



Advance

Creators of SCOTSMAN®

Managing the Pipeline

Applying Root Cause Analysis and
Problem Solving to Forecast Accuracy Improvement

*A brief guide to
Pipeline and Opportunity Management Success*

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INTRODUCTION – Improving Forecast Accuracy

One of today's biggest issues for Business Leaders is to achieve the predictability, reliability and consistency of business forecasting demanded by key stakeholders.

Accurate forecasts are key to achieving planned business results, and a range of situations both inside and outside of a business's control, can result in problems.

COVID-19 is a prime example. There has never been a greater need for the use of quality tools and processes such as root cause analysis and problem solving.

Pipeline and Opportunity Management, which governs sales success, is dependent on sales process management and a forensic understanding and interpretation of key data sets to deliver accurate forecasting.

Objective of this Guide

The objective of this guide is to illustrate how the application of appropriate quality tools and processes can provide the kind of analysis required to uncover true root causes of existing problems and implement solutions.

The document focuses on pipeline management, both the size and conversion, critical to sales forecast accuracy and delivering the plan.

It illustrates how to isolate root causes, problem solve them and put in place the necessary corrective actions. It also highlights the role of Sales Leaders and the management of closed loop processes.

Sales Forecasting

Sales Leaders are under pressure to demonstrate that they are in control, and can deliver predictable, reliable and consistent results.

Most Business Leaders are not satisfied with the predictability of business results:

- Sales Leaders are wrestling with the challenge of accurate forecasting
- They do not have the data sets to make informed decisions
- They struggle to measure the quality of the sales pipeline
- Sales Leaders measure what the salesperson is doing, not what the customer is doing
- Sales probabilities are frequently inaccurate
- Sales productivity is often lower than desired

Additionally, the lower the hit rate, the more difficult it is to forecast sales accurately, whatever the system.

Robust qualification needs to be correctly implemented. The discipline of sales qualification for many is not always fully understood. There is often a lack of rigour, lack of science and a lot of ambiguity. As a consequence, effective selling time is wasted – reflected in inaccurate sales forecasts, poor reliability and a lack of consistency.

CRM Systems

CRM systems provide good reporting on month by month forecasts. They don't, however, use forecast ratios or probabilities for each month. Instead, each opportunity has its own probability, based on its stage of sale.

This means that within the 30 day forecast, there can be some opportunities at 90%, others at 10%, or anywhere in between. The same is true for 60 day and 90 day forecasts, and onward. This makes the forecasts more accurate than simply applying broad brush monthly ratios. However, this relies on accurate probabilities, which are rarely set and "out of the box" or "finger in the air" values often used.

Stage of sale probabilities cannot be used to determine the pipeline required two months, three months ahead, and beyond. So, CRM systems are good at recording and presenting what is known because it has happened, but not good at presenting what is going to happen or what is needed. Clearly, this is a serious gap when it comes to forecasting.

Companies can and do miss out on the benefit of being able to look further ahead with confidence.

The CRM system is only as good as the information you put in it, As a result, CRM systems do not support Business Leaders with enough qualitative data to deliver desired improvements in sales force productivity, win rates and the reliability of forecasting.

CRM systems are commonly implemented with a top down approach to give better management forecasting and reporting. A lack of a bottom up approach results in the sales teams not actively using the CRM system to plan and win deals. Companies fail to capture the knowledge inside the salesperson's head.

Why Apply Root Cause Analysis and Problem Solving?

Sales forecasting is always a challenge for companies, so improving accuracy is a high priority requirement.

Effective Root Cause Analysis clearly identifies the necessary actions to problem solve in order to achieve predictable, reliable and consistent forecasting that leads to the achievement of improved conversion rates.

The rest of this document describes how to apply Root Cause Analysis and Problem Solving Process in situations common to almost every organisation.

It starts with a clear, concise Problem Statement. A short description of the Current State follows. This outline is completed with a definition of the Desired State that will be delivered by applying the process and necessary follow-up.

We present a brief description of recommended management process dashboard data sets overleaf, and the relationship between them and the Problem Solving Process on the following page.

