



Coaching the coach: How to turn sales managers into effective coaches

MindTickle!★

Why coaching?

Coaching can be one of the most effective ways to improve the performance and productivity of a sales team. Good coaching depends on having a great coach. To help sales managers become great coaches, they need to understand why it's important and have access to the right skills and tools.

In this ebook, we will explain:

- How coaching can make a sales organization more effective.
- Why coaching helps sales managers meet their KPIs.
- Warning signs that a coach needs to be coached.
- How sales managers can become great coaches.
- How to link sales coaching to revenue.
- What it takes to be a great coach.

CONTENTS



INTRODUCTION	04
CHAPTER 1 Why is coaching important to your sales organization?	06
CHAPTER 2 Coaching creates better sales managers	08
CHAPTER 3 Help your sales managers coach	10
CHAPTER 4 Tools that help managers coach effectively	17
CONCLUSION	22
APPENDIX	24

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1:

Why is coaching important to your sales organization?

CHAPTER 2:

Coaching creates better sales managers

CHAPTER 3:

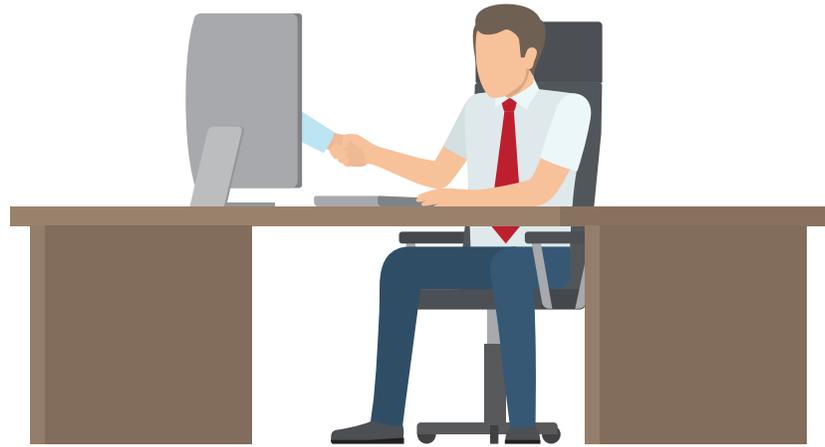
Help your sales managers coach

CHAPTER 4:

Tools that help managers coach effectively

CONCLUSION

APPENDIX



Coaching is on top of everyone's mind at the moment and for good reason. A good coach can help salespeople achieve quota by **up to 10%**. Sales productivity also increases when coaching and training are combined.

According to the International Coaching Federation, coaching is:

“An interactive process to help individuals and organizations develop more rapidly and produce more satisfying results; improving other's ability to set goals, take action, make better decisions and make full use of their natural strengths.”

The coaching process is only effective with a good coach. In most sales organizations, the primary coach is the sales manager. For coaching initiatives to be successful, sales managers need to have the right skills to take on the role.

CHAPTER 1

Why is Coaching Important to your Sales Organization?

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1:

Why is coaching important to your sales organization?

CHAPTER 2:

Coaching creates better sales managers

CHAPTER 3:

Help your sales managers coach

CHAPTER 4:

Tools that help managers coach effectively

CONCLUSION

APPENDIX

Being a sales manager today is less about managing and more about developing, inspiring and growing the skills of their team. This can't be achieved by checking in on reps a few times a year.

One of the most effective ways to reinforce, amplify and increase adoption of new skills is through coaching. Coaching a sales organization can:



Improve sales results

CSO Insights found that implementing a formal or dynamic coaching process can help more salespeople achieve quota by up to 10%. A structured coaching program will help the entire sales organization meet or even exceed their objectives.



Build cadence for development

Ad hoc coaching doesn't have the same impact on an individual's ability to sell than regular and focused coaching. By putting in place structured coaching programs sales managers can continuously develop the skills of their team.



Improve modern selling skills

In this day and age buyers are well-informed and savvy. They require salespeople who are up to date and adaptable. Coaching can help sales managers guide their salespeople on how to improve their selling skills.

