# 3 Ways Sales Leaders Can Improve Win Rates

Introduction

Sales managers are under a ton of pressure.

They're overwhelmed by requests to support deals, join customer calls, guide reps, and pull together accurate reporting. They're frustrated by the amount of time it takes to ramp up new sellers and to build efficient training processes. On top of that, they spend hours manually sorting through various dashboards trying to pinpoint areas for improvement.

They need new ways to scale their coaching and business decisions. But how? Read on for three expert tips.
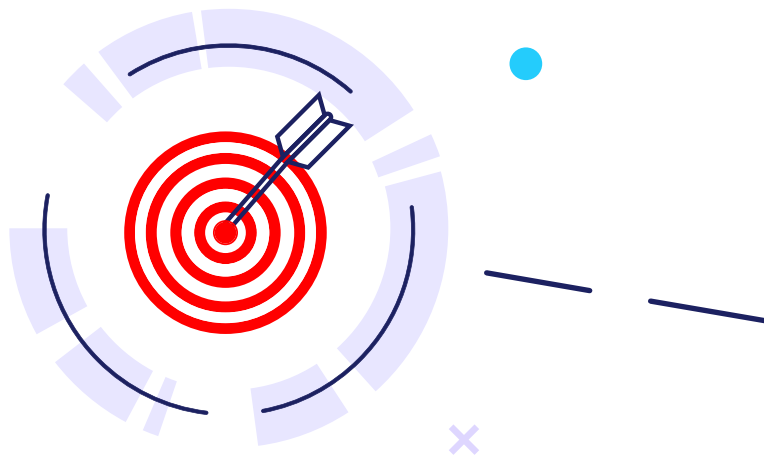
"The frontline sales manager of the future is still *customer obsessed* and has incredibly high standards for what they expect in terms of customer excellence."

— **Dan Gottlieb,** Director and Analyst, Gartner

Best Practice #1:
Dig Into the Data's Context

To help their teams thrive, transformational leaders (aka Revenue Innovators) are over-indexing on data to pump insights back into their business.

"The frontline manager of the future is analytical, but thoughtful, because they're able to see through and contextualize," says Dan Gottlieb, director and analyst at Gartner. "They are curious about what the data is saying but aren't only satisfied with just the data in certain scenarios."

The Revenue Innovator sales manager may ask a question like, "How do we increase velocity in our sales funnel by converting at each layer of the funnel?" They thoughtfully ingest that data to inform their coaching while remaining curious about how it applies to individual reps.

Ultimately, they understand that one rep sells differently from another. They see that in the data. And with those insights in hand, they have the context to steer their sellers, facilitate learning, and use technology to deliver a better seller and buyer experience.

Success Story:
Honeycomb delivers the right information in the right context

Honeycomb, a fast-growing SaaS startup, needed to engage with prospects and customers more effectively while scaling its sales team and business. Of course, they hosted enablement sessions, but reps couldn't attend every session.

They decided to leverage Outreach Kaia, an intelligent virtual assistant. With Kaia, the Honeycomb sales team now surfaces product and competitive information on content cards in real time during calls. Reps now answer customer questions and handle twists and turns in the conversation, confident they're delivering the right information in the right way.

"Content cards allow our product marketing team to push out content directly to the reps," said Michael Wilde, senior account executive for Honeycomb. "With content cards surfacing the latest and greatest messaging, contextually in the moment, even the reps that didn't attend the sessions have what they need. It's like having a live enablement session with you on every call."

READ THE FULL STORY

Contextualizing in action

Rather than coaching reps on the same sales strategy, a Revenue Innovator sales manager encourages each rep to get better at their own game using the resources available.

Real-time coaching and enablement at scale makes this possible. For example, modern sales technology powered by AI provides sales reps the critical information they need, exactly when they need it. If a customer asks a tough question or states an objection, the relevant enablement content surfaces on cue, helping sales reps keep the deal moving forward.

Sales managers can then turn their attention to helping coach new and tenured reps in different ways. They analyze high-level data around meetings set, deal conversion, and win rate. They uncover another layer to focus on where conversion metrics are lagging. They see what is and isn't working during remote sales meetings so they can coach their reps accordingly.

Revenue Innovators *over-index on data* to pump insights back into their business

Best Practice #2:
Embrace Transparency

By 2025, 80% of interactions between sellers and buyers will occur digitally. It may feel like you're losing opportunities to connect with your sellers with fewer face-to-face interactions. But Revenue Innovators sales managers know they stand to gain a lot. With a deeper reliance on data, they get a pulse on what's actually happening within the buyer and seller relationships so they can react faster.

Greater insight around sales data means a next level amount of transparency into teams. Many revenue organizations may not be sure how to handle it. In the past, sales teams had control over the narrative. In a world committed to next-level transparency, the data becomes the story.

Leaning into this deep transparency is necessary to compete in today's environment - and win.

Next-level transparency in action

With modern technology, all the right stakeholders can count on a collaborative and transparent buying experience. Success Plans set buyers, sellers, and internal stakeholders up for success by capturing key needs and next steps in a mutually agreed-upon plan. But only if they are fully armed with the data and tech literacy to understand it.

The sales industry is in the early stages of digital transformation, so be ready to set expectations for your team - and yourself.

"Because of technology and insights, you're not only *more successful* as an individual, but also as a manager. You know the levers to pull, you can coach best practices, and teach sellers how to increase conversion rates throughout the funnel."

— **Anna Baird,** CRO, Outreach

Who should get certified on new tools? Who needs to deeply understand deal engagement? How will you roll out analytics and reports? Change is often nonlinear and slow, so you need to be supportive of the new process (and the emotions that might come with it).