Management Process Dashboard Data Sets

Our recommended dashboard structure is shown below. It consists of four data sets:

- **Set 1** carries trend information, showing how the matter being reported on has changed over time.
- **Set 2** shows the current state and distribution – and provides for drilling down into the present situation.
- **Sets 3 and 4** describe the root causes to current problems and the actions planned or recommended to remove those causes and thus fix the problems that are limiting the organisation’s sales success.

1 Trend	2 Current State and Distribution
3 Root Causes	4 Actions

What you **measure** can be improved. What you **inspect** gets done.
But make sure you are **measuring** the **right things!**

Relationship between Data Sets and the Problem Solving Process

1 Problem Solving Process

The problem solving process is described by this diagram.



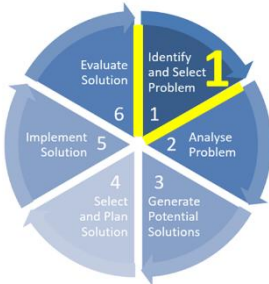
2 Dashboard Structure

The table below shows the relationship between steps 1 to 6 of the problem solving process and the quality dashboard approach to management reporting as outlined on the previous page.

<p>Steps 1 and 6 (Step 6 into Step 1)</p> <p>Trend information exposes the problem(s) and facilitates evaluating results of earlier actions.</p>	<p>Step 1 into Step 2</p> <p>Further detail helps define the problem and begins the analysis stage.</p>
<p>Step 2 into 3</p> <p>In depth, factual analysis exposes the root causes of the problems and helps with the generation of potential solutions.</p>	<p>Steps 4 and 5</p> <p>Solutions having been generated (step 3) and selected (step 4), are ready to be implemented (step 5).</p>

ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS

Problem Statement – Sales Forecasting



Inaccurate forecasting has highlighted that forecasts are not based on a forensic understanding of the pipeline. This results in many costs of non-conformance, risks to achieving budgets and a high level of selling hours wasted. Critically, the business is not fully under control.

Also, root causes identified in business and sales management reviews to date are not always quantified causes upon which corrective actions can be initiated and results measured.

Current State



Inaccurate, inconsistent and ineffective sales forecasting is causing us not to be in control of the business, wasting selling time and risking missing plan.

This means that senior and sales management dashboards can fail to enable close monitoring of the qualitative and quantitative data sets that are critical to ensure Business and Sales Leaders stay in control.

The closed loop sales management process is failing to surface all of the existing problems associated with sales forecasting.

Additionally, predicting and thus, avoiding somewhat obvious problems does not feature in meeting plans.

The above illustrates identifying and selecting the problem (step 1) and beginning to analyse it (step 2)

These are included here to set the scene.

Illustration – Salesforce Performance is Short of Plan

This brief, but important example illustrates problem identification, before we move on to dealing with the bigger picture.

Order revenue is falling short of the 30/60/90 day plan.

Wrong 30/60/90 sales forecasting puts the future plan at risk.

If these short term forecasts fall short, then there are two likely causes:

- Either the prospect base is too small to achieve the forecast or the conversion of the prospect base is below the expected ratio (step 1).

You will notice that, in one case, there is no problem.

The following process, which takes a simple view of potential root causes, illustrates by example, a suggested methodology which should improve the quality of root cause analysis, and in this case, reliability of the forecast.

Using the templates below, the Sales Leader identifies the problems:

Template – Problem Identification

Order Revenue Actual vs Plan %	Prospect Base Actual vs Target %	Problem
On or Over	On or Over	1 No problem (given capacity)!
Over	Under	2 The prospect base is below target (even though order plan was exceeded)
Under	Over	3 The conversion rate of prospects to business written is insufficient
Under	Under	4 The prospect base and/or the conversion rates are below plan or target

Template – Problems by Team

Team	Order Revenue Actual vs Plan %	Prospect Base Actual vs Target %	Problem Statement
Team 1	= or > 100%	= or > 100%	-- 1 --
Team 2	110%	95%	-- 2 --
Team 3	85%	105%	-- 3 --
Team 4	70%	75%	-- 4 --
et al	%	%	N/A

The leader then directs all but Team 1 to apply Step 2 of the Problem Solving Process (Analyse the Problem).

