



SALES OPERATIONS PEER GROUP MEETING

Aligning Sales Processes with Sales Strategy

September 2010

Despite the high degree of sales process usage, many member companies still struggle with designing a sales process that aligns with sales strategy and assessing the effectiveness of the process they implement. At this meeting, member companies had an opportunity to compare notes on sales process strategies and practices that boost sales effectiveness.

Key Takeaways are culled from attendees' comments communicated during discussion periods and on paper.

Attendees' Key Takeaways

- √ **"Star performers and people who have been in sales for a long time are having the most difficult time utilizing new technologies."** Researchers have coined the phrase "digital immigrants" for people to whom digital technologies are the equivalent of a new language. Digital immigrants will likely struggle with using and valuing sales processes dependent on technology for workflow and communication.
- √ **"I like the internal Facebook idea. Will help people in medium- to large-size companies feel more connected."** Research shows that people age 35 and above use Facebook for personal connection, for sharing photos and links, and for the convenience of communicating one-to-one and one-to-many in one place. Increasingly, users' experiences of these goals being met in social media will inform what people expect from corporate systems.
- √ **"Programs focused on individual greed often fail; those incentivized around a collaborative goal tend to be more successful."** Research suggests, perhaps counter-intuitively, that self-interest wide enough to include the whole team produces the best results for the organization. Sales processes geared toward team reward for team success beat individual spiffs and incentives hands down.
- √ **"Fairness is an absolute must."** When sales reps don't have equal opportunity to succeed in the sales process, they know it. Nothing shuts down a sales process as quickly as when reps perceive that the game is rigged.
- √ **"Make weekly/monthly sales statistics visible."** Besides being an incentive for performance, such transparency lessens sales reps' suspicions about sharing the information they have held tight in the past.