

Sales Training: Deploying Knowledge, Process and Technology to Consistently Hit Quota

September 2010

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Executive Summary

Sales organizations in 2010 remain under economic pressure to accomplish more with less, as companies worldwide endeavor to achieve and sustain post-recessionary profitability through top-line revenue growth. The result is often a larger investment in knowledge transfer, promulgation, and retention in order to arm sales talent with the skills and behaviors necessary to acquire larger customers within shorter selling cycles. With the advent of technologies enabling buyers with increasing insight into the sellers' products and competitors, the traditional strategies of bringing qualified prospects to a closed deal require a new set of contemporary skills among sales staff.

Best-in-Class Performance

In May and June 2010, Aberdeen surveyed 835 end-user organizations to learn about their deployments of sales training. Aberdeen used the following three key performance criteria, among only the 465 companies deploying sales training, to distinguish the sales teams within Best-in-Class companies:

- An average of 77% of their sales reps are achieving their annual sales quota, compared to 38% for Industry Average and 26% among Laggard companies
- 14.8% average year-over-year increase in annual corporate revenue, compared to a 2% increase and 11.7% decrease among Industry Average and Laggard companies, respectively
- 7.2% year-over-year increase in average sales deal size or contract value, versus a 0.1% increase for the Industry Average and 7.8% decrease among Laggards

Competitive Maturity Assessment

Survey results show that the firms enjoying Best-in-Class performance share several common characteristics, including:

- Providing sales managers customized training and content, distinct from that offered to sales reps
- Maintaining a focus on frequent training activities for both sales reps and managers

Required Actions

In addition to the specific recommendations in Chapter Three of this report, to achieve Best-in-Class performance, companies must:

- Embed sales training content into both easily accessible knowledge repositories, as well as linking it to defined CRM sales stages
- Ensure an aggressive approach to ongoing reinforcement and refreshment of sales training skills and content provided
- Gain and retain executive-level sponsorship for sales training initiatives

Research Benchmark

Aberdeen's Research Benchmarks provide an in-depth and comprehensive look into process, procedure, methodologies, and technologies with best practice identification and actionable recommendations

How Does Your Performance Compare to the Best-in-Class?



- Compare your processes
- Receive a free, personal PDF scorecard
- Benefit from custom recommendations to improve your performance, based on the research

Take the Assessment

Receive Your Free Scorecard

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Chapter One: Benchmarking the Best-in-Class

The economic downturn has placed continued pressure on the sales function within businesses, seeing its leaders tasked with achieving increasing sales efficiencies. In fact, 48% of more than 1,600 executives from cross-functional business disciplines surveyed in July and August 2010 for Aberdeen's *Quarterly Business Review* indicated "organic revenue growth" as their organization's top goal; while external forces have reduced or delayed the number of real sales opportunities and threatened to erode successful sales quota attainment. However, while conventional wisdom might have predicted a budgetarily-required reduction in sales training during the midst of the economic recession, the opposite trend was revealed among 517 companies surveyed for Aberdeen's September 2009 research [*Sales Training: Translating Tribal Selling Knowledge into Bottom-Line Productivity*](#). Indeed, 45% of top-performing organizations from that study indicated they were increasing their sales training spend.

Top-performing companies in this study – those that most learned to adapt to difficult conditions and emerged the strongest – understand the need for actionable practices and data that aligns sales behavior with business objectives and creates best practices that allow them to rapidly adapt to changes in the market. This requires a holistic approach that not only includes productivity enhancements for the sales function, but also potentially for key partners in marketing, finance, operations, human resources, and information technology, all of whose efforts impact both top and bottom line growth.

Business Context of Sales Training

Few business executives would disagree that traditional selling, particularly in the Business-to-Business (B2B) arena, has rapidly evolved from the times of Willy Loman, or *Glengarry Glen Ross*, into a sophisticated, data-rich environment requiring myriad contemporary prospecting, nurturing and closing skills. Prospects and customers demand more than a product from their sales rep; they seek added value through consultative and problem-solving skills, with need-based conversations instead of sales pitches, and often they desire a long-term relationship that survives the drying ink on the contract.

Clearly, corporate sales organizations must adapt to today's on-demand selling environment and the resulting altered buying cycles, as well as new methodologies of transferring knowledge to and from customers and prospects. Maintaining credibility, customer satisfaction and their own profitability requires ongoing attention to the skill sets of the company's front line in order to assure the highest degree of sales effectiveness in managing prospects through the sales cycle. To this end, a wide variety of sales training solutions and methodologies are deployed by companies seeking to lower or control the cost of selling, while maximizing the top line of gross revenue, by influencing the behavior of their sales reps.

Fast Facts

- √ 63% of Best-in-Class companies offer formal, structured sales training, vs. 36% of Laggards. Informal or on-the-job training is deployed in opposite proportions: 37% of the Best-in-Class and 64% of Laggards.
- √ 51% of companies rely on internal trainers or subject matter experts; 48% use external providers
- √ The Best-in-Class are 14% more likely than other firms to consider sales training "absolutely vital" or "integral to our success"

"Training is essential to any sales person or manager. Everyone should be cross-trained in marketing, management, etc. Even the very seasoned sales/manager/marketing director/VP can always learn, as well as refresh their skills."

~ Marguerite Pollard,
Educational Sales Consultant,
Zaner-Bloser Publishing

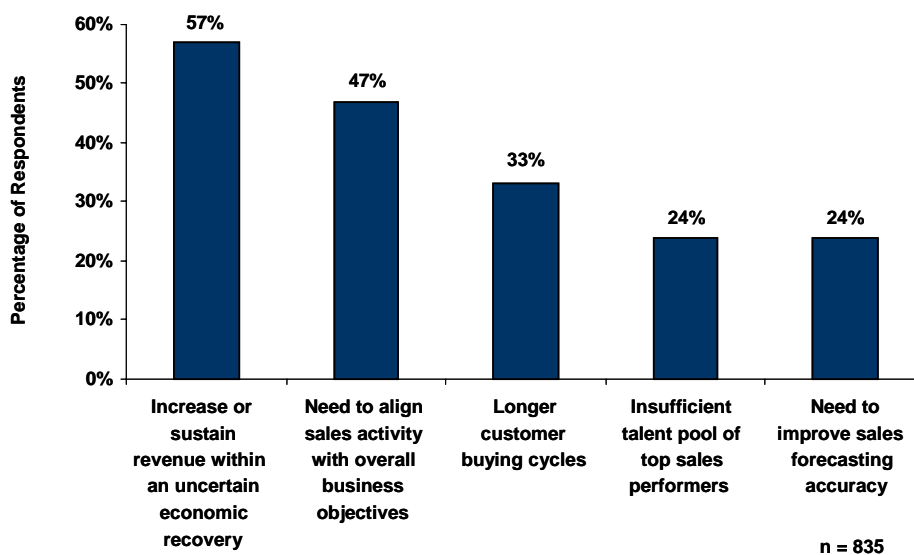
Aberdeen research conducted for [*Sales Intelligence: Preparing for Smarter Selling*](#) (February 2010) found that the Best-in-Class (top 20% of performers around quota attainment and sales cycle reduction) among 528 companies were 52% more likely than Laggards (35% vs. 23%) to deploy externally-provided training on behalf of their sales team. Moreover, companies from this study that deployed sales training report an average of 58% overall team attainment of quota, compared to 42% among those who do not; 30% of sales training users saw this metric improve on a year-over-year basis, compared to 18% for other companies.

Travel expenses, long considered a necessary burden associated with traditional, classroom-oriented sales training, were also mitigated by the growing use of virtual and other remote modalities in the 2009 sales training research. In fact, 31% of the Best-in-Class actually saw a year-over-year improvement (reduction) in their sales travel expenses, nearly twice the 16% reported by Laggards.