CHAPTER 2

Coaching Creates Better Sales Managers

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1:

Why is coaching important to your sales organization?

CHAPTER 2:

Coaching creates better sales managers

CHAPTER 3:

Help your sales managers coach

CHAPTER 4:

Tools that help managers coach effectively

CONCLUSION

APPENDIX

Coaching can also make your sales managers better at their job. Coaching helps sales managers achieve their KPIs by:



Increasing their skill set

Good coaches are in high demand. Improving the coaching skills of sales managers will help build a pipeline of competent sales leaders. This not only empowers managers but also gives them the opportunity to take on more senior roles.



Identifying skill gaps and strengths

Coaching regularly gives sales managers the cadence and insight to identify issues that may be impacting the performance of their salespeople. Rather than waiting for the next performance review, managers can nip issues in the bud. Coaching can also help managers understand what their salespeople's strengths are and put together succession plans.



Improving team morale and retention

According to CSO Insights 20% of salespeople turnover each year – that's a significant investment walking out the door. They also found that sales managers only spend about 20% of their time actually helping sales reps sell. Reps that feel supported are more likely to feel motivated and willing to stay. In fact, 87% of millennials and 69% of other employees believe development opportunities are important. Coaching gives salespeople valuable feedback that can help them improve how they sell and make them more likely to stay.

CHAPTER 3

Help Sales Managers Coach

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1:

Why is coaching important to your sales organization?

CHAPTER 2:

Coaching creates better sales managers

CHAPTER 3:

Help your sales managers coach

CHAPTER 4:

Tools that help managers coach effectively

CONCLUSION

APPENDIX

If sales managers don't know how to coach effectively they may choose not to do it – that's human nature. It's important to make sure sales managers have the skills to coach their team effectively.

Not everyone knows how to coach. To be an impactful coach takes skill. Impactful coaching focuses on the needs of reps. It helps them improve how they approach selling and their customers. Managers that are not impactful may fail to move the needle on reps' behavior and performance.

There are many reasons a sales manager may not be an effective coach. Perhaps they're doing less coaching and more telling, or are just apathetic. In order to be impactful coaches, sales managers may need help.



INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1:

Why is coaching important to your sales organization?

CHAPTER 2:

Coaching creates better sales managers

CHAPTER 3:

Help your sales managers coach

CHAPTER 4:

Tools that help managers coach effectively

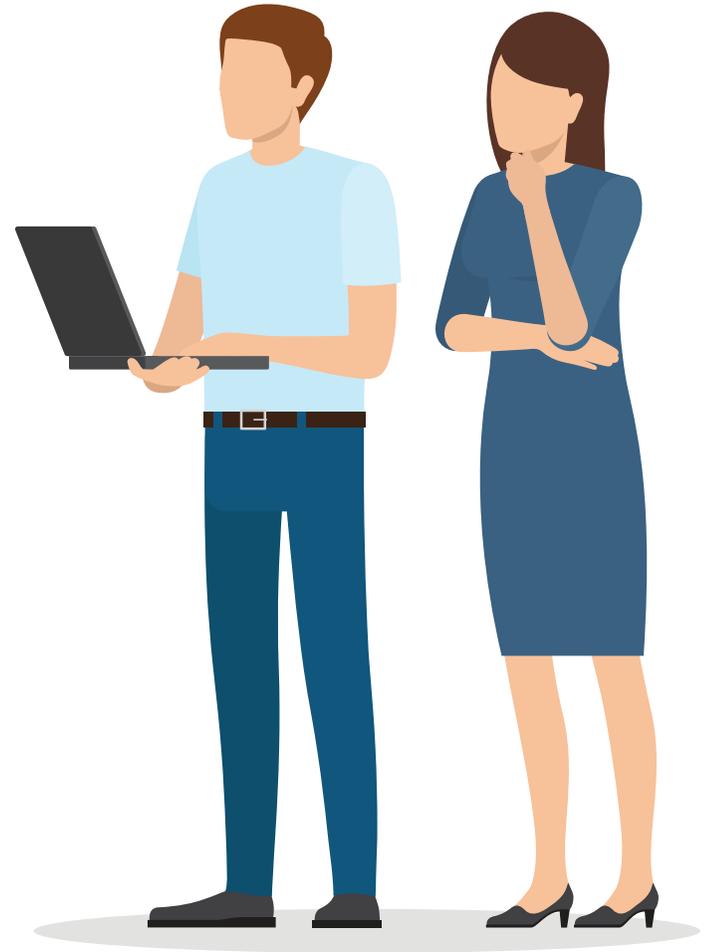
CONCLUSION

APPENDIX

Help sales managers seek out training

Research by the Sales Management Association has found that **41% of companies have no budget** to train their sales managers. Half of those that do have a training budget don't offer any specific training to help their managers learn how to manage their team.

Sales managers are charged with motivating and leading their team to achieve quota. To be successful it's important to help sales managers find learning opportunities that will help them structure coaching programs and give them the skills they need to be a good coach.



INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1:

Why is coaching important to your sales organization?

CHAPTER 2:

Coaching creates better sales managers

CHAPTER 3:

Help your sales managers coach

CHAPTER 4:

Tools that help managers coach effectively

CONCLUSION

APPENDIX

Look for warning signs that the coaches need coaching

Not all managers will know that they need help learning how to coach. Some may believe they know how to coach impactfully, while others may be embarrassed to speak up.

A sales manager may need help if they:



Can't see beyond the horizon

A sales manager who is more concerned with fighting fires than laying out a strategic roadmap for their sales team may be in trouble. If a manager's team lacks clear purpose or direction they may end up going around in circles. Sales managers need to be able to articulate what they want their team to focus on in the next three, six or 12 months and help them achieve it.



Don't know how to identify performance issues

Numbers, quotas and KPIs only tell part of the story when it comes to performance. Sales managers need to draw on a range of information to understand where their team's skill gaps are. Once an issue is diagnosed, the sales manager then needs to determine the best way to address it.

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1:

Why is coaching important to your sales organization?

CHAPTER 2:

Coaching creates better sales managers

CHAPTER 3:

Help your sales managers coach

CHAPTER 4:

Tools that help managers coach effectively

CONCLUSION

APPENDIX



Let the loudest team members dictate the direction

A sales manager who constantly focuses on the most vocal members of their team may misdirect their energy or even alienate some team members. To manage different personalities effectively sales managers need to develop their soft skills.



Lack consistency

Sales managers may develop their own processes and approach, which can be problematic, particularly in large organizations. Sales managers within an organization need to speak the same language, leverage the same information and embed consistency amongst their teams. This ensures that all customer interactions are consistent.

From an organizational perspective, consistency also enables sales teams to be accurately compared.



INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1:

Why is coaching important to your sales organization?

CHAPTER 2:

Coaching creates better sales managers

CHAPTER 3:

Help your sales managers coach

CHAPTER 4:

Tools that help managers coach effectively

CONCLUSION

APPENDIX



Help them to lead rather than manage

There is a big difference between managing and leading a team. Managing involves dealing with or controlling the way things are done, whereas leadership is about guiding people to achieve. Sales teams that are truly led are liberated and unconstrained. They're given wings to do their job well, rather than being bogged down in red tape and control.

Leadership is also about motivating people and this is a skill that takes time to learn. **A good leader doesn't just focus in on the numbers, they know which numbers to look at and how to use them to influence their team.**

To create an environment where people can thrive, it's important for sales managers to encourage and inspire salespeople to learn and develop.

To lead effectively sales managers need to set a clear strategy and goals for their team that dovetails into the broader organizational sales strategy. This should be continuously reiterated through their communications, coaching sessions, rewards and KPIs.

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1:

Why is coaching important to your sales organization?

CHAPTER 2:

Coaching creates better sales managers

CHAPTER 3:

Help your sales managers coach

CHAPTER 4:

Tools that help managers coach effectively

CONCLUSION

APPENDIX

A clear strategy helps sales managers give their team clarity and creates a cadence for them to look forward, develop and strive for their goals.

Sales managers also need the right tools to lead. Give sales managers access to data that informs their coaching by helping them identify where to focus their energy.



