

# Reaching Sales Goals

## A Plan for Sales Managers...



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**S**pring time is a season of renewed resolutions, ‘fresh starts’. It is also a good time for sales reps to review and renew their annual sales goals. Some reps may be quite adept at goal setting, but it's rare to find salespeople who remain focused on their professional goals without some managerial guidance. And it's even more rare to find reps that are good at implementing plans over an extended period of time. Salespeople get busy and are easily distracted while trying to work a plan throughout an entire year. As a result, reps will be more successful achieving their goals with the support, direction and guidance of their manager.

### **Promote the Power of Planning**

Salespeople know that setting goals is important, yet many tend to reject planning as busy work that gets in the way of selling. You must educate your team to view planning as an implementation step in achieving goals. It is the critical groundwork necessary to improve the attitudes, accuracy and accountability so many sales teams are lacking. Invest time up front to help reps view creating a sales plan as an invaluable tool in achieving their goals. The mistake I see many sales managers make is that completing sales plans is just a necessary report that is required, by them or the company, at the end of the year. The better you are able to have reps view this tool as an important step in getting

where they want to go, the less you will have to work at getting them to use it!

### **Success Follows Structure**

One of the fundamental reasons people don't achieve higher levels of performance in sales is the lack of a structured, organized ways of achieving them. It is here that sales managers can offer invaluable support to their reps by teaching and coaching effective goal setting tactics.

Most sales people will embrace ideas they believe will help them achieve better results with less effort. As a sales manager, your job is to demonstrate how mapping out the implementation steps necessary to achieve sales goals will improve the likelihood goals will be met or exceeded. A *Strategic Sales Plan* is a written ‘game plan’ that outlines the specific tactics and strategies necessary to achieve personal and professional goals.

Every *Strategic Sales Plan* should be as unique as each territory and the representative who will execute it. A good plan will guide reps through important considerations needed by *this* territory, during *this* year, given the specific market conditions that exist at *this* time in *this* territory. The sales plan itself, as a deliverable, isn't the most important part of this process...it is the process reps must go through of investigating and answering key questions. I recommend providing reps with template or topic outline to create a more uniform

format to boost consistency, making it easier to coach and provide better management support. Encourage reps to customize their *Plans* to meet their needs and the needs of the market. Ask them to take into account a distributor or customer needing special attention or different strategies. Build the template to cause reps to view their market at a higher level than the view they have on a daily basis when their feet are on the street. This exercise will help to strengthen their research, data analysis skills and creativity while preparing these plans. The more reps put their unique thumbprints to the *Sales Plans*, the more they will own the results.

### **The Rewards of Reinforcement**

Delivering final *Strategic Sales Plans* can be done one on one with managers to discuss the unique and specific details of each strategy. Another approach is to showcase each rep's strategy by presenting them to each other at a regional meeting. Group presentations encourage the support and fresh ideas from other members of the team. One of the most important ways managers can reinforce the value of a *Strategic Sales Plan* is to encourage reps to refer to the *Plans* throughout the year. In addition, consider conducting midyear reviews as a 'checkup' on progress to plan.

Think of strategic sales planning as the beginning of a process to better goal achievement. A well thought out customized plan and consistent follow-through will keep your reps on task and focused on the endgame.

### **About the Author**

**Anita Sirianni**, *The Professional Sales Coach*, has over 20 years of sales success in healthcare. Today she is one of the industry's most popular consultants and sales trainers, providing customized programs for leading corporations throughout the United States. For more FREE sales tools and information visit our web site at [www.AnitaSirianni.com](http://www.AnitaSirianni.com) or contact Anita at [Coach@AnitaSirianni.com](mailto:Coach@AnitaSirianni.com) or 800-471-2619.



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