Identifying the Business Pressures Addressed by Sales Training

In terms of the business challenges motivating these organizations' sales strategies, it should be of no surprise that the business community is still wondering if the clouds of economic recession have been lifted only temporarily. Indeed, the leading concern among these respondents is the business climate as a whole (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Business Pressures Associated with Sales Training



Source: Aberdeen Group, September 2010

The second most cited business pressure driving sales training efforts is the "need to align sales activity with overall business objectives." This speaks

Sector Definition

For the purposes of this study, "sales training" refers to internal or external solutions deployed by sales leadership (Chief Sales Officer, EVP / SVP / VP of Sales / Operations / Enablement / Effectiveness) in order to provide both content and skills to front-line selling personnel. The research data is drawn only from companies deploying some form of training, which exists in a wide variety of methodologies, from traditional classroom-based, instructor led events to online/virtual tools, video, and individualized content and communications portals.

directly to the concept of sales effectiveness, and addresses the question of how efficient sales organizations are at matching what their reps say and do, to the overlying business goals of their employer. Additional pressures cited by 24% or more companies speak to concerns that potentially can be addressed by sales training, and which have been discussed in recent Aberdeen sales effectiveness research:

- **Longer customer buying cycles** are a natural fear in an economy that is not humming. However, in Aberdeen's research report [*Optimizing Lead-To-Win: Shrinking the Sales Cycle and Focusing Closers on Sealing More Deals*](#) (May, 2010), the top performers reported 22% more strength in attacking the problem by quickly onboarding and training new sales people, compared to the bottom-performing companies. The top performers in that study – 57% of which currently used or had specific plans to deploy external sales training – were able to shrink their sales cycles by 8.4% on a year-to-year basis; Laggards saw a 6.7% average lengthening.
- **Insufficient top sales talent** might seem like a contradiction in terms given the current high unemployment rates, but as most successful managers know, quality trumps quantity when filling crucial, revenue-centric roles such as sales, particularly when individual quota attainment is vital to overall business success. Indeed, in Aberdeen's August 2010 report [*Sales Performance Management: Getting Everyone on the Same Page*](#), even the top performers among 534 firms required an average of 5.37 months to hire and train sales team members to levels of typical productivity; all other companies averaged even longer, 5.8 months. Given this productivity loss of nearly half a year, multiplied by an average reported annual sales turnover rate of 21%, training new and current salespeople into better skills – and better performance – makes sense. In fact, 64% of the top-performers in that study indicated they deploy formal training, versus 38% among all other organizations in that study. Plus, with an average sales rep replacement cost of \$30,420 among all respondents, the stakes for educating team members into high performance levels are very high.
- **Better sales forecasts** are associated with top-performing companies. In Aberdeen's [*Sales Forecasting: Analytics to the Rescue!*](#) report (June, 2010), the Best-in-Class (defined in that report as the top 20% of aggregate performers in accuracy of sales forecasts, sales team attainment of quota, and gross revenue per sales rep) averaged 83% sales forecast accuracy, compared with 44% for bottom-performers. These top-performers were also 38% more likely (38% vs. 23%) than their counterparts to use sales training. Top performers used both technology and knowledge to achieve an average 13% annual increase in their team attainment of sales quota, compared to zero growth for the middle 50% and an 8% decrease for the bottom 30% of aggregate performers.

The Maturity Class Framework

Aberdeen used three key performance criteria among responding sales organizations around sales training, to distinguish the Best-in-Class from Industry Average and Laggard organizations:

- Current percentage of sales representatives achieving sales quota
- Year-over-year change in overall corporate revenue
- Year-over-year change in average deal size or contract value

Organizations with top performance based on these criteria earned Best-in-Class status, as described in Table 1. For additional details on the Aberdeen Maturity Class Framework, see Table 5, The Competitive Framework Key, in Appendix A.

"Classroom-based sales training must be followed up closely with ongoing field coaching and feedback."

~ Yoon Pak Low, New Business Development, Dow Corning Singapore Pte Ltd

Table 1: Top Performers Earn Best-in-Class Status

Definition of Maturity Class	Mean Class Performance
Best-in-Class: Top 20% of aggregate performance scorers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 77% of sales reps, on average, are achieving their annual sales quota ▪ 14.8% average year-over-year improvement in annual corporate revenue; 91% showed improvement ▪ 7.2% average year-over-year increase in average deal size or contract value; 58% showed improvement
Industry Average: Middle 50% of aggregate performance scorers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 38% of sales reps, on average, are achieving their annual sales quota ▪ 2% average year-over-year improvement in annual corporate revenue; 38% showed improvement ▪ 0.1% average year-over-year increase in average deal size or contract value; 20% showed improvement
Laggard: Bottom 30% of aggregate performance scorers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 26% of sales reps, on average, are achieving their annual sales quota ▪ 11.7% average year-over-year decrease in annual corporate revenue; 3% showed improvement ▪ 7.8% average year-over-year decrease in average deal size or contract value; 3% showed improvement

Source: Aberdeen Group, September 2010

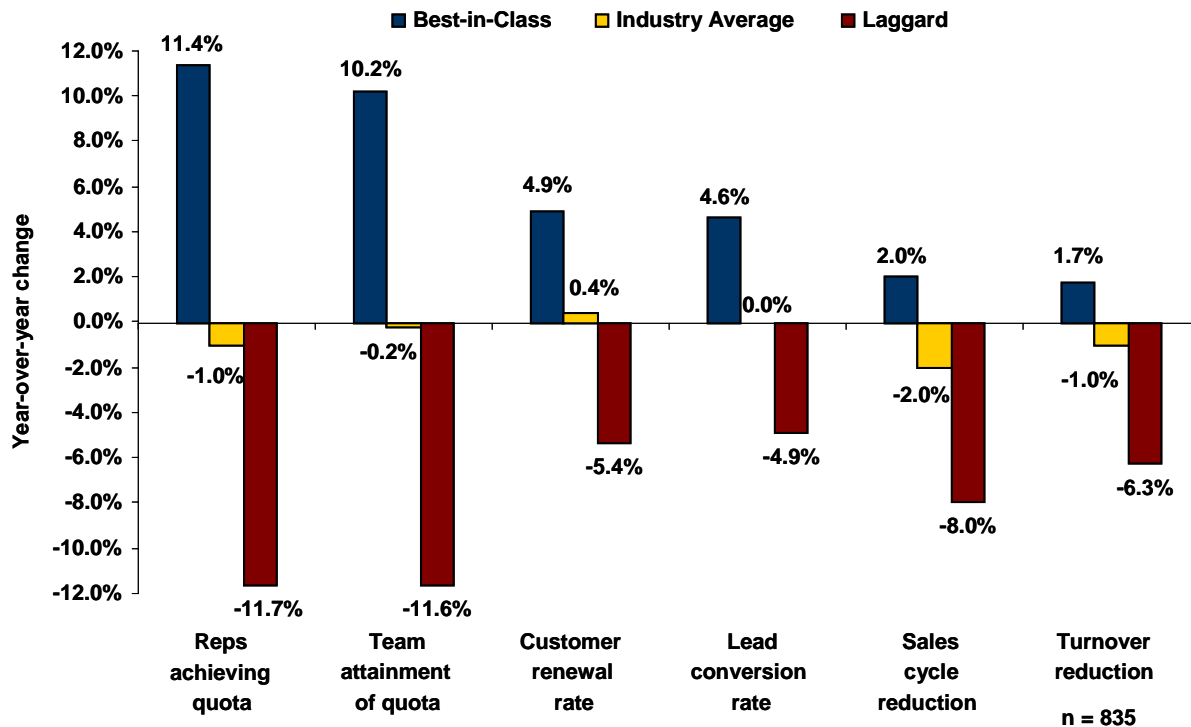
With an understanding of the results associated with Best-in-Class sales organizations around training, it is worth examining how these companies reach these advanced levels of achievement.

