

# Inside Sales Training: What Your Reps Need to Know to Beat the Competition

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- **All about the Product**

To sell a product, reps need to understand it inside out. That means not only the features and attributes but also the bigger picture — how buyers will be better off after they've purchased it. They need to be able to go in-depth into the details of any product feature that is essential to solving the prospect's problem.

Once salespeople are thoroughly steeped in product knowledge, they will be

able to free their minds to listen to concerns of prospective customers and tailor conversations accordingly.

- **Competitive Strengths and Weaknesses**

Because your product or solution does not exist in a vacuum, it's equally important that your reps understand the strengths and weaknesses of competitors' offerings. This way, they can explain how your product compares, highlight competitors' flaws, and better position your solution as the best choice.

- **How to Listen Actively**

To sell, reps need to understand the customer. And to understand the customer, they need to listen actively.

It seems like listening should be a natural skill. However, listening isn't the same as hearing. For example, if a rep is preoccupied with reciting their sales pitch, they may not make an effort to listen and understand the prospect's concerns.

There are a few ways to help your reps hone their listening skills. Start by teaching them how to ask open-ended questions (those that can't be answered with a "yes" or "no.") Then move on to listening techniques such as parroting, paraphrasing and adding empathy.

With these skills, reps will be able to understand customers better and build rapport by signaling genuine interest.

- **How to Qualify Leads**

If you don't have a separate lead qualification team, your inside sales people need to qualify leads, so they don't waste time talking with people who will never buy. That means ensuring leads have the budget, authority and need to buy. Also, they must have some urgency to solve the problem, and your solution should be a good fit for them.

Teach your reps to ask qualifying questions such as why the prospect is looking for a solution when they expect to make a decision, what their budget

is and who is involved in the decision.

- **Customized Demos**

It's likely your product has a large number of bells and whistles. Because of this, demos can be challenging. You don't want your reps to drown prospects in information that's not relevant to them.

To avoid, this, you need to train your reps to determine where someone is in the buying cycle, and what their processes and goals are before giving a demo. Without these insights, the demo is likely to wander off into areas where the prospect has no interest. Alternatively, a rep may give the demo before the prospect is ready.

On the other hand, with information about the buyer and their needs, they have a roadmap for their demo. They can simply walk the customer through the challenge they are trying to overcome.

The bottom line is that reps are not there to present the product in all its glory. Instead, they are revealing how to solve a particular problem.

- **Overcoming Objections**

Sales often run into hurdles along the way — the dreaded objections. But if your reps know how to leap over them, they'll gain confidence and increase their sales closing ratios.

A full product understanding can help because it enables your reps to understand how your product is differentiated in ways that are meaningful to customers. But it's also a good idea to prepare a list of common objections and the best ways to answer them and role play with reps until they can counter objections without hesitation.

- **Time Management**

Time is money, especially in sales. Inside salespeople cannot afford to waste it. So provide your reps with guidance on how to be more productive.

They should, of course, take full advantage of technology. This includes using

your CRM system to automate follow-up tasks and schedule meetings. Also, they can use ready-made email templates that they customize when communicating with prospects and customers. And while technology can assist them, they need to know when to walk away from it. For example, turning off email alerts and mobile phones can reduce time-eroding distractions.

When your reps are grounded in product and competitive knowledge, know how to listen actively, customize demos and overcome objections, they are well on their way to sales success. Add in a dose of time management, and they'll be more efficient closers than ever before. So put together an inside sales training program that embraces these key elements.

**Call us at +1 718-709-0900 (US) or +39 06 978446 60 (EMEA), or contact us online to learn how you can outsource your inside sales and get rapid results.**

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