

Five Experiments Your Sales Team Should Be Running

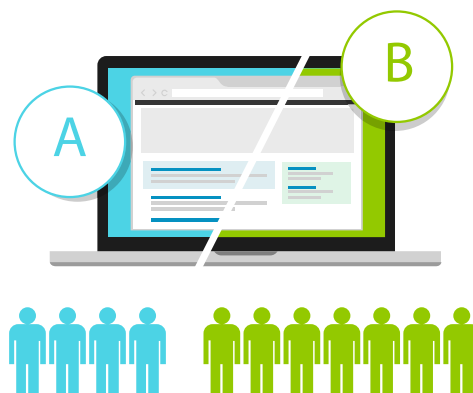
Sales teams that keep doing the same things while expecting better results are not just ineffective – they might be insane! You can't hope to improve if you're not constantly innovating. Innovation starts with experimentation...and experimentation should begin with your sales team.

As Jill Konrath said, “**You can look at any aspect of the sales process and experiment and improve there.**” By empowering your sales team to experiment - letting them tinker and test – you'll get a much better idea of what actually works, and what doesn't.

Here are 5 sales experiments your sales team should be running.

1 Sales Emails

If a sales rep sends an email and no prospect ever reads it – or even opens it! – does it make a sound? Reps send lots of cold or warm emails every day, but if they're ineffective, your reps are just wasting their time. You can experiment to optimize your email effectiveness in many areas, such as the best time to send emails.



Experiment: Best time to send - When are my prospects most likely to open and read emails?

Hypothesis: My prospects are most likely to reply to emails on weekends, when they are less pressed for time.

What to Look for: The open and reply rates for different email segments, sent at various times of day or days of the week.

How to Measure Success: Use a tool like Yesware to compare the results of a batch of emails sent on weekdays and a batch of emails sent on weekends (or over some other defined and controlled period of time). With a large-enough sample size, you will soon get a better idea of when your prospects are most likely to engage with your emails.

Other Sales Email Experiments to Run: Frequency of send (how many emails a prospect receives from you), different subject lines, different tones (serious and straightforward vs. playful) in email copy.

2 Talk Tracks On the Phone

When launching your product, you won't necessarily know what will resonate with your potential buyers. To narrow it down, come up with two distinct scripts - for example, one script that focuses on user features vs. one that emphasizes your product's mobile connectivity. Then arm half your sales team with one version and the other half with the other. You will get a better idea of what type of value proposition leads to deeper conversations and, eventually, opportunities and deals.



Experiment: Two different sales scripts - What type of talk track resonates better with prospects and leads to more in-depth sales conversations?