Best-in-Class Business Landscape

Not all companies deploy sales training – the 56% of survey respondents that indicated their organizations do were used to calculate the maturity classes above – but performance differentials between users and non-users include gaps in current (percentage of sales reps achieving quota, sales

turnover and average deal size) and year-over-year (team attainment of quota, lead conversion rate, sales cycle reduction) results, that point to the value of adoption overall. Among all organizations utilizing sales training, additional year-over-year advances by the top performers are dramatic in comparison to other organizations, as illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2: The Best-in-Class Demonstrate Significant Year-over-Year Success



Source: Aberdeen Group, September 2010

Looking more in-depth at the specific content, modality and timing of Best-in-Class training deployments is worthwhile, to understand not just whether top performing sales teams deploy training, but exactly how they do so and what best practices can be adopted by other organizations aspiring to achieve the kind of sustainable metrics represented by the above-the-bar performance in Figure 2.

As Table 2 illustrates, the content of externally-provided sales training used by Best-in-Class sales organizations focuses on strategic rather than the tactical aspects of professional selling, with an underlying theme of customized, buyer-driven sales practices. At the top of the list sits strategic account mapping and prospecting/discovery skills: who are the individual players, budget holders, decision-makers, influencers, champions or barriers within specific sales targets to which I am assigned, and how can I effectively navigate inside each company to make and sustain sales?

Table 2: Sales Training Content Delivered by the Best-in-Class

Type of External Sales Training	Percent of Best-in-Class
Strategic account mapping	47%
Prospecting/discovery skills	37%
Creating prospect/customer demand	31%
Account management	29%
Negotiation skills	27%
Objection-handling	25%
Sales management	25%
Presentation/demo skills (live or virtual)	24%
Products and pricing	16%

Source: Aberdeen Group, September 2010

Training in these skills leads to more effective seller-buyer communications, which can better drive demand and, once an initial sales is made, better relationships amid long-term account management activities. It also leads to a more complete understanding of prospective customer, including the myriad prospect groups (i.e. product teams, divisions, etc.), in addition to budget-holders and related influencers. With this knowledge, it becomes much clearer for a sales representative to position how the company's solutions can address these varied needs.

At the bottom of the content spectrum are product/pricing training activities, sourced externally by only one in eight Best-in-Class respondents. These granular elements are perhaps best handled internally, since the specifics of every company do not naturally map to the methodologies and best practices offered on a more horizontal basis by sales training solution providers. On a related note, the Best-in-Class organizations indicate "cost of solution" as only the fourth most important characteristic in selecting their own vendors, behind demonstrated success in similar projects, domain expertise or commitment to customer service.

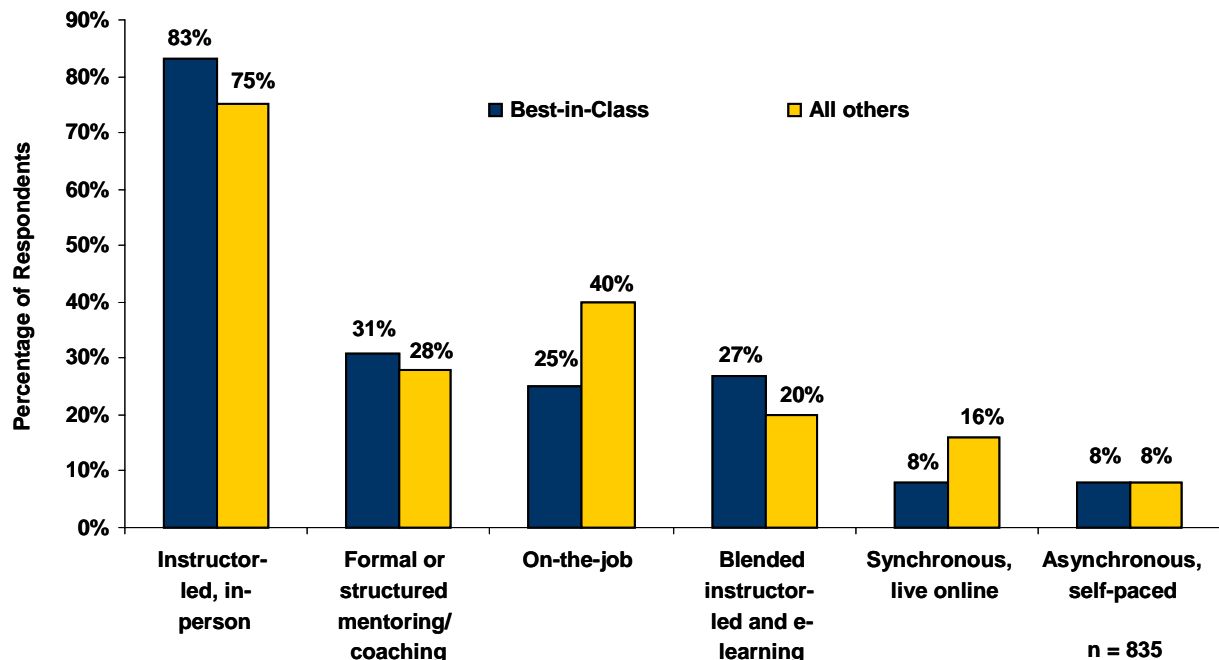
Training Modalities: Something Old, Something New

Moving from the content of sales training to the way in which it is delivered, how do the best-performing organizations serve up best practices to their team? As illustrated in Figure 3, the most traditional approach is secure, in that live, instructor-led sessions are by far considered the most effective modality, among both the Best-in-Class and all organizations. This does not detract from the value of contemporary technologies – in fact, 51% of the top performers also use online e-learning, mobile and video modalities to support their instructor-led approach – but merely supports, as a best practice, a tried-and-true approach that works.

"Be sure to determine pre- and post- training business metrics in order to determine achievement of concrete training goals."

~ Tom Ortez, Sales Development Program Manager, Agilent Technologies

Figure 3: Most Effective Sales Training Modalities by the Best-in-Class



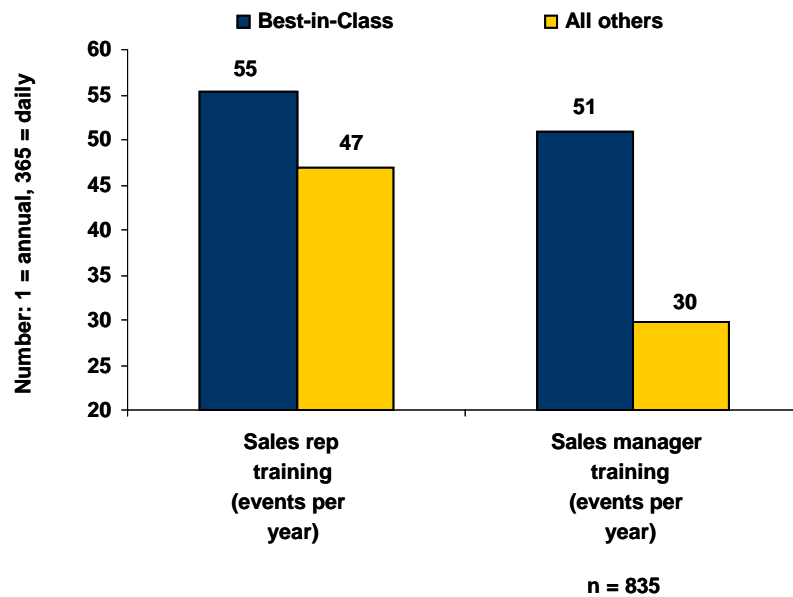
Source: Aberdeen Group, September 2010

What Aberdeen's 2010 sales training data does tell us, as well, is that formal training of any sort is valuable, in that more of the Best-in-Class deploy both instructor-led as well as structured mentoring/coaching than other firms, and that simple on-the-job training is adopted 60% less frequently by these organizations versus other companies. Another low-performance trend (half as many Best-in-Class vs. others) is represented by "synchronous, live online" sales training, which represents – as a stand-alone modality – a potentially ineffective way to capture and keep a sales rep's attention without the classroom experience; today's multi-taskers are not likely to adequately absorb and deploy this particular delivery of training content if left to their own devices.

More is More

So, how much sales training is necessary to achieve Best-in-Class performance? Figures 4 and Figure 5 provide insight into the volume and frequency of top performers' deployments. Clearly, for both front-line sales reps and their managers, more substance and reinforcement is optimal, with the Best-in-Class providing nearly two formal or ad hoc opportunities each month, and Laggards half as much.