You will have seen that, in this scenario, choices are restricted by the nature of the example. There are four possible current states, three possible problem statements and one "no-problem". Simplicity aids clarity of this part of the process.

End of Illustration

Sales Forecasting Accuracy

When it comes to business forecasting, Sales is firmly in the spotlight. Without accurate sales forecasting the costs to an organisation can be significant and impact many stakeholders.

As stated earlier, Root Cause Analysis starts with a clear, concise Problem Statement. A short description of the Current State follows. This outline is completed with a definition of the Desired State.

The simple illustration on the last page demonstrates that accuracy of forecasting is dependent on two fundamentals:

- The prospect base and the conversion rate.

Each can fall short, be equal to or exceed expectations.

Problem Statement



Inaccurate forecasting has highlighted that forecasts are not based on forensic understanding of the pipeline. This results in many costs of non-conformance, risks to achieving budgets and wasted selling hours.

Also, root causes identified in management reviews to date are not always quantified causes upon which corrective actions can be initiated and results measured.

Steps 1 and 2 of the Problem Solving Process (PSP) get things moving.

Brainstorming and Grouping

Root causes of sales forecasting problems all relate to factors affecting the size and conversion rate of the prospect base (as illustrated earlier).

Brainstorming and grouping is the best way to examine many kinds of problems. The team agreed six main groupings for the potential root causes they identified in the brainstorm. These will be subjects for Root Cause Analysis and Problem Solving:



This guide focusses on the Forecasting, Coverage and Activity arms.

Sales Forecasting – Root Cause Analysis

Root Cause Analysis and Problem Solving start with a clear, concise Problem Statement. A short description of the Current State follows. This outline is completed with a definition of the Desired State that will be delivered by applying the process and necessary follow-up. The process example is embedded after current state and desired state.

Problem Statement (re-cap)

Inaccurate forecasting has highlighted that forecasts are not based on a forensic understanding of the pipeline. This results in many costs of non-conformance, risks to achieving budgets and a high level of selling hours wasted. Critically, the business is not fully under control.

Also, root causes identified in management reviews to date are not always quantified causes upon which corrective actions can be initiated and results measured.

Peeling back the Onion to uncover Root Causes

Identifying and systematically analysing every component of the problem by adopting the '5 Whys' approach will help you dig down to the root cause(s).

For every problem component, keep asking "WHY?" until you reach the point where the question cannot be asked. Only then can you prioritise, plan and implement corrective actions with confidence, because you know that you are dealing with root causes – as opposed to symptoms.

Current State Sales Forecasting (re-cap)

Inaccurate, inconsistent and ineffective sales forecasting is causing us not to be in control of the business, wasting selling time and risking missing plan.

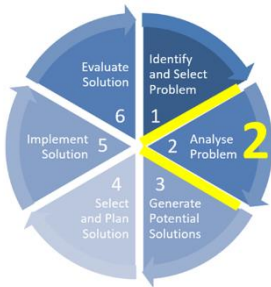
This means that senior and sales management dashboards can fail to enable close monitoring of the qualitative and quantitative data sets that are critical to ensure Business and Sales Leaders stay in control.

The closed loop sales management process is failing to surface all of the existing problems associated with sales forecasting.

Additionally, predicting and thus, avoiding somewhat obvious problems does not feature in meeting plans.

One sub-set of the team focusses on analysing forecasting problems.

- WHY?
- Because the pipeline is not consistently reviewed with robust qualification criteria and quality measures.
- WHY?
- Because we are over-reliant on probabilities based on sellers' input which is usually optimistic, and not measuring what the customer is doing.



- **WHY?**
- Because we don't have a scientific approach to predicting future sales levels, or a consistent sales language which ensures we can be objective, black and white – the customer did or didn't commit to specific next steps.
- **WHY?**
- Because we have not adopted best practices and trained our sellers in robust planning and qualification skills. Leaders are not trained to coach the behaviours of the best.
- **WHY?**
- Because we have depended on data sets from the CRM system focused on quantitative data and probabilities and not focused on continuous qualitative data reporting, critical to forecasting.
- **ALSO:**
- Sales teams often fall into the trap of identifying root causes that disregard prospect ratios, are unquantifiable, or highlight problems that are outside of their domain. Too often, they tend to point to problems outside the control of Sales.

