

10 Best Tips For Building A Winning Sales Team For SMEs



After eating some numbers around and looking at your company's growth, you find that there is something that needs to be done for you to grow; hiring and building a sales team. However, hiring a sales team is one thing, building a winning sales team is another. As a good place to start, I have come up with 10 best tips to kick-start your efforts in this endeavor;

1. Define description, roles and objectives for your sales team

Before hiring a sales team, it's important to have a job description together with roles and objectives that are well stated. This will help you to understand why you are actually hiring a sales team. The quickest ways to come up with this is to look at the skills that you want to offload and those you want to keep. You might be looking for someone who goes out there and brings in customers. That's not a very good task to do yourself as your focus should be on streamlining your company's processes and continually refining your product as you grow the already acquired customers.

Look at what your company needs and the sales skill set that currently exists. Once you compare these and come to terms with where you want to go, it will be easier to develop your objectives for the sales team.

2. Define your sales process and strategy

It's important to understand what processes your company will employ in its sales department. This will assist you to know what talent you want in a sales team. For instance, one sales strategy could be using product demos to demonstrate to customers why they need your product and how to use it. By knowing the sales strategy you intend to follow, you will be able to move to the next step.

3. List the behavioral qualities you need most

Once you know your sales strategy, you can come up with qualities that you need in your team. For example, say your product requires demos as discussed above, you might therefore need a very fluent speaker, and a person who is patient with people. The patience is for consumers who may not understand how the product works during the very first demo. If your sales strategy is to contact consumers using mobile, then you would require a top-notch people's person like a customer care executive maybe.

4. Come up with a definitive compensation plan

I discuss money issues early on because money is important to every sales person you will want to bring on. Since you already defined your sales process and strategy, it's easy to come up with a compensation plan for your sales talents. This can be by way of commissions and bonuses, or by way of commissions and minimum basic pay whether or not the sales reps bring in a new customer within a certain period of time, mostly monthly.

As a good rule of thumb, have a base salary for your team so that they don't have to worry about their next pay check. Let them focus on getting those new customers instead of worrying about money.

5. Stick by your company's culture

Culture in a startup is very central to the success of the company. In a previous article we discussed how startups can maintain their company's culture even when they continue to grow. The article can apply to you here as well so do check it out.

The bottom line is that during your hiring process, find characters that enhance your culture or people who are willing to embrace the company's culture. Disrupting the way a startup does things and carries itself can be very detrimental to its growth.

6. Budget for Training

Don't hire a sales rep based on their previous successes and have high expectations of them reproducing the same results in your company. Things might not be that straightforward. The product is different, and so is the company, the customers your sales reps are going for and the environment.

With so many things being different, the only surefire way your team will reproduce their heroics at previous companies is to invest in their training. Build their skills further and customize these skills to the needs of your company. Make sure to educate your new sales team on how to find possible customers, how to stick by your sales strategy and finesse it. Provide feedback and never stop coaching them on how to be better. Remember, training is an ongoing process as is learning.

7. Be quick to fire

You don't want dead logs in your team. If the person doesn't have results to show, fire them. Very fast.

That's because in sales and marketing time is of the utmost essence. The more time you waste with an unproductive sales person, the more money you lose and the more customers go to your competitors.

Some people are very good on paper and theoretically during the hiring process. They are also good at pleasing you so that they can get that job. Once the job is there, days come and go, and they have nothing to show for it. Don't tolerate such people.

8. Do a lot of communicating

Communication between you and your sales team should be top-notch and in several drips that are totally extensive. Get onto things quickly and communicate to your sales team the soonest.

Don't leave issues sitting there for weeks unaddressed.

Don't leave your sales team guessing.

Great communication is an important part of building an effective sales team.

9. Develop metrics for success

Having metrics that you can hold your team to will go a long way in keeping your team accountable and defining their milestones. Let the team send you daily or weekly reports and stats of how they are progressing. Don't skip this step, by all means.

When your team meets specific targets, give them little bonuses.

10. Read a lot

There are lots of bestselling titles that show you how to building winning sales teams for your growing company. Get these books and read them in plenty, learn from them and implement what you deem fit into your sales team. You can never go wrong in learning a lot about anything. You can only get better.