Sales Accelerator

Flawless execution of today's core selling skills

Audience
All business-to-business sales professionals. It is required that managers of the salespeople participate in the coaching pre-meeting and that they attend and coach during the program.

> Program Benefits

Sales Accelerator, from BTS, is the first core selling skills program that reflects the realities of selling in today's business-to-business environment. Customers today want salespeople who deeply understand their businesses and they want their purchases to impact their desired business results as rapidly as possible. Sales Accelerator provides salespeople the understanding, skills, and tools they need to deliver maximum value.

Based on several years of research with customers and salesforces around the globe, the two-day Sales Acceleratorprogram focuses on four areas: aligning your sales efforts with the customer's buying cycle, improving your customer understanding, applying the best practices that world-class salespeople use to accelerate the sales process, and asking high-impact sales questions that connect product and service needs to the customer's desired business results. Additional practice is provided in evaluating opening a sales call, asking follow-up questions, handling objections, gaining commitment, and building a call plan for an account. The program also includes the completion of a personal development plan using what they learned along with the Web tools they now have unlimited access to.

Sales Accelerator helps salespeople:

- Learn the market trends and business challenges that shape customer decision making.
- Understand the customer's buying cycle and align it with their own sales cycle.
- Create an effective pre-call plan.
- Apply best practices that are most critical to advancement in their accounts at each stage of the buying cycle.
- Learn the sales practices that will help them achieve success.
- Construct and ask compelling questions that identify the customer's desired business results and the actions they are taking.
- Learn how to "peel the onion" to dig deeper into customer interests and needs.
- Address concerns and objections by exploring customer interests and driving toward completing the sale.
- Prepare a call plan for an account.

> Program Description

Sales Accelerator is comprised of four key elements. The first is prework in which participants engage with their manager to select an account that will be used during the program. Both the participant and the manager also rate the participant's skill on various sales best practices as part of the prework.

The second element is a learning day for sales managers in which the principles and practices of the program are unveiled and the managers are prepared to coach participants both during and after the workshop.

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The third element is the two-day learning experience, and the fourth element is a set of Web tools and learning extensions that help both the managers and the participants apply the practices and principles back on the job.

Finally, there is an option for a third day of learning that explores additional topics.

Day One

In the first module, a video showing four salespeople making a call is played for participants to assess and debrief. Three of the examples include typical mistakes salespeople make. The final salesperson applies many of the skills and practices contained in the Sales Accelerator program, uncovering hidden decision drivers and opportunities while demonstrating a solid understanding of the customer's business and market.

In the second module, participants explore global trends affecting both companies and customers and consider which trends are most significantly influencing their own customers. They identify opportunities, challenges, and overall implications for them as salespeople. Next, they investigate business challenges that shape their customers' purchasing decisions.

Then, participants examine the differences and similarities between a salesperson's sales cycle and a customer's buying cycle. As a team, tables explore the different needs of their customers at each stage of the buying cycle and determine how they, as salespeople, can best meet those needs and influence the buying process. They explore what they can do to accelerate the buying cycle at each stage and explore what buyers value most by examining breakthrough research. They determine areas where they are delivering value as well as opportunities for growth. Participants then revisit trends and challenges, deciding which their customers face in two customer scenarios that mimic companies they call on.

Next, participants develop a deep understanding of how the questioning model connects to the value their customers desire, the buying cycle their customer is in, and their own efforts expended in their pre-call planning. They learn the distinguishing characteristics of high-impact questions and build competence using the questioning model to create powerful questions and probing techniques.

To finish off the first day, participants explore the interests of the key players they are or should be calling on.They use a case study to create a call plan. Then, during the evening, they begin to build a call plan for a current account. They prepare an analysis to review in class the next morning.

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Day Two

Participants practice using the sales questioning model to drive business development and relationships in a simulated sales call with a client. They will receive feedback from the simulation and self-assess their questioning abilities.
Next, in pairs, participants read a scenario based on a real account from the standpoint of either the customer or a salesperson. Pairs apply the sales questioning model in a role-play based on the scenario.

Participants now learn and discuss a series of sales best practices, which are based on research with world-class salesforces. They then assess their current state of competence in each practice and identify how each practice has, or could, add value to a customer they are currently working with.

The personal development plans are based on each person's strengths and developmental areas relative to the sales best practices. First, participants explore their own and their manager's ratings of their strengths and developmental areas. Working in pairs, participants share their personal development plans regarding the sales best practices. They finalize their journal entries, which they will be taking back to review with their managers.

Next in the program, participants explore in detail how to build trust with a customer. They explore the key steps in opening a customer-focused sales call and the key steps to closing a sales call. Teams also explore how to handle "derailers" that take salespeople off course during a call.

Participants now return to the buying cycle to explore and resolve areas of concern (objections).They practice (using the customized scenarios from earlier) using high-impact questions and key messages to defuse customer objections.

Participants continue working on the case study from the prior day, focusing now on the call objective, key messages, and applying the questioning model they have learned. Participants complete their work on a call plan started the night before, receiving feedback and ideas from a peer and, if possible, their manager.

Participants explore and create "look for" signals and practice non-manipulative methods for "closing the sale."

The final element of the program is post-workshop reinforcement. Using specially created Web tools, participants routinely apply the principles of the program to their accounts. Included in the tools are a buying cycle diagnostic, a high-definition question support system, and a personal sales practice development system.

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Optional Day Three

Participants review a set of publically available data for a typical customer and use it to analyze that customer's performance and goals.They also review information about the industry the customer operates in and link back to market trends and business challenges. Next, they practice this approach with their own individual accounts and make presentations based on what they've learned.

They next explore a typical set of prospects and measure them against a set of success criteria. Then, they choose which prospects to target and identify questions to ask to qualify each opportunity.

Participants learn best practices for handling gatekeepers that prevent access to decision-makers. They explore "tricks" and "tips" for handling typical access issues. In a role-playing simulation, participants apply all of the learning to an extended case study that mimics a customer's full buying cycle. They practice call planning, customer understanding, influencing a buying cycle, questioning techniques, opening a call, handling objections, closing the call, and gaining commitment.

> Implementation/Customization

Several elements of SALES ACCELERATOR are customized to maximize relevance to the participants and to speed application of the skills developed during the program.

The sales cycle and examples of what happens when selling and buying cycles are out of synchronization are customized. The research packet used during the pre-call planning activity is customized. And a variety of practice cases are also customized.

The recommended implementation process includes prework, a pre-meeting with managers, the workshop, and rigorous post-program coaching.

For more information, contact:

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