

The Definitive Cheatsheet for Sales VPs

Top Sales VPs know what it takes to lead a sales team, manage pipeline and accurately forecast, but what differentiates a TOP sales manager from the average Sales VP? Read on to find out:

	Top Sales VPs Must...	Average Sales VPs Just...
1 Be a More Effective Coach	Coach Effectively! Coaching is the single most important sales management activity that drives more sales. Customize it to each individual and focus only on a single behavior during the period until it's improved.	Manage reactively instead of proactively coaching reps individually to improve their performance.
2 Train	Train your reps consistently. It's one of the keys to making them more effective and capable. Make it a weekly priority.	Let reps learn "in the trenches". They believe reps can learn on their own instead of scheduling regular monthly training.
3 Over-Communicate	Communicate ad nauseum. You know it's enough when someone complains that it's too much. Until then, over-communicate.	Expect reps to "get it". They don't communicate consistently and clearly and just expect everyone to catch on.
4 Align with Marketing	Align with marketing and your sales team will reap huge rewards. Add your experience about leads to marketing's objective data and everyone grows!	Stay in their sales silo and demand more and more leads from marketing. They complain instead of collaborating and aligning to achieve great performance.
5 Analyze Key Sales Metrics Daily	Be laser focused on metrics on a daily basis. Sales today is a science. If you can't measure it then you can't manage it. Sales VPs who don't analyze metrics will lose authority quickly.	Believe that managing sales is done through hunches and don't look at the numbers. They lack insight into which metrics (calls, activity ratios, conversions) might help identify problems early on.
6 Forecasting	Perform data-driven forecasting. Don't use forecasting stages like Commit and Upside. Don't run forecasting on subjective feelings of your reps. Forecast only by opportunity stage conversions.	Ask reps for how they "feel" about a deal and whether it's an upside or strong upside. They don't perform metrics-driven forecasts and ignore the fact that < 40% of their forecasts actually close.
7 Pipeline Management	Schedule bi-weekly pipeline reviews to ensure your top of funnel is full. Know whether you need it to be 3x or 5x of your sales quota by analyzing historical conversions.	Talk about pipelines sporadically but don't hold dedicated pipeline review meetings. They ignore historical pipeline-to-sales conversions, creating situations where there could be insufficient opportunities for reps to work.
8 Stop Focusing Only on Revenue	Focus on coaching and developing your sales reps to achieve better performance independently. That means don't sell and don't get on calls with your reps.	Try to do sales themselves and make themselves too available to their reps who should be selling on their own. They hamper the rep's ability to grow and stand on their own feet.
9 Inspire Your People	Win your reps' hearts before you win their minds (go to bat for them, take them bowling) and inspire your team to greatness. A good manager has more impact on a sales rep's results than experience or skills. Remember - it's all about the people!	Fail to inspire their sales reps. They focus on the negatives - missing goals, losing opportunities - instead of celebrating the positives. They forget the magic management ratio of "3:1" for praise:reprimand.
10 Reward, Recognize and Appreciate	Appreciate, recognize and reward your reps - nothing is more critical. A Globoforce 2011 survey found that 70% of employees would work harder if they were recognized more. Reps exceed expectations if they feel appreciated!	Treat achievements with indifference and demand too much from their teams. They fail to motivate their reps with positive reinforcement.
11 Have Fun	Make sure to have fun - hold contests, go out for team dinners, celebrate success, launch the 100% Club! People perform better when they love their job.	Focus only on work, and don't pay attention to team morale. In a fun environment, their team would outperform their objectives but average Sales VPs don't recognize this and don't facilitate fun.
12 Hire Great People	Identify, hire and attract talented people. Use SalesDrive or DISC personality tests that help discern a high level of conscientiousness and commitment to goals. Hire for attitude, not aptitude.	Hire for technical skills, and don't consider attitude. They'd rather see a beefy resume than a "can-do", or better yet "will-do", candidate.
13 Fire Bad People	Get rid of bad attitude immediately. You can coach weaknesses but can't change negativity. Give those with good attitude but bad performance 3 full months to show improvement but measure monthly.	Keep negative reps on their roster, hoping to change them, while they let go of motivated but lower performing reps that could be easily coached (if they focused on that in the first place).