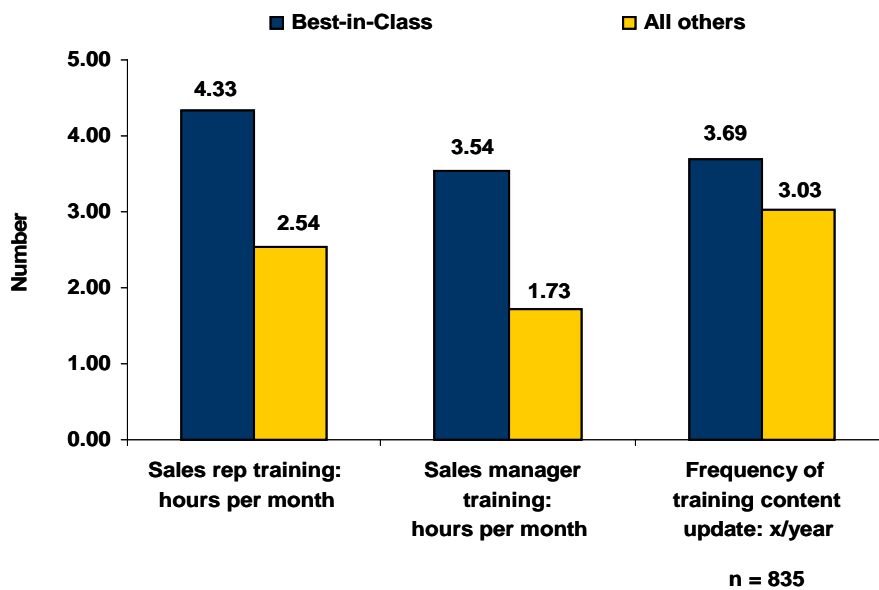
Figure 4: Frequency of Sales Training by the Best-in-Class



Source: Aberdeen Group, September 2010

Further, the amount of training on a per-month basis also reveals a more intense focus by the industry leaders. These top-performing companies provide sales managers with twice as much training activity per month than all other organizations, and do so nearly as much for their sales reps.

Figure 5: Training Volume and Content Refresh by the Best-in-Class



Source: Aberdeen Group, September 2010

The Best-in-Class also provide more timely updates of sales training content. This allows for more accurate knowledge pertaining critical items such as product updates and competitive maneuvers (both internal and external to the company).

The Best-in-Class PACE Model

Thus far, the model sales training deployment appears to be one of substantive, ongoing knowledge transfer, in a live setting with instructor-led content around strategic, account-based selling, and supported by frequent reinforcement of key concepts. Using sales training to achieve corporate goals also requires a combination of strategic actions, organizational capabilities, and enabling technologies and services that can be summarized as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: The Best-in-Class PACE Framework

Pressures	Actions	Capabilities	Enablers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase or sustain revenue within an uncertain economic recovery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enhance sales prospecting, nurturing and closing skills ▪ Create more meaningful sales conversations that address buyer's overall business needs ▪ Standardize messaging and sales process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Homegrown or externally-provided formal sales methodology ▪ At least one dedicated staff resource (FTE) for sales improvement/training ▪ Post-training reinforcement ▪ Sales managers receive customized training and content, distinct from that offered to sales reps ▪ Top-level executives within our company are active sponsors of sales training initiatives ▪ Defined competencies for each sales role ▪ Defined sales performance metrics are widely publicized 	<p><u>Technology:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dynamic library of marketing and sales assets ▪ CRM/SFA integration of call planning and selling milestones ▪ Customized sales playbooks ▪ Virtual or on-demand training content <p><u>Service:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Instructor-led training ▪ Behavioral analysis/assessment ▪ Customized coaching from third-party providers – team or deal-specific ▪ Licensable content or methodology

Source: Aberdeen Group, September 2010

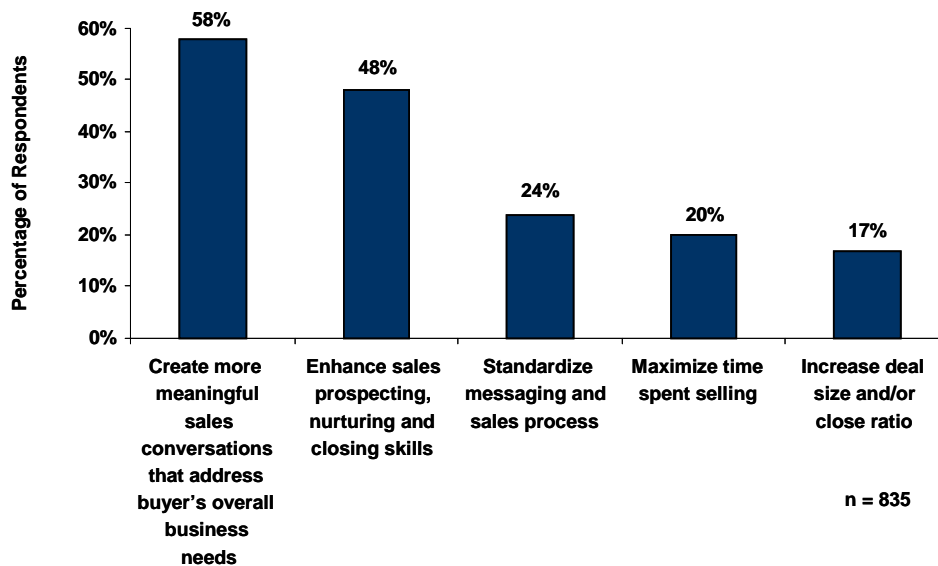
Best-in-Class Strategies

The most popular strategies among Best-in-Class organizations to improve sales effectiveness in the context of sales training (Figure 6) are focused on building and sustaining better customer relationships through sales training. While these strategies follow a number of themes, two stand out: speaking directly to the needs of a sales prospect, and better managing the sales cycle.

Following the above theme of customized, client-centric conversations, the best sales organizations focus their training strategies around those skills that will most successfully, and repeatedly, open doors with behavior that legitimately addresses the most important needs of the prospect and

customer whose business in turn helps the selling team achieve both quota attainment and customer loyalty.

Figure 6: Best-in-Class Strategic Actions in Response to Pressures



Source: Aberdeen Group, September 2010

Case Study — SunTrust

Consider the case of Atlanta-based SunTrust, one of the nation's largest regional banks. When Mary Slaughter joined as Chief Learning Officer in January 2009, the depths of the economic recession and public mood regarding the financial services industry were creating significant problems for the company. "Even though our performance and stability were considered 'solid' for the industry," she explains, "the old saying about 'all ships rising or falling with the tide' holds true; we were in a sector that people simply didn't trust," and as a result client deposits and loyalty were both on the decline.

As SunTrust instituted a company-wide cultural transformation focused on the three tenets of, "putting clients first, acting as one team, and generating profitable growth," Slaughter explains that a crucial decision was made "to better equip our front-line client-facing professionals with the distinct goal of bringing the customer experience to a new level." While in troubling economic times, the predictable reaction would be to cut training, she says; "An increased investment in sales training was made because we felt it had enormous potential to enhance our overall business." At stake were the needs, "to reverse the recession-driven decrease in client satisfaction and to enhance the client experience," and Slaughter adds that "internal employee surveys pointed toward needing more tools to get their jobs done."

continued

"An increased investment in sales training was made because we felt it had enormous potential to enhance our overall business."

~ Mary Slaughter, Chief Learning Officer, SunTrust

Case Study — SunTrust

After selecting a sales training provider, the bank rolled out content beginning with senior leaders in October 2009, and continued with regional presidents, managers and, so far, over 10,000 staff members; 5,000 additional employees are planned to be rolled into the program. The training content went far beyond pure selling, according to Slaughter; “While we have many actual sales staff, we’ll be extending e-learning to our tellers so they can appreciate the linkage between their service-driven role and sales; our senior leaders have benefited tremendously from the coaching training as well.”