CHAPTER 4

Tools That Help Managers Coach Effectively

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1:

Why is coaching important to your sales organization?

CHAPTER 2:

Coaching creates better sales managers

CHAPTER 3:

Help your sales managers coach

CHAPTER 4:

Tools that help managers coach effectively

CONCLUSION

APPENDIX

To identify whether sales managers are making a real difference to their reps' performance, take a data-driven approach. Use metrics like the Sales Capability Index (SCI) to quantify the sales readiness of the sales team and salespeople.

The SCI is an index developed by MindTickle to score sales capabilities. The score provides a holistic, quantified assessment of individual salespeople and a manager's entire team's sales readiness. This is then linked to their performance, producing a leading indicator of their expected performance.

Sales manager	# Sales Reps	SCI	Knowledge	Skills	Coaching Execution	Engagement Completion %	Sales Takeoff Achievement
Diana Prince	53	67%	78%	60%	63%	65%	81%
Clark Kent	101	80%	82%	81%	77%	88%	94%
Nathasha Romanoff	40	78%	78%	75%	81%	74%	93%

The SCI combines not only coaching but also knowledge and skill, so managers and leaders can see what's really impacting performance and what's not. For example, if a sales organization has just launched a new product, coaching program, competitor series or other sales enablement initiatives to their sales team, managers can see what elements have had an impact by looking at the scores before and after.

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1:

Why is coaching important to your sales organization?

CHAPTER 2:

Coaching creates better sales managers

CHAPTER 3:

Help your sales managers coach

CHAPTER 4:

Tools that help managers coach effectively

CONCLUSION

APPENDIX

The SCI gives a higher level of conviction about how prepared the sales team is and helps identify what initiatives are making an impact and what aren't. It also indicates where coaching may have a positive impact on sales results and potentially helps to predict revenue more accurately.

The data in the SCI can be broken down by sales manager, team and by individual, highlighting whether individual sales managers are coaching effectively. This brings issues with a sales manager's coaching abilities to the surface, so they can be addressed long before the quarter or year is lost.



Identify what's driving a business outcome

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1:

Why is coaching important to your sales organization?

CHAPTER 2:

Coaching creates better sales managers

CHAPTER 3:

Help your sales managers coach

CHAPTER 4:

Tools that help managers coach effectively

CONCLUSION

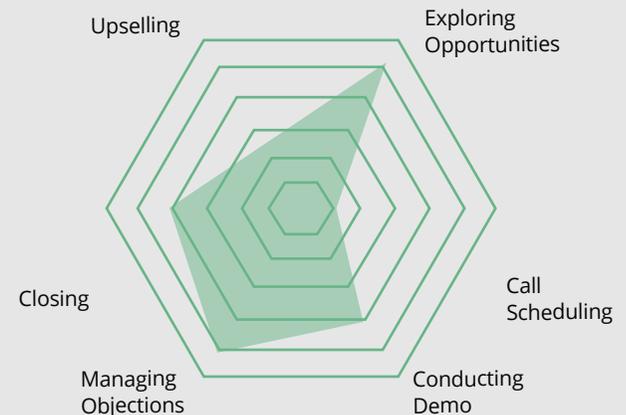
APPENDIX

Coaching is only effective if it drives a business outcome. There's no point having sales managers spend hours coaching reps if top line revenue doesn't grow. By using data like the SCI, coaching can be directly linked to real outcomes and help sales managers understand what their reps need to be coached on.

No rep needs to be developed in every aspect of the sales process, but it can be difficult for a sales manager to identify what they need help with. By breaking down the entire sales process and connecting each step with an organization's enablement data, it is possible to see sales competencies at each stage. This highlights exactly where a rep or a sales manager may need help.

This chart shows a sales team that is able to explore opportunities and manage objections well, but perhaps needs help upselling and in call scheduling. The data pinpoints exactly where opportunities fail and evaluates qualitatively and quantitatively what competencies are needed at that specific stage.

Average Score for Last Month



INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1:

Why is coaching important to your sales organization?

