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How to Develop a Strategic Sales Advantage

Management who believe solely in developing the sales team's product knowledge will give them the edge and increase sales are headed for disappointment. It may have been a good idea forty years ago but in today's environment a client can gain information via the internet and through their peers, product knowledge is not a differentiator.

In this context the client's perspective is the only one that counts. Product knowledge is essential, and can be motivating, but it needs to be part to a wholistic approach; one of which the primary indicator for present and future sales performance is sales competence.

In my opinion, the current level of sales competence needs to be at a higher standard. Many people are attracted to sales and many do try it without realising it is not any easy career and end up failing.

Failure can be a blessing for those who end up in a more suitable career. However, for those who manage to continue in sales though unsuitable, experience constant difficulties that affect their behaviour. Excuses are commonplace and their reports tend to be significantly longer than sales achievers. The content is padded with many words to hide what is really going on.

To develop a strategic sales advantage resulting in substantial sales revenues requires above the norm competence. Sending salespeople to generic sales courses might be acceptable for information but it will not boost sales competence.

Sales competence in B-to-B sales has six levels:

- Level 6 Professional
- Level 5 High-Flyer
- Level 4 Competent
- Level 3 Disciplined
- Level 2 Novice
- Level 1 Beginner.

The mean average is Level 3. With **fifty three percent of client purchase decisions directly attributed to the salesperson**, there is a real opportunity to create a strategic sales advantage that surpasses competitor salespeople when Level 4 is achieved.

Level 4 and above will necessitate a specific set of knowledge, skills, and attributes that will give you the tools to outsell them.



Kurt's expertise is in improving the sales effectiveness of his clients' businesses by generating more sales in a more profitable manner. He has guided companies to increase sales 10-56%. Clients range from small to multinational companies in Australia, the Middle East, Asia, and Europe.

If you have any questions about this article or want to discuss a specific sales issue, then contact me directly on +61 412 252 236 or email kurt@salesconsultants.com.au.