Less than a year after the broad implementation of SunTrust’s sales training roll-out, Slaughter says that; “We’ve seen record levels of deposit growth, the ‘voice of client’ feedback has improved around multiple satisfaction ratings, and our teammate engagement increases speak to the value of actually leveraging this investment at a time when doing so may have seemed counter-intuitive.” By focusing on their clients and deploying the tools necessary to meet their needs, SunTrust represents a clear example of linking sales training to bottom-line business results.

In the next chapter, we will see what the top performers are doing to achieve these gains.

Chapter Two: Benchmarking Requirements for Success

Effective sales training plays a critical role in an organization's ability to turn these strategies into profit. The following is an analysis of how top performers distinguish themselves from other companies through the implementation of capabilities and enablers that support excellence in deploying sales training best practices.

Case Study — Underwriters Laboratories

Consider the case of Underwriters Laboratories, the independent product safety certification organization. Prior rolling out a formal sales training methodology in 2004, explains Keith Gilbert, Business Development Manager, Chemical, “we had very little consistency in the way we approached prospects, managed accounts, planned meetings or even reported on our sales pipeline.” As a result, he explains, UL sales managers were limited in their ability to coach team members consistently; accurately forecast the amount of closed business; and essentially saw “everyone playing off a different sheet of music.” To make matters worse, no consistent CRM deployment was in place across a variety of business units and geographies.

Upon rolling out a consistent sales training methodology, as well as settling on an enterprise-wide CRM, Gilbert says that improvements were quickly seen, though the process was not always smooth. Some of the longer-tenured sales team members were reticent to adopt new techniques and use online access to training content, but “the more career-oriented – and ultimately most successful – reps were eager to absorb the new system. After an initial roll-out, over 70 team members have now been formally trained, with plans for the global sales team of 250 to eventually participate.”

As Gilbert says, “We saw significant turnaround in business opportunities after implementing the training. We expanded into higher-level contacts, saw bigger deals, and are earning more annual contracts as opposed to the bulk of business lying in more transactional deals as in the past.” One large plastics manufacturer account grew from \$250k to \$12M per year in UL spend, he continues, “purely through building peer-to-peer relationships at higher levels, identifying more pain points, and getting away from the transactional type of selling from the past.”

Fast Facts

- ✓ Among companies that use formal sales training, the average firm has done so for 3.7 years
- ✓ 79% of their sales staff have typically participated within the past year
- ✓ Managers' sales training focuses vary among the maturity classes: the Best-in-Class emphasize selling skills 50% more frequently than other companies, but products/pricing 41% less often. “General management training” is the leading management training content among all respondents.

Competitive Assessment

Aberdeen Group analyzed the aggregated metrics of surveyed companies to determine whether their performance ranked as Best-in-Class, Industry Average, or Laggard. In addition to having common performance levels, each class also shared characteristics in five key categories: (1) **process** (the approaches they take to execute daily operations); (2) **organization** (corporate focus and collaboration among stakeholders); (3) **knowledge management** (contextualizing data and exposing it to key stakeholders); (4) **technology** (the selection of the appropriate tools and the effective deployment of those tools); and (5) **performance management** (the ability of the organization to measure its results to improve its business). These characteristics (identified in Table 4) serve as a guideline for best practices, and correlate directly with Best-in-Class performance across the key metrics.

Table 4: The Competitive Framework

	Best-in-Class	Average	Laggards
Process	Homegrown or externally-provided formal sales methodology		
	73%	64%	51%
	Analyze existing customers' data to promote cross- and up-selling		
	71%	57%	51%
	Formal "train the trainer" methodology		
	46%	37%	26%
Organization	Top-level executives within our company are active sponsors of sales training initiatives		
	80%	72%	49%
	Defined competencies for each sales role		
	66%	60%	41%
	At least one dedicated staff resource (FTE) for sales improvement/training		
	53%	48%	25%
Knowledge	Post-training reinforcement		
	54%	50%	28%
	Sales managers receive customized training and content, distinct from that offered to sales reps		
	48%	42%	19%
	Extensive sales team cross-training of other company functions, such as marketing, customer service, procurement, etc.		
	46%	28%	23%

	Best-in-Class	Average	Laggards
Enabling Technology/Service	<u>Technologies</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 56% Dynamic library of marketing and sales assets ▪ 55% CRM/SFA integration of call planning and selling milestones ▪ 43% Customized sales playbooks ▪ 36% Social media used for internal collaboration 	<u>Technologies</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 53% Dynamic library of marketing and sales assets ▪ 47% CRM/SFA integration of call planning and selling milestones ▪ 35% Customized sales playbooks ▪ 24% Social media used for internal collaboration 	<u>Technologies</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 42% Dynamic library of marketing and sales assets ▪ 30% CRM/SFA integration of call planning and selling milestones ▪ 30% Customized sales playbooks ▪ 17% Social media used for internal collaboration
	<u>Services</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 70% Instructor-led training ▪ 44% Behavioral analysis/assessment ▪ 43% Customized coaching from third-party providers – team or deal-specific ▪ 40% Licensable content or methodology 	<u>Services</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 68% Instructor-led training ▪ 39% Behavioral analysis/assessment ▪ 37% Customized coaching from third-party providers – team or deal-specific ▪ 35% Licensable content or methodology 	<u>Services</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 50% Instructor-led training ▪ 30% Behavioral analysis/assessment ▪ 25% Customized coaching from third-party providers – team or deal-specific ▪ 20% Licensable content or methodology
Performance	Defined sales performance metrics are widely publicized		
	72%	63%	46%

Source: Aberdeen Group, September 2010

Capabilities and Enablers

Based on the findings of the Competitive Framework and interviews with end users, the Best-in-Class demonstrate that a highly identifiable set of corporate capabilities and enablers can lead to measurable business success through the deployment of specific sales-oriented methodologies and technologies. Additional Aberdeen research is cited to further support these positive trends.

Process

While it may seem obvious for professional selling organizations to adopt a **formal selling methodology**, barely half of Laggard performers in this data set have enacted this process capability, while nearly three-quarters of the Best-in-Class have done so. Whether the protocol involves defining the different responsibilities of team members within the customer management lifecycle – lead generation, inside sales, closers, account managers – or

perhaps the sales stages by which the company can measure its forecasted business more accurately, the simple tasks regarding what and when to communicate with prospects within the sales process is a crucial best practice.

Layered on top of these communications protocols are significantly different Best-in-Class and Laggard adoption rates regarding **cross-selling and up-selling** activities rooted in better knowledge of prospect or customer activities and data. Indeed, 53% of the top-performing companies in [*Providing a 360° View of the Customer - Better Service - Higher Sales*](#) (March, 2010) supported sellers with formal training on customer-facing skills, versus 42% of other companies. That study of 443 companies showed how linking views of customer data among various enterprise data silos was directly associated with higher rates of customer retention, satisfaction and especially annual spend; the last of these metrics is supported by better cross-selling and up-selling efficiencies that can be taught through sales training.

Finally, Best-in-Class companies outpace Laggards by 77% (46% vs. 26%) in their adoption of a **"train the trainer" methodology**. These organizations work with outside providers of best practices and content to empower their own leadership with the data, style and delivery models to ensure that effective sales training becomes embedded in their culture for the long term. Additional advantages of a formal "train the trainer" deployment include ensuring consistency of high quality sales training delivery - which helps provide a better experience for all attendees - that is especially important when sales teams are too large to be trained by the same person or at the same event, or when new sales people are added to the team at a later time.

"Make training part of your sales culture: 'It's how we do business.'"

~ Tom Moriarty, President,
Kensingtonhouse Ltd

Organization

Research from Aberdeen's Human Capital Management (HCM) practice [*Learning & Development: Arming Front-line and Mid-level Managers to Deliver People and Performance Results*](#) (October, 2009) found that 76% of top-performing employers among 529 companies formally sought **executive sponsorship** for leadership development within their companies, compared to 61% and 30% of Industry Average and Laggard firms respectively. Similarly, in the sales training data, a 63% gap (80% vs. 49%) between top and bottom performers regarding senior-level support speaks to the value of gaining top-down validation for sales best practices. This is particularly important for the sales organization, which may often be seen as a poster child for time management protocols, i.e. minimizing the non-selling time, yet still benefiting mightily from off-the-phone time spent learning and refining better sales skills. After all, only one in five Best-in-Class companies consider "maximizing selling time" a top strategic action (Figure 6); most understand that quality trumps quantity when deploying their sellers' time most efficiently.

