

Secrets of an Ex- VP Sales

Confession: Sales Operations

By Janet Gregory

It is no secret that sales fuel a company. Sales fuel growth. Sales fuel market share. The sales team takes home the big trophies, big recognition and big rewards.

Confession: Sales operations is the secret to sales success. For me, sales operations was run by the amazing Mr. K; without him sales would grind to a halt.

In your company whether the amazing Mr. K is an individual or an organization – whether the company even recognizes that the amazing Mr. K really exists – sales operations is the fuel for the sales force. Bring sales operations out of the background and sales will flourish.

Fill the pipeline. Hear the constant drum beat of the sales team... leads, leads, qualified leads. The amazing Mr. K taps the inside sales drum 42%* of the time and keeps the lead generation rhythm pulsating 23% of the time. Like a metronome these functions often click from sales to marketing and back again depending upon company objectives.

Find the sweet spot. Show me the money. Where do we have the best opportunity to win? The amazing Mr. K can analyze vertical markets, tell which contacts get to closure fastest, best references to us and much more through sales analysis and sales tools like CRM because 70% fill this important responsibility. Take this a step closer to the money and 42% own RFP templates and handle RFP responses that will set traps for the competition and position their company for the win.

Propel the sales process. Talk about fuel, let's turbo charge the sales process. The amazing Mr. K trains the sales team (63%) sharing best practices and winning strategies. The real fuel booster comes from the 72% in sales support answering every call for pre-sales support, configuration, quote preparation, pricing, contact assistance, executive briefings and deal making. Sales operations is sales rocket fuel; it is intense, immediate and explosive.

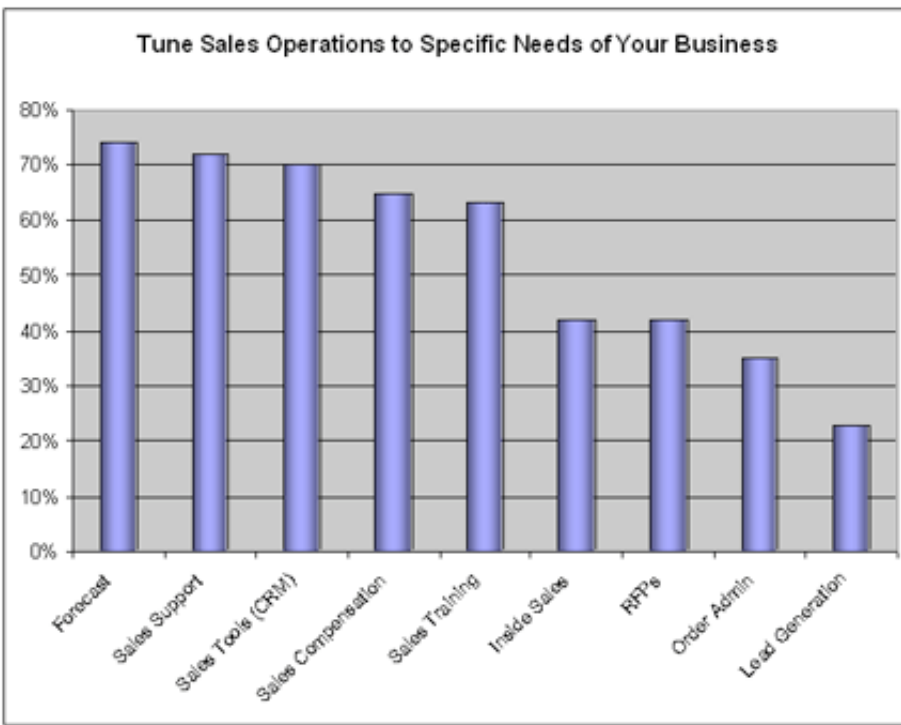
Motivate the sales force. SPIFs, promotions, contests and sales compensation stimulate, encourage and reward sales activities. The amazing Mr. K manages sales compensation (65% of the time) to accelerate sales and invigorate the sales team.

Track the progress. Like the dashboard of a high performance vehicle the forecast measures where you are, where you're going and how fast you'll get there. With his hands on the controls the amazing Mr. K dials in the forecast, budgets and reporting three quarters of the time. Over one third handle order administration thus driving the process from end to end.

Admission of guilt: The amazing Mr. K is under-appreciated and under-recognized, yet has the biggest impact on the business.

The amazing Mr. K answers every question with OKAY. "Okay, I don't know exactly how we will get that done" but would always figure something out. "Okay, I will get right back to you" and always did. "Okay, customers come first" everything else can be done after hours. The amazing Mr. K never complains and takes great pride in the company success.

Atone for transgressions: Say OKAY to the amazing Mr. K in your organization. Recognize the value of this secret to sales success with organizational identity, budget and.



* The statistics provided in this article are based on the 2006 survey results of sales operations forum members regarding functional responsibilities.

Janet Gregory is a veteran sales executive and co-founder of KickStart Alliance. For assistance with sales strategy, sales planning, training, compensation or any aspect of sales operations, contact [Janet](#). Janet leads the sales readiness practice at KickStart Alliance. For help in aligning sales & marketing for results contact any member of the [KickStart Alliance team](#).