales training is the art of teaching sales reps the skills they need to excel in their role. Sales training can cover a variety of different areas, from soft skill training to technical training.

With soft skill training sessions, the focus is usually on helping reps master and improve their communication skills, ability to build rapport with customers, and work well as part of a team. With technical training sessions, experts provide teams with guidance on how to utilize specific sales strategies. For instance, training sessions might cover things like how to structure a discovery call, how to pitch a solution to a customer, and how qualify and nurture leads.

Sales training is all about equipping a seller or sales team with the skills, tools, and mindset they need to be effective in their role. It's essential to ensuring team members can not only reach their sales quotas, but also perform more effectively and efficiently in the workplace.

While some training sessions are delivered as part of an onboarding process for new hires, most of the best sales teams also implement regular, recurring training programs. These ensure teams can stay up-to-date with new strategies, and hone their talents over time.

What Does Sales Training Involve?

As mentioned above, sales training sessions can cover a wide variety of topics and focus on a multitude of different skills and strategies. Training can also be delivered in a variety of different ways. Some companies pay for external experts to come in and coach their staff members on a one-to-one basis, others provide teams with resources they can access in their own time.

Common types of sales training include:

- **Training events and webinars:** With online training events and webinar sessions, sales professionals and business leaders can deliver incredible educational experiences to hundreds, or even thousands of employees at once. Some sessions are interactive, with gamified elements designed to inspire teams and encourage them to practice new skills. Others are available on an on-demand basis, allowing staff to learn in their own time.
- **Online training courses:** Online training courses and micro learning classes have grown increasingly common in recent years. These allow students to access downloadable resources, quizzes, guidance, and other training solutions wherever they are, provided they have access to the internet. Some even come with options to earn certifications.
- **In-person classes:** One of the most traditional forms of sales training, in-person classes involve bringing team members into a structured environment, where they can interact with slides, presentations, and other team members as they learn. Some sessions include role playing sessions, while others focus more on research and independent learning.
- **Coaching and mentorship:** Coaching and mentorship options in sales training involve pairing an employee with a specialist team member who already has specific knowledge or skills to share. Coaching and mentorship often happens on a consistent basis, over a longer period of time, allowing team members to consistently improve their skills.

What is Sales Enablement? Enabling Sales

So, what is sales enablement, and how is it different from sales training? Simply put, sales enablement involves providing teams with the tools and resources they need to act on their training, and put their skills to good use. A sales enablement team in a business, for instance, might create a repository of content resources for new employees to access when implementing training techniques. This collection of resources might include pitch decks, FAQs, infographics, and even videos.

Some companies even create their own 'sales enablement platform' using software and technology. With this platform, companies invest in curating all of the tools and information a sales rep might need to close deals, qualify leads, and host effective conversations with buyers.

The focal points or pillars of a sales enablement strategy are:

- **Constantly optimizing the sales process:** A sales enablement team often works as both the research and development branch of a sales department. They constantly explore new strategies, market updates, tools and tactics designed to optimize rep performance, then provide team members with the

resources they need to enhance buyer journeys.

- **Empowering and informing sales staff:** Using sales enablement technologies and tools, companies provide their employees with a complete toolkit of solutions they might need throughout the sales cycle. Sales enablement tools might include buyer personas, buyer journey insights, data analytics, and tracking tools for monitoring results.
- **Implementing effective technologies and tools:** There are various tools and software solutions available to help support sales reps in their work. CRM systems, lead qualification tools, prospecting apps and more can all make teams more efficient. A sales enablement team will test the tools most likely to benefit the team, and deliver them to staff members.

Why is Sales Enablement Important?

Sales training can provide employees with the skills and insights they need to thrive in their role. However, sales enablement ensures team members can access the actual tools they need to put their training to good use. By following sales enablement best practices, companies can ensure their staff members are empowered to overcome any challenge they might face in the sales cycle.

What's more, with a sales enablement strategy, companies can take a more data-driven and educated approach to improve sales outcomes over time. Sales enablement experts and members of the sales and marketing team will often monitor metrics and KPIs to track the ROI of strategies and tools.

These insights can help business leaders determine the best ways of increasing win rates, improving team performance, and reducing inefficiencies in the sales cycle.

How is Sales Enablement Different from Sales Training?

At a glance, it's easy to see why the terms 'sales enablement' and 'sales training' are often used interchangeably. Both strategies are designed to empower and optimize sales teams. However, while sales training provides professionals with insights, and new skills, sales enablement delivers access to tools, resources, and technologies to use in the sales journey.

Sales training gives your staff the hard and soft skills they need to succeed in sales. Sales enablement provides your sales rep with the resources and support they need to utilize their skills effectively.

So, which is more important? Sales training, or sales enablement?

The simple answer is both of these processes are crucial to building an effective team. Sales enablement and sales training might be two different things, but they're also complementary processes. When sales reps can combine excellent sales training with effective, accessible sales enablement resources, they'll be more likely to achieve the right outcomes.

Together, sales enablement best practices, and sales training strategies convert any employee into a selling expert. They empower every staff member to reach not only their own professional goals, but the targets set by business leaders too.

Sales Enablement and Sales Training: Empowering Teams

The sales world is a challenging place. Reps need to consistently find new ways of connecting with customers, streamlining the sales cycle, and closing deals. That's why providing staff with consistent sales training and sales enablement solutions is so important.

Investing in regular sales training initiatives will help to give your employees a competitive edge over the other sellers in your industry. Implementing sales enablement technologies and strategies will ensure teams can take advantage of that all-important edge.

Used correctly, sales training and sales enablement are two parts of the same key, used by your team members to open the door to success.

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