It would be a mistake for companies to simply deploy a monochromatic sales training methodology across their entire enterprise, without acknowledging that the skill sets and **defined competencies for various**

sales roles can vary widely among the different job roles that exist within enterprise sales organizations. Indeed, many companies, even smaller firms, deploy a number of well-defined but highly distinct sales staff profiles, such as inside versus outside, hunter versus farmer, national versus global accounts, etc. Among all company sizes and revenue bands, a common theme revealed by the research is that Best-in-Class sales teams are 61% more likely (66% vs. 41%) than Laggards to formally separate out sales job role competencies, which in turn allow for various alternatives of sales training, both regarding content and modality.

Knowledge Management

Best-in-Class companies outpace Laggards by nearly a two-times factor in providing **post-training reinforcement** of the best practices commonly learned in classroom-style, instructor-led sales education sessions. These firms have learned that long-term success depends on underscoring the best practices taught in sales training deployments, not only among the reps that have experienced the training, but also in extending this knowledge to future hires and other departments. Indeed, the concept of "tribal knowledge" is based on an assumption that sales reps themselves, as well as marketers, customer service professionals and other market-facing staff, can contribute to the enterprise's understanding of selling best practices. The modalities used for secondary sales training and beyond, moreover, can also be more geared toward online and remote support, as opposed to the more costly but still highly beneficial initial or annual classroom-style approach.

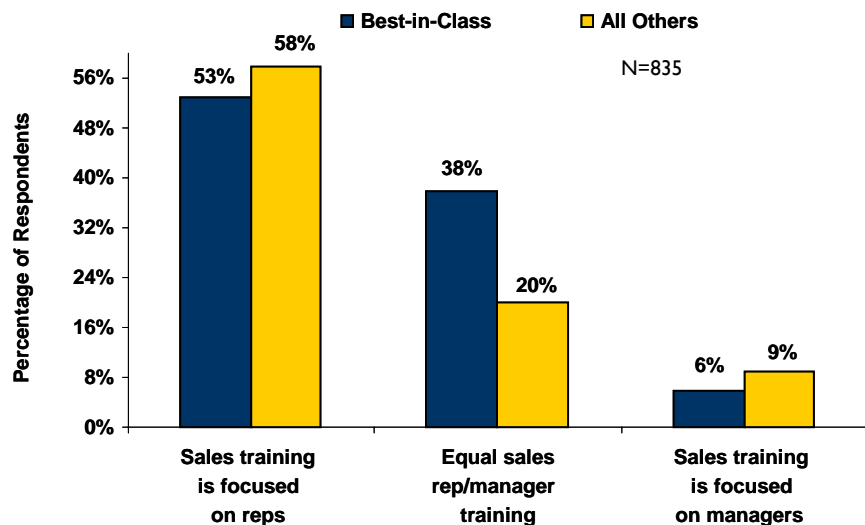
The deployment of **customized manager training** is supported by nearly half the Best-in-Class, while fewer than one out of five Laggards agree. In the aforementioned report on [*Learning & Development*](#) (October, 2009), research revealed that top-performing companies out-pace others in support of identifying and filling knowledge gaps not only between managers and staff, but additionally between mid-level and front-line managers. Accomplishing this, both in the general employee base and among sales practitioners in particular, requires training content unique to the skill sets, financial compensation plans and career goals of the specific audience involved.

In terms of the balance of sales training provided to reps or managers, Figure 7 reveals that while the majority of all survey respondents focus their efforts on reps, the Best-in-Class deploy equal levels of training to both cohorts nearly twice as often as other firms. This indicates an understanding among the best performers that not only will their enterprise benefit from different content for different audiences, but also by carefully allocating attention in at least a somewhat equal fashion. Plus, sales reps can hardly be expected to follow and benefit from training activities, if their managers have not absorbed the same content.

"Sales management training, coaching and development are a must for overall improvement of the sales team's performance."

~ Joe Lauber, Midwest Region
Sales Manager, Spacelabs
Healthcare

Figure 7: Training for Reps vs. Managers - Striking a Balance



Source: Aberdeen Group, September 2010

Finally, why would twice as many Best-in-Class companies promote **cross-training** for their sales staff than Laggards, if using potential selling time to understand colleagues' duties in marketing, customer service or other departments weren't highly valued? Consider that in [Providing a 360° View of the Customer - Better Service - Higher Sales](#) (March, 2010), a scant 4% of 377 survey respondents felt they had achieved the full potential of business from existing customers. While 26% had a very strong penetration, they felt they could still benefit more from additional up-sell and cross-sell opportunities; 58% were definitely leaving money on the table or rarely achieving the full potential of Net Client Value (NCV). All these factors combine to make a true 360° view of each customer a priority for all companies, and speak to the value of providing sales teams with better visibility into the customer data – and client support protocols – of sister departments also tasked with maximizing the share of each customer's wallet.

Technology Enablers

The specific technology tools procured and deployed by top-performing companies need to be isolated from among a crowded marketplace of solution providers. Building on the process and knowledge management capabilities around "tribal knowledge," the leading Best-in-Class technology enabler involves an easily accessible and searchable **dynamic library of assets**. This allows community members access to all current content on-demand, and in some cases with a filter of "most recently viewed" and even "most highly rated" by peers. It should be noted that both marketing and sales content, and staff, are included in this enabling technology; this can represent an important step in building better alignment between the two groups around common business goals.

In [Optimizing Lead-To-Win: Shrinking the Sales Cycle and Focusing Closers on Sealing More Deals](#) (May, 2010), 48% of the Best-in-Class (top 20% of performers around increasing lead conversion rates and decreasing sales

cycles) supported a “guided selling methodology to help sales identify the optimal message and timing at each stage of the sales cycle,” versus 36% of the Industry Average and 29% of Laggards. With this kind of attention paid to variable content associated with selling discussions taking place at different chronological steps within the sales cycle, **CRM/SFA integration of call planning and selling milestones** follows as a logical way to formally identify and capture these different nuances in real-time, so that reps and managers alike can more accurately track the progress of each discrete deal. Deals that remain in identified sales stages too long can thus be more easily flagged for one-off coaching based on sales training content specific to the stage; the Best-in-Class deploy this enabling technology 83% more frequently (55% vs. 30%) than Laggards.

The integration into the CRM system of additional sales technologies extends to the enabler represented by **customized sales playbooks**, which help sales teams locate, refine and create case-specific collateral and presentations from centralized repositories, whose content can be dictated not only by sales stage milestones but by industry, product, geography, etc. Indeed, Aberdeen research for [*Sales Forecasting: Analytics to the Rescue!*](#) (June, 2010) saw 48% of top-performing organizations integrating sales playbook content into the CRM instance, with a goal of better forecasting deal closures and eventual revenue. Twenty-three percent (23%) of Industry Average and only 10% of Laggard firms reported the same, further supporting the value of fully integrating CRM, content and forecasting technologies.

Service Enablers

As seen above, the most effective modality identified by all survey respondents is **instructor-led training**, though the Best-in-Class actually deploy it 40% more frequently than Laggards. While not a new offering, clearly the strongest sales performers continue to deploy this enabler successfully; all other Aberdeen sales effectiveness studies referenced here reveal the same trends among each Best-in-Class end-user group. Additionally, 34% of the current Best-in-Class includes their channel partners or value-added resellers in the provision of this training modality, versus only 20% of Laggards.