Another suggestion from Gartner's Dan Gottlieb is to start small: "With regards to using data to run the business, starting with one aspect of the process rather than some massive initiative is best. For example, focusing on a specific part of the sales process like the way you're managing pipeline, and separating that from the way you're managing forecast, as a distinct behavior, is a great place to start."

It's also important to operate from a single source of truth. That means spending more time cross-functionally with business intelligence, go-to-market, and finance teams to reach consensus on what the data is telling you and identifying the path forward.
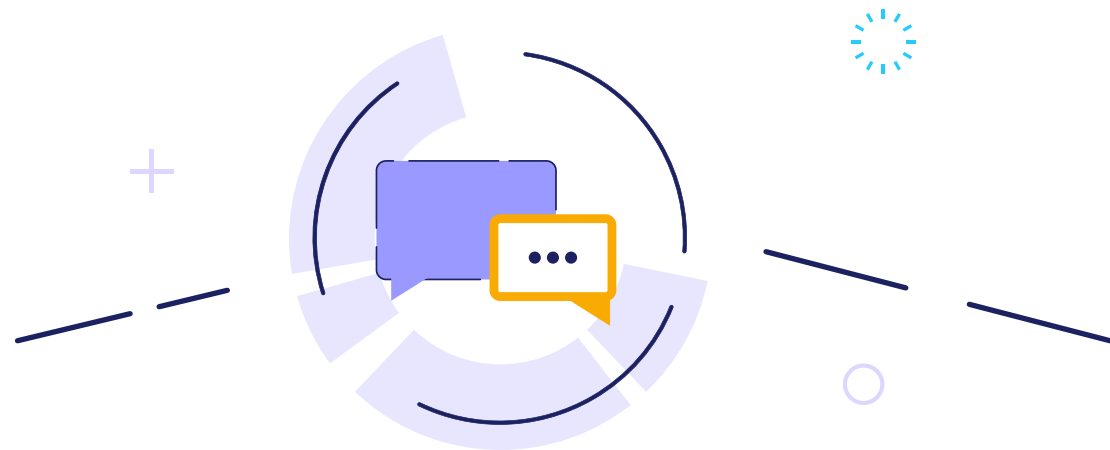
Best Practice #3:
Invest in Modern Sales Tech

Most sales leaders still rely on spreadsheets or dashboards to manage their team, understand deal stages, and coach reps. It's no wonder that, according to Gartner, frontline sales managers are rated as having low sales data proficiency despite their focus on sales data and seller activity.[1] They don't know where to focus their efforts for the greatest ROI because they don't have modern tools to extract the right insights.

Plus, with hybrid work environments the norm, managers need the ability to coach reps in digital, virtual, and analog settings. They need easy-to-consume data and analytics to help them quickly understand what activities, messaging, and channels drive the best results so they can coach their reps on how to continuously improve their interactions and business outcomes.

Simply put, companies that don't invest in a thorough data strategy and don't have the underlying sales technology architecture to support it will be at a significant competitive disadvantage.

Modern technology in action

Modern, streamlined sales technology that provides insights across the sales cycle is key. A Revenue Innovator sales manager can log into a single platform and get the insights and visibility they need to make smart decisions every day. It takes the guesswork out of their operations.

On a broad level, it helps managers with coaching efforts by allowing them to focus on top deals, steering those sales reps toward the emails and calls they should spend time on.

A modern platform automatically collects data so the buyer conversation isn't simply a subjective record in the CRM, but an incredibly rich data source. Leaders can better understand certain behavioral opportunities for coaching at scale by leveraging data around areas like talk-to-listen ratios and length of monologues.

Sales leaders can use tech to scale some fundamental in-the-moment coaching. For example, with real-time enablement powered by AI, they can listen to sales calls and present helpful note cards when certain keywords are mentioned. This means reps can react faster.

"Prior to having access to *top-tier technologies*, individual contributors would spend 40% of their time trying to figure out how to spend their time."

— **Mary Shea,** VP of Global Innovation, Outreach

Ready to become a
Revenue Innovator?

REQUEST A DEMO TODAY!

Outreach Kaia brings together real-time sales enablement and advanced automation to give...

Sales reps the critical information they need, exactly when they need it.

And **sales managers** clear insight into every customer interaction — helping you coach new and tenured reps as effectively as possible.

*"**Conversation Intelligence is a huge benefit to any sales leader,** as it helps us listen to recordings and coach after the fact — but Kaia takes it one step further by helping in the moment — right when coaching is needed. I can confidently say that my team and I will be leveraging Kaia heavily."*

— **Rob Simmons** | Sales Leader, LeanData

About Outreach

Outreach is the largest and fastest-growing sales engagement platform that helps companies dramatically increase productivity and drive smarter, more insightful engagement with their customers. The only sales engagement platform to make the Forbes Cloud 100, Outreach was also the fastest-growing Sales Engagement Platform on the Deloitte Technology Fast 500. More than 4,600 companies such as Adobe, Tableau, Okta, Splunk, DocuSign, and SAP depend on Outreach's enterprise-scale, unparalleled customer adoption, and robust AI-powered innovation. Outreach is a privately held company based in Seattle, Washington.

To learn more, please visit www.outreach.io.

Sources

Outreach, The Secrets to Effectively Coaching Your Reps, June 2021, https://www.outreach.io/lp/webinar-coaching-reps

[1] Gartner, "The State of Sales Analytics, Part 1: Sales Operations' Role and Effectiveness," Craig Riley, Steve Herz, November 2, 2020