CHAPTER 2:

Coaching creates better sales managers

CHAPTER 3:

Help your sales managers coach

CHAPTER 4:

Tools that help managers coach effectively

CONCLUSION

APPENDIX

This level of granularity allows managers to do tactical coaching and helps leaders identify whether sales managers have skewed competencies. It gets to the heart of the issue and hones in on what needs to be done.

Sales leaders can look at the entire sales organization and **identify if there is consistency across how teams are coached**. This can identify bias in coaching performance and gives leaders the opportunity to address it objectively.



Close the loop

Coaching is a two-way street, so it's helpful to give reps a forum to give feedback as well. One way that we've seen this work effectively is where individuals are given the ability to approve or disapprove coaching feedback.

Rather than just letting sales managers have a say about how a coaching session went, **let the reps give feedback** about whether they felt the session made a difference to them. This data can also be quite telling - if reps don't feel like they're benefiting from their coaching sessions then it may be symptomatic of a broader problem with either the coaching program or individual coaches.

CONCLUSION

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1:

Why is coaching important to your sales organization?

CHAPTER 2:

Coaching creates better sales managers

CHAPTER 3:

Help your sales managers coach

CHAPTER 4:

Tools that help managers coach effectively

CONCLUSION

APPENDIX

Coaching can be a game-changer for a sales organization. But in order for it to be effective, sales managers need to be up to the task. To help sales managers do this it's crucial to identify their gaps, what assistance they need and give them the right tools and data to monitor performance.



APPENDIX

The Essentials of Being a Good Coach

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1:

Why is coaching important to your sales organization?

CHAPTER 2:

Coaching creates better sales managers

CHAPTER 3:

Help your sales managers coach

CHAPTER 4:

Tools that help managers coach effectively

CONCLUSION

APPENDIX

The essentials of being a good coach

Being a good coach involves creating an environment where sales managers can coach effectively. Here are five essential things that sales managers need to do to be impactful coaches:

1. Build trust and a safe environment

To build trust it's important that sales managers are mindful, patient and truly listen. There's no point trying to coach someone with one eye on your emails and the other on your watch. Sales managers need to show salespeople how important their development is by giving them their full attention and allowing them to work through an issue.

Creating a safe environment is also important to build trust. No one will open up to a sales coach unless they feel secure, supported and know what they say is confidential.

Part of creating a safe environment is to leave judgement at the door. If salespeople are worried about being critiqued, they're less likely to be open to change. Sales managers need to allow reps to vent their frustrations and work through different ways to find a solution that works for them.

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1:

Why is coaching important to your sales organization?

CHAPTER 2:

Coaching creates better sales managers

CHAPTER 3:

Help your sales managers coach

CHAPTER 4:

Tools that help managers coach effectively

CONCLUSION

APPENDIX

2. Be strategic

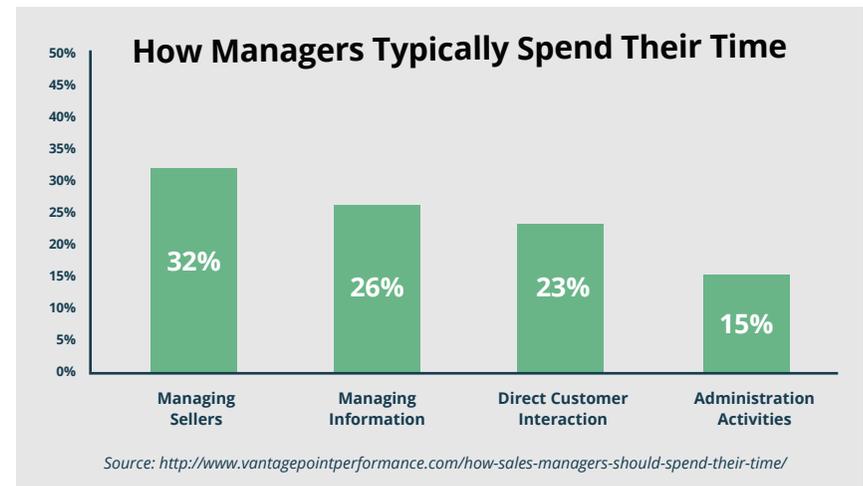
It's difficult for a person to step back and look at how all the moving parts work together, but this is what sales managers must do. As a coach they need to help individual reps pull everything together in a cohesive way. This gives salespeople new insights that they can use to sell more effectively.

3. Make time to coach

Research has found that sales managers spend just 32% of their time managing their team and only part of that is spent coaching.

Prioritization is key to helping sales managers find more time to coach.

The priority of a sales manager should be to help their salespeople reach their targets. Some things sales managers can do to help them prioritize include:



INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1:

Why is coaching important to your sales organization?

CHAPTER 2:

Coaching creates better sales managers

CHAPTER 3:

Help your sales managers coach

CHAPTER 4:

Tools that help managers coach effectively

CONCLUSION

APPENDIX



Focus on the right metrics and reports

Look at the reports managers must generate and review each week and understand which ones directly help their reps meet quotas. If the reporting or analysis isn't helping salespeople sell more their managers should be allowed to stop doing it.



Spend less time in meetings

Take an objective look at the regular meetings sales managers attend and see if there are any that could be removed. For those that are important or add value, consider whether they can be more efficient.



Stop being a slave to technology

Help sales managers take back control of their inbox and calendar by showing them effective management techniques. Managers could try simple but effective things like using apps to manage their inbox.



Schedule coaching sessions

It's important to plan coaching sessions and customer visits by booking them into their diary. By having the time scheduled, sales managers can demonstrate how important coaching is and make sure that it actually happens.

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1:

Why is coaching important to your sales organization?

CHAPTER 2:

Coaching creates better sales managers

CHAPTER 3:

Help your sales managers coach

CHAPTER 4:

Tools that help managers coach effectively

CONCLUSION

APPENDIX

4. Customize coaching for reps

No two salespeople are the same. The needs of someone who is relatively new to the job are very different to that of a seasoned veteran. A rep's level of experience can also impact their attitude to development. While a newbie may be thirsty for knowledge and ideas, it can be harder to bring a veteran salesperson along on the ride.

Regardless of their experience, all reps need to improve - the velocity of change in products, consumer buying behaviors and industry dynamics are just too quick to leave them to their own devices. Managers can identify where each individual needs to develop by observing them in action. If newbies need more help articulating the value proposition then perhaps their coaching needs to focus on role plays. Whereas seasoned reps may need access to case studies and success stories to help them understand how to move prospects through the sales pipeline.

When taking reps through their tailored development plan, sales managers should be clear about what's in it for them. This will help sales reps embrace change and overcome any resistance they may have to training and coaching. Managers can also get the buy-in of their salespeople by asking them what areas they'd like to develop and how they believe it will benefit them. The training then becomes the sales person's idea, and helps them commit to it.

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1:

Why is coaching important to your sales organization?

CHAPTER 2:

Coaching creates better sales managers

CHAPTER 3:

Help your sales managers coach

CHAPTER 4:

Tools that help managers coach effectively

CONCLUSION

APPENDIX

5. Make reps accountable

It's important that salespeople understand what they're being developed on, why, and are held accountable for the results. How a sales manager does this may differ depending on how experienced an individual rep is.

If a salesperson has never sold before, they may find it useful to have their goals broken down into the number of calls, meetings and demos they need to meet their quota. Seasoned reps may benefit from seeing their performance measured before and after they use their new skills to see how it has improved.

It may also be necessary for sales managers to have hard consequences if reps don't put their new skills into practice. This not only shows reps that the organization is serious about behavioral change, but also gives them an opportunity to play ball or face the music.



About MindTickle

MindTickle is the industry's most comprehensive sales readiness solution for closing the knowledge and skill gaps found in customer-facing teams. Sales teams across a wide range of industries use MindTickle's award-winning platform to train, coach, and align their sales teams to make reps and their managers more effective.

Combining on-demand online training, bite-sized mobile updates, gamification, coaching and role-play with a data-driven approach, MindTickle accelerates time-to-productivity, ensures consistent execution, and helps boost sales performance.

Companies leveraging MindTickle for sales enablement to assess and certify the readiness of each rep see bigger deal sizes, higher win rates and reduced sales cycles.