Behavioral analysis and assessment enablers, deployed by the Best-in-Class 47% more frequently (44% vs. 30%) than Laggards, involves the practice of deploying formal assessments and/or behavioral analyses of sales team candidates or members, both before and post-training. Identifying which individuals are best suited to particular roles can align the skills, talents and personalities best aligned with different sales positions and engender a more efficient use of territory assignments, inside/outside sales partnering, and even career path development within the sales organization. This supports the organizational capability described above, regarding defined competencies for distinct sales roles, and is further complemented by a 49% Best-in-Class use of: (a) processes to assess sales reps against competency requirements to determine specific skill/competency gaps (vs. 42% and 25% for Industry Average and Laggard firms); and (b) assessment/measurement tools to understand pre-training sales rep performance metrics (vs. 32% and 13%).

"Ensure that field sales leadership has a sense of and genuine ownership in each of the training investments you make."

~ John Crowther, Director,
Sales Training, Cubist
Pharmaceuticals

Performance Management

Finally, the determination and intra-company publication of **defined sales performance metrics** are wisely deployed by nearly three-quarters of the Best-in-Class, as opposed to less than two-thirds of Industry Average companies and fewer than half of Laggards. Especially in the context of sales training, organizations must be able to determine not only what performance areas require the most focus for sales training, but also they must be able to benchmark the impact of sales training, before and after knowledge transfer. This is supported by other Aberdeen HCM research [*Employee Performance Management: The Alpha and the Omega of Talent Strategy and Business Execution*](#) (May, 2010), in which top-performing firms among 362 companies focused on making performance management part of the overall company culture – the leading strategic action reported among all organizations surveyed – achieved superior results in employee engagement and customer satisfaction.

Case Study — VMWare

Consider the case of virtualization provider VMWare, whose steady growth has necessitated a significantly stronger sales operations infrastructure recently. According to Sharon Little, Director, Global Field Communication, "One of the key elements when you invest in the sales organization is making sure they have the latest information" at all times. When it comes to the written word, in terms of product information and sales training materials, Little explains, "we'd instituted a lot of audio content but felt that video was a compelling new medium," considering the popularity of YouTube and expanding internet bandwidth to support the medium.

VMware selected an enterprise video tool provider to create and structure a content repository accessible to the entire company's 8,200 employees, though Little's focus was on the 3000-member field team, including all sales-related staff, operations, field marketing and channel partners. "It's been enormously impactful to VMware," she reports, "especially given our larger international component. It has become the de facto video repository for the whole company, and we use it for internal meetings, training content and especially new product roll-outs." The latter instance was recently supported during a 16-city training tour, where information was provided via the video tool both before and during live presentations, which were also captured and quickly made available in the communal library for long-term sales access to the material.

Little acknowledges that, "At first, the enormous storage needs and complexities of enterprise video, even just for sales training, were a source of concern for VMware." Since the implementation, however, "our adoption has been very robust, and helps with sales effectiveness because it adds a very personal, hands-on element to the overall training and development of our team. It's a great tool as well for white-boarding ideas, sharing best practices, and has been very impactful for our business."

"Our adoption of video has been very robust, and helps with sales effectiveness because it adds a very personal, hands-on element to the overall training and development of our team. It's a great tool as well for white-boarding ideas, sharing best practices, and has been very impactful for our business."

~ Sharon Little, Director,
Global Field Communication,
VMWare

Chapter Three: Required Actions

Whether a company is trying to move its performance in sales performance management from Laggard to Industry Average, or Industry Average to Best-in-Class, the following actions will help spur the necessary performance improvements:

Laggard Steps to Success

- **Link training content to defined CRM sales stages.** Multiple Aberdeen research studies have validated the importance of driving CRM adoption rates, not only for the benefit of management to view the sales team's activities, but also on behalf of front-line sellers themselves who can improve their performance with self-served content. Competitive intelligence, mobile access, forecasting/analytics tools and sales intelligence feeds all create a more valuable CRM experience for a sales rep; adding useful training and development modules will further aid the current Laggards who are 57% less likely to adopt this enabler than the Industry Average.
- **Divide and conquer** when deploying sales training for managers and staff members, by customizing the content for each audience to match the expectations, compensation and goals associated with different groups of employees. Industry Average companies are more than twice as likely as Laggards to manage their "tribal knowledge" this way, using dedicated content and delivery for different cohorts of learners within the sales team.
- **Support an internal FTE, SME, ASAP.** Acronyms aside, even smaller companies can benefit from assigning at least one full-time equivalent or subject matter expert to the sales training process. If an argument against doing so is based on "we're too small" to support this organizational capability, consider this: the Best-in-Class report an average sales force one-third the size of Laggards (351 team members vs. 1,015 team members respectively)

Industry Average Steps to Success

- **Cross-train sales with other functions** inside the enterprise in order to help them walk in other departments' shoes. Trailing the Best-in-Class by 64% in this knowledge management capability, Industry Average companies should place a higher value on the benefits, to the sales team, of understanding how other customer-facing colleagues are tasked and motivated. This is particularly important in scenarios when the quality of lead generation by marketing, or client service by customer care, is considered relevant to the sales group's ability to close, maintain and cross-sell/up-sell their accounts.

Fast Facts

- ✓ The annual sales quota among survey participants is \$1.3M for the Best-in-Class, compared to \$880k for Laggards
- ✓ The estimated cost of replacing a full-time sales rep is \$35,000
- ✓ The average annual sales turnover among all participants is 14.7%, though the "ideal turnover" cited was 8.6% for the Best-in-Class, vs. 11.1% for Laggards
- ✓ The average "fully loaded" annual cost for a Best-in-Class sales rep is \$125k, vs. \$100k for other companies

- **Drive long-term training benefit through reinforcement** of content and skills provided through initial sales training, over the long term. With a plethora of web-based technologies offering various modalities of reinforcement – video, “push” email reminders, self-paced learning – the efficiencies of scaling post-training reinforcement can easily be recognized, and the drain on sales team members’ time minimized. Add social media communications and the sharing of best practices that lie at the heart of these tools, and your sales team will self-teach as an added bonus.
- **Analyze customer data** to increase wallet share, in support of more fruitful up-sell and cross-sell results. Better insight into, and connectivity between, the disparate customer data silos within marketing, sales, customer service and accounting departments can yield fresh insight into real-time knowledge sales staff need in order to fully support, and increase the net value of, each customer relationship. Industry Average companies trail the Best-in-Class by 25% in adopting this process capability.

Best-in-Class Steps to Success

- **Get social** by more aggressively adopting internal collaboration tools such as blogs, wikis and chat, to provide sales and other teams with instant access to one another and the “tribal knowledge” within the enterprise. While more than twice as likely as Laggards to do so, only about a third of the Best-in-Class currently benefit from the opportunity to have vital information about projects, deals, competitors or markets pushed to them as it occurs in real-time. Team collaboration, document sharing, mobile access to content and privacy guarantees are just some of the typical elements that internal social networking can bring to the sales team, who in turn demonstrate better customer renewal rates (55% vs. 47%), lead conversion rates (22% vs. 17%) and more sales reps achieving quota (46% vs. 40%).
- **Customized coaching** from third-party solution providers is used 72% more frequently by the Best-in-Class in comparison to Laggards, but still less than half the time by top performers. For specific selling campaigns or “plays” associated with product launches, new geographic territories or even individual, massive target accounts in need of highly specific selling strategies, there are significant benefits in developing a unique, targeted marketing/sales messaging tool belt that is carefully designed to fit the needs of that individual pursuit scenario.
- **Train the trainer** by institutionalizing the “special sauce” learned from outside providers within your company. Between the predictable reality of sales turnover, and the proven benefits of regular training reinforcement, it makes little sense to re-invent the

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"It is critical to first gain executive leadership buy-in into the programs you will develop and the sales approach you will train on. You will need their commitment and buy-in to drive the programs."

~ Erin Johnson, Senior Manager, Learning & Development, Ingram Micro, Inc.

wheel by repeatedly acquiring the same content from the same providers over time. While these companies are typically the most effective at presenting their own content, bringing them into your organization at spaced intervals can be more cost-effective by filling in the gaps with your own staff who qualify as subject matter experts.