Desired State

Predictable, reliable, and consistent sales forecasting which delivers the budget, enabling leaders to be fully in control, have a forensic understanding of the pipeline and make informed decisions – despite the crippling challenges created by COVID-19.

Moving from out of control to fully in control requires an effective sales forecasting process to be created.

HOW? – Implement the following Vital Few Actions (potential solutions embedded after the statement above to ease understanding):



- 1 Design and implement management dashboards which measure the quality of the pipeline within a closed loop management process which identifies root causes and clear actions.
- 2 Train leaders to be effective in performance management, management by fact, use of quality tools and coaching
- 3 Apply continuous qualification, adapting throughout the selling cycle – contact to contract, in real time.
- 4 Identify potential showstoppers. If you cannot change the rules you are going to lose. If you are going to lose – lose quickly and focus time on winnable business.
- 5 Train sellers in commitment selling so they have the right mindset and adopt the best behaviours. Deals are won when the customer/prospect does some of the work to progress the opportunity.

Winning deals is the accumulation of customer commitments.

Ultimately this should be a fully automated, dynamic, continuous process outputting the required data for cut-offs.

The vital few actions improve the quality of each opportunity, and so, collectively, the quality of the pipeline. Forensic understanding of the pipeline supports leaders to make informed decisions and stay in control.

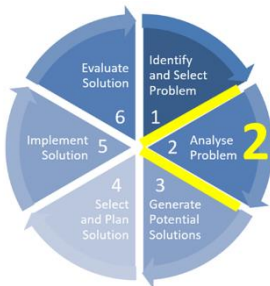
Additionally, the vital few actions, especially those concerned with rigorous qualification, result in higher hit rates, which in turn improve the accuracy of the forecasts and help ensure delivery of the Budget.

As pointed out earlier, our focus is on Forecasting, Coverage and Activity.

Coverage and Activity Shortfalls are Damaging the Pipeline Build

Coverage and Activity have a great impact on the pipeline.

Data Analysis – Worked Example – Coverage Shortfall



Having brainstormed and grouped potential root cause areas, the team moves on to data analysis.

Taking Coverage as an example, the suggested root causes on this bone of the Ishikawa relate to:

- Number of vacant territories
- Attrition rate
- Training time
- Holidays.

These are all easily quantified as either absolute numbers or percentages. The total team time lost could well be a cause of order revenue shortfall. Fewer salesperson days means less time to win business.

Excessive or unplanned time lost will require actions to be put in place to remove the root causes.

If you can ask the question "WHY?", you do not have a root cause.

For example, in a team with a headcount of six people:



- 20% of selling time had been lost because of holidays.
- WHY?
- Because two people's holidays overlapped during the same two weeks.
- WHY?
- Because the holiday authorisation process was not working.
- WHY?
- Because management had let the process slip.

SOLUTION – Enforce the Authorisation Process

You have quantified data analysis, a root cause and a clear action requirement which, in this example, defines itself.

Thus far in our example, we have established that 20% of salespeople's time was lost to holidays during the month.



This leaves Training, Attrition and Vacant Territories. Having “peeled back the onion” with similar data analysis of these three items, we find out (or confirm) that:

- 9% of total salespeople’s time was spent training
- We continue to suffer a 35% attrition rate
- There is one vacant territory at present

So, the coverage situation in our six person team is as follows:

- 20% coverage “lost” to holidays
- 9% coverage “lost” to training
- 17% unmanned territory
- Total “lost” is 46%.

Coverage Problem

Coverage for the month was at 54%.