Summary — Sales Training 2.0

Aberdeen's original research on this topic, [*Sales Training: Translating Tribal Selling Knowledge into Bottom-Line Productivity*](#), was published in September 2009. With the advantage of a year's time and consistent survey methodology, a number of year-over-year trends are noteworthy:

- **Sales training spending will rise for top performers.** While the estimated growth in sales training spending by all companies is lower (2.4% in 2010 vs. 2.6% in 2009), today's Best-in-Class estimates an average forward-looking 3.7% increase, as opposed to a 3.3% estimated increase in 2009.
- **More team members are now involved.** In 2009, 64% of the average company's sales team members had received formal training. This figure has jumped 19% in 2010, to 76% of sellers.
- **Training frequency has increased significantly.** Forty eight events per year for reps, vs. 29 per year in 2009; 34 events per year for managers, vs. 24.

In addition, analysis of Aberdeen's PACE methodology (see Table 4 in Appendix A of this report for details) reveals further trends, including:

- **Pressures.** The "need to align sales activity with overall business objectives" has grown in significance (by 30%); while "decreasing customer budgets" is 44% less of a concern in 2010. This may reflect a loosening of the recessionary mindset among sales leaders who are re-directing their attention away from short-term economic concerns to long-term shareholder value.
- **Actions.** The most significant growth in strategies pursued, at 34%, is to "create more meaningful sales conversations that address buyer's overall business needs," which maps directly to the recommendations above regarding the need to deploy more buyer-centric, customized selling messages.
- **Capabilities.** The most significant increases among the Best-in-Class are: analyzing existing customers' data to promote cross- and up-selling; user-generated marketing and sales content availability for sales reps and managers; defined competencies for each sales role; and formal processes to measure individual/region/team competencies. These protocols help move sales training from individual events to strategic initiatives embedded in the company's DNA.
- **Enablers.** The most significant growth in technologies and services used are: customized sales playbooks; CRM/SFA integration of call planning and selling milestones; behavioral analysis/assessments; and licensable content or methodology. Each of these approaches help Best-in-Class companies grow revenue, deal size and the ability for more reps to achieve quota.

All in all, sales training continues to represent an investment that companies continue to retain as a "must have" rather than a "nice to have," as the realization that an educated, focused sales team is tantamount to success, even during a questionably healthy economic cycle. While spending cuts have helped enterprises reduce their expenses, only this team can refresh the gap between the bottom and top lines. Providing them with the processes, technologies and services to do so effectively remains the wisest strategy of all.

Appendix A: Research Methodology

In July and August 2010, Aberdeen examined the use, the experiences, and the intentions of 835 enterprises using services and technologies that impact the performance of their sales teams.

Aberdeen supplemented this online survey effort with interviews with select survey respondents, gathering additional information on sales performance management strategies, experiences, and results.

Responding enterprises included the following:

- **Job title:** The research sample included respondents with the following job titles: CEO / President (20%), Manager (26%), EVP / SVP / VP (11%), Director (18%), Consultant (7%) and other (18%).
- **Department / function:** Survey respondents serve in the following departments or functions: sales and business development (59%), human resources or talent management (7%), marketing (5%), customer service or support (3%), operations (3%) and other (15%).
- **Industry:** Companies surveyed represented IT consulting and services (8%), industrial equipment and manufacturing (8%), healthcare (8%), financial services (7%), wholesale distribution and services (7%), education (7%), telecommunications equipment and services (7%), chemicals (6%), and other (41%).
- **Geography:** The majority of respondents (75%) were from the Americas; remaining respondents were from the EMEA region (17%) and Asia-Pacific (8%).
- **Company size:** 23% of respondents were from large enterprises (annual revenues above US \$1 billion); 30% were from midsize enterprises (annual revenues between \$50 million and \$1 billion); and 47% of respondents were from small businesses (annual revenues of \$50 million or less).
- **Headcount:** 36% of respondents were from large enterprises (headcount greater than 1,000 employees); 25% were from midsize enterprises (headcount between 100 and 999 employees); and 39% of respondents were from small businesses (headcount between 1 and 99 employees).

Study Focus

Responding executives, primarily in sales management roles, completed an online survey that included questions designed to determine the following:

- ✓ The degree to which sales training is deployed in their organization and the impact they have on achieving their business goals
- ✓ The structure, effectiveness and satisfaction with existing sales training implementations
- ✓ Current and planned use of sales training to achieve desired changes in revenue, quota and deal size
- ✓ The benefits, if any, that have been derived from sales training initiatives

The study aimed to identify emerging best practices for managing performance of sales teams, and to provide a framework by which readers could assess their own management capabilities.

Table 5: The PACE Framework Key

Overview
<p>Aberdeen applies a methodology to benchmark research that evaluates the business pressures, actions, capabilities, and enablers (PACE) that indicate corporate behavior in specific business processes. These terms are defined as follows:</p> <p>Pressures — external forces that impact an organization’s market position, competitiveness, or business operations (e.g., economic, political and regulatory, technology, changing customer preferences, competitive)</p> <p>Actions — the strategic approaches that an organization takes in response to industry pressures (e.g., align the corporate business model to leverage industry opportunities, such as product / service strategy, target markets, financial strategy, go-to-market, and sales strategy)</p> <p>Capabilities — the business process competencies required to execute corporate strategy (e.g., skilled people, brand, market positioning, viable products / services, ecosystem partners, financing)</p> <p>Enablers — the key functionality of technology solutions required to support the organization’s enabling business practices (e.g., development platform, applications, network connectivity, user interface, training and support, partner interfaces, data cleansing, and management)</p>

Source: Aberdeen Group, September 2010

Table 6: The Competitive Framework Key

Overview
<p>The Aberdeen Competitive Framework defines enterprises as falling into one of the following three levels of practices and performance:</p> <p>Best-in-Class (20%) — Practices that are the best currently being employed and are significantly superior to the Industry Average, and result in the top industry performance.</p> <p>Industry Average (50%) — Practices that represent the average or norm, and result in average industry performance.</p> <p>Laggards (30%) — Practices that are significantly behind the average of the industry, and result in below average performance.</p>
<p>In the following categories:</p> <p>Process — What is the scope of process standardization? What is the efficiency and effectiveness of this process?</p> <p>Organization — How is your company currently organized to manage and optimize this particular process?</p> <p>Knowledge — What visibility do you have into key data and intelligence required to manage this process?</p> <p>Technology — What level of automation have you used to support this process? How is this automation integrated and aligned?</p> <p>Performance — What do you measure? How frequently? What’s your actual performance?</p>

Source: Aberdeen Group, September 2010

Table 7: The Relationship Between PACE and the Competitive Framework

PACE and the Competitive Framework – How They Interact
<p>Aberdeen research indicates that companies that identify the most influential pressures and take the most transformational and effective actions are most likely to achieve superior performance. The level of competitive performance that a company achieves is strongly determined by the PACE choices that they make and how well they execute those decisions.</p>

Source: Aberdeen Group, September 2010

Appendix B: Related Aberdeen Research

Related Aberdeen research that forms a companion or reference to this report includes:

- *Sales Performance Management: Getting Everyone on the Same Page*; August, 2010
- *Sales Forecasting: Analytics to the Rescue!*; June 2010
- *Optimizing Lead-To-Win: Shrinking the Sales Cycle and Focusing Closers on Sealing More Deals*; May 2010
- *Employee Performance Management: The Alpha and the Omega of Talent Strategy and Business Execution*; May, 2010
- *Providing a 360° View of the Customer: Better Service - Higher Sales*; March 2010
- *Sales Intelligence: Preparing for Smarter Selling*; February 2010
- *Inside Sales Enablement: "Let Them Drink Coffee!"*; December 2009
- *B2B TeleServices: The 2009 Buyer's Guide*; November 2009
- *Learning & Development: Arming Front-line and Mid-level Managers to Deliver People and Performance Results*; October, 2009
- *Sales Training: Translating Tribal Selling Knowledge Into Bottom-Line Productivity*; September 2009
- *The Carrot or the Stick? Competing Strategies for Sales Effectiveness*; July, 2009

Information on these and any other Aberdeen publications can be found at www.aberdeen.com.

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