Root Causes

- | | | |
|---|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 | Holidays | • Process not being used (20%) |
| 2 | Training | • 12 Days (9%) spent training |
| 3 | Attrition | • Continuing at 35% |
| 4 | Vacant Territories | • One (17%) |

Actions

- | | | |
|---|------------------|---|
| 1 | Holidays | • Enforce authorisation process |
| 2 | Training | • Ensure that any impact of training time is taken into account when compiling 30/60/90 day forecasts |
| 3 | Attrition | • Check employee satisfaction improvement status |
| | | • Inspect role model status of management |
| | | • Check the competition’s current compensation packages |
| | | • Inspect recruitment process and practices |
| 4 | Vacant Territory | • Assign trainees to cover |
| | | • Arrange necessary training |
| | | • Step up recruitment actions |

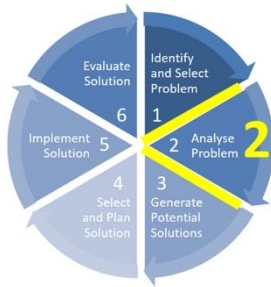
Note: The four items above cover the main reasons why actual revenue is falling short of the sales forecast.

Attrition is covered in more depth in the next section, Activity Shortfall, as its impact is that there were fewer feet on the (virtual) street and therefore, a lower activity level than is assumed in the sales forecast.

Data Analysis – Worked Example – Activity Shortfall

We have peeled the onion back on Coverage.

Similar analysis of Activity revealed that:



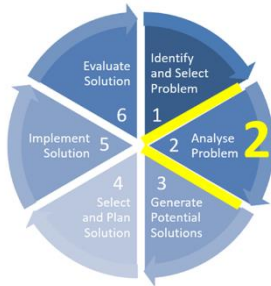
1 The number of sales meetings were 60% of expectation.

- **WHY?**
- Because we did not take enough account of the coverage situation when computing our expected number of sales meetings.
- **WHY?**
- Because we do not bring together all the reasons why sales meetings may not have taken place.



- **WHY?**
- Because we have not focused enough attention on ensuring a systematic approach to prospect development and conversion.
- **SOLUTION** – Create and instal a more comprehensive prospect development process

Once again, you have quantified data analysis, a root cause and a clear action requirement.



2 We have an attrition rate of 35% and one vacant territory:

- **WHY?**
- Because Sales job advertisements are increasing in number.
- **WHY?**
- Because there is a shortage of highly skilled salespeople.
- **WHY?**
- Because a tough marketplace has created the need for higher skills.
- **WHY?**
- Because highly skilled salespeople win more business.
- **WHY?**
- Because they are far more likely to beat the competition.

The impact of the above is the root cause of our existing vacant territory and consequent reduction in activity.



- **SOLUTION** – Check/inspect recruitment process and practices, employee satisfaction improvement status, role model status of sales management, competition’s current compensation packages.

Data Analysis – Concluded – More factors affecting the forecasting problem

Root causes regarding Marketing Programmes, Use of the Forecasting Process and Selling Skills status included:

- 1 A new marketing programme had not been fully implemented.
- 2 Sales training was three months behind schedule because of a lack of virtual selling skills courses.

Actions have been put in place or recommended:

- 1 Programme Manager to conduct a workshop.
- 2 Continuing lobbying for increased availability of sales training.

Action Plans

The vital few actions to be taken to remove the root causes are summarised on the plans illustrated overleaf.

Obvious actions, such as an incentivised prospecting drive, have not been included. The plans are designed to illustrate actions relating to layers beneath the skin of the onion.

These plans, together with summarised evidence of the analysis and decision making from which they were constructed, provide the necessary back up to information to the Actions elements of management data sets.

Based on our example, Actions would include:

- Improve holiday authorisation process
- Implement a more comprehensive prospect development process to support forecasting
- Improve sales recruitment process
- Assign trainee to vacant territory
- Hold additional selling skills training courses
- Hold a marketing programme workshop



Closed Loop Sales Management Process

A closed loop Sales Management Process should be in place. Its agenda includes ensuring that, where applied, the six steps in the Problem Solving Process are engaged in sequence. In real life situations, progress reports are produced throughout, clearly identifying, which steps of the process have been completed and where teams are now.

The management team members are totally familiar with the process, having run it themselves.

- 1 Problem identification and selection.
- 2 Analysis of the problem.
- 3 Generation of potential solutions.
- 4 Selection and planning of the solution selected.
- 5 Implementation.
- 6 Evaluation.



There is no need explain to the management team what comes next, so concentration can be applied to expected challenges or difficulties that are envisaged during the remaining steps of this specific application.

This familiarity of 'how it works' improves the efficiency and effectiveness of the team carrying the work and the management team – a win:win.

Increased efficiency and effectiveness benefits both people development and process performance.

Improving sales forecast accuracy by applying root cause analysis and problem solving to the numerous processes that have an impact on sales success, contributes to delivering credible forecasts and achievable plans.

This enhances the predictability, reliability and consistency needed to get and keep the business under control.

Summary –Key Action Plans (high level)

The reason for including the following outline plans is to provide a starting point that stimulates more thoughts regarding solving the problems that are contributing to falling short of sales revenue forecasts and, more importantly, budgets.

<p>1 – FORECASTING PROCESS IMPROVEMENT PLAN (not surprisingly, many of the following actions involve awareness/influencing of and linkage with other plans) <i>This outline includes some embedded advice.</i></p>
<p>Re-qualify existing prospect base and revise as necessary.</p>
<p>Re-examine historic prospect ratios, determine trends and put in place measures that lead to improved forecasting accuracy.</p>
<p>Define and implement comprehensive prospect development process to help improve 30/60/90 day and longer term forecasting.</p>
<p>Inspect prospect development process progress as part of closed loop sales management reviews (forecasting elements). Review and improve meeting agenda content. Increase priority of and attention given to the future.</p>
<p>Make all possible improvements to future-focussed CRM system outputs, to improve accuracy of future-facing data sets.</p>
<p>Measure what customer is doing in all sales campaigns – an essential element of effective qualification, and higher hit rates which will lead to forecast accuracy improvement. Deals are won when the customer/prospect does some of the work to move the opportunity forward.</p>
<p>Prioritise and plug gaps to meet existing sales training requirements. Improve sales productivity through skills training – in particular, qualification and gaining sales meetings.</p>
<p>Ensure that potential showstoppers are recognised, and swiftly acted upon. If you cannot change the rules you are going to lose. If you are going to lose – lose quickly and focus time on winnable business.</p>
<p>Ensure new marketing programmes objectives and content are clearly understood by Sales.</p>
<p>More thoughts ...</p>

2 – COVERAGE PLAN INTRODUCTION

Improve holiday authorisation process.

Implement selling skills training.

Arrange vacant territory cover by trainees.

More thoughts ...

HOLIDAY AUTHORISATION PROCESS

Check holiday authorisation processes, improve as required and distribute to all employees.

Implement revised processes.

Implement regular process inspection to check progress and capture and act upon any additional process improvements needed.

More thoughts ...

VACANT TERRITORY – TRAINEE COVER

Define roles and responsibilities.

Train trainees to “hold the fort” in vacant territory.

Allocate them (if more than one available) to specific roles.

Implement, ensuring that mentoring and coaching is provided (this is a very good opportunity for the selected trainees to broaden their skills and demonstrate their potential worth to the business).

More thoughts ...

3 – ACTIVITY PLAN INTRODUCTION

Define comprehensive prospect development process to support 30/60/90 day and longer term forecasting.

Arrange selling skills training, paying special attention to gaining meetings skills.

Document and implement the prospect development process.

Inspect prospect development process as part of sales management reviews.

More thoughts ...

SELLING SKILLS – Experienced and trainee salespeople Particular attention to be paid to gaining sales meetings
Hold at least two selling skills virtual workshops.
Accompany trainees on physical and virtual calls during the next two months.
Request increased selling skills training courses to be made available – How? ↓↓.
Convert existing courses and workshops into on-line training programmes that do not need a human leader, effectively creating an unlimited number of e-training events, 24/7.
More thoughts ...

ATTRITION/SALES RECRUITMENT
Identify root causes of the current attrition level, and plan/implement the actions necessary to reduce the 35% to 20% maximum.
Check current recruitment performance and practices for quality of applicants, interviewee:recruit ratios, length of service, etc.
Produce recommendations for improvement. Agree/modify recommendations. Implement agreed changes.
Check employee satisfaction improvement status.
Inspect role model status of management.
Check the competition’s compensation packages.
Inspect recruitment process and practices.
More thoughts ...

MARKETING PROGRAMME WORKSHOPS
Arrange and hold virtual workshops, preferably leaderless, available 24/7, that can keep salespeople (and any other employees who choose to participate) up to speed, whenever they choose to attend.
Include tests of understanding in all virtual events – recognise and reward the most successful participants.
More thoughts ...

Key Points – Quality and Forecasting

Quality Comments

There is a direct relationship between the problem solving process and management data set formats. This is an example of how to embed quality within processes.

Root cause analysis should be directed at things which are under your span of control whenever possible – “What can **we** do to solve the problem?”

True root causes nearly always impact more than one problem. The more thorough the analysis, the broader the impact and the more effective the solution – removal of cause as opposed to quick fix based on symptoms.

If you can ask the question “**WHY?**”, you do not have a root cause.

Forecasting Comments

When it comes to forecasting, the prospect base and conversion rates are clearly the two most important factors.

Restrict action and presentation to your agreed vital few. No-one can solve everything at once, so decide which are the most important and focus on them.

Pareto analysis can help selection, once the root causes are grouped, and indicate the best sequence in which to tackle problems and opportunities.

Conclusions

The importance of Leadership to Pipeline Management

It is key that Business Leaders are effective coaches and experts in sales process and pipeline management. They need to be able to lead root cause analysis and problem solving sessions. Corrective actions to the process or behaviours can then be dealt with quickly.

They also need to know how to use the right levers to drive sales efficiency and effectiveness, and ‘bottle’ sales excellence by replicating the best salespeople.

Coverage and Activity are particularly important, as a reduced percentage of available sales resource will impact every aspect of performance by impairing the four levers of sales growth – Selling Hours, Velocity, Hit Rate and Transaction Value.

Performance Management – The Infrastructure and Data for Success

CRM systems should be valuable tools that provide the data sets to support sales process management. It is crucial to have the right balance of quantitative and qualitative data sets. But CRM systems focus only on the quantitative.

Furthermore, the use of poorly designed and thought out probabilities or ratios hamper progress. CRM system funnels don’t always match the stages of sale for companies. So we need a carefully designed planning, and a closed loop process around them, so that the Sales side of CRM systems can contribute true value to the forecasting process.

Productivity – Redefining Qualification

The average B2B salesperson **loses 70%** of their deals. This has a knock-on effect for forecasting and hitting plan. Top salespeople win **7 out of 10** deals. They are good at qualifying opportunities and losing quickly.

Salespeople plan the work and look for the bad things in their deals. Qualification helps to identify: Will they act and will they act now? You double the power with customer commitments (actions taken by the customer to move the sale forward). This answers the question: Will they act with us?

You get what you inspect, not what you expect

Quality and accurate data should not require 'beating up' sales teams to update the CRM system. If salespeople see how their CRM system adds value for them, personally, they should willingly feed in the necessary information.

SCOTSMAN® and Commitment Selling can be integrated into CRM systems (currently Salesforce.com and MS Dynamics) and feed the qualification, planning and review processes, helping both Sales Leaders and salespeople.

As a result, day-to-day processes build up the right data sets providing forensic understanding, enabling management by fact and facilitating the planning and implementation of corrective actions.

Business Benefit Check

Applying appropriate quality tools and processes effectively, such as Root Cause Analysis and Problem Solving, delivers multi-faceted business benefits:

- The cost of the problems is wiped out
- Resources can be redeployed to removing unnecessary cost or adding more value in other areas
- The obvious negative impacts on the people are replaced by positive impacts, improving their effectiveness, productivity – and satisfaction.

There is no double or triple counting here, the three benefits above continue indefinitely, and most of the value goes straight to the bottom line.

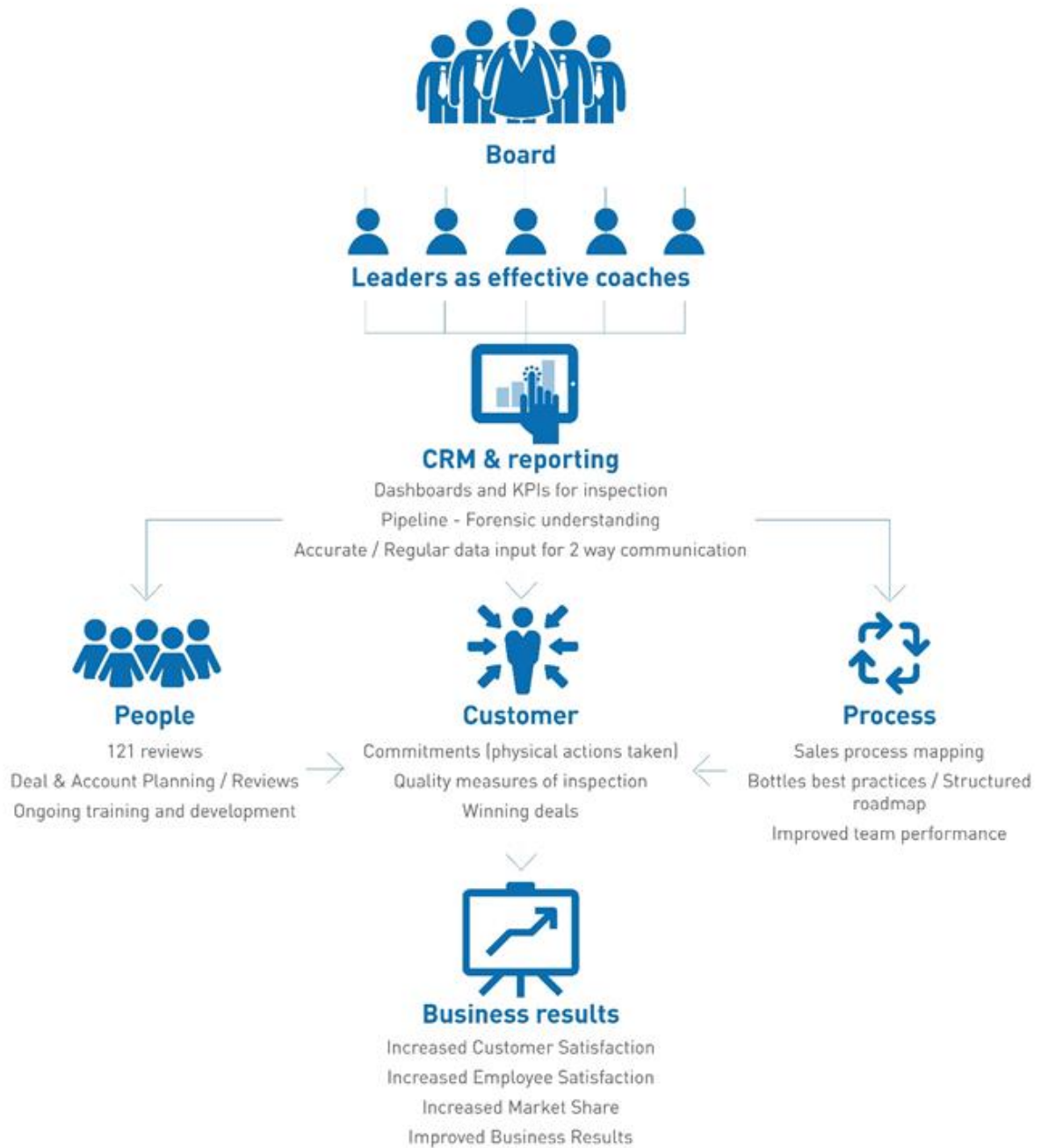


Key to Success – Sales Enablement

Pipeline and Opportunity Management is the backbone of sales enablement, our view of which is summarised in the model on the next page:

The Advance Sales Enablement Model

The Advance Sales Enablement Model



Strategy delivers promises People and processes deliver results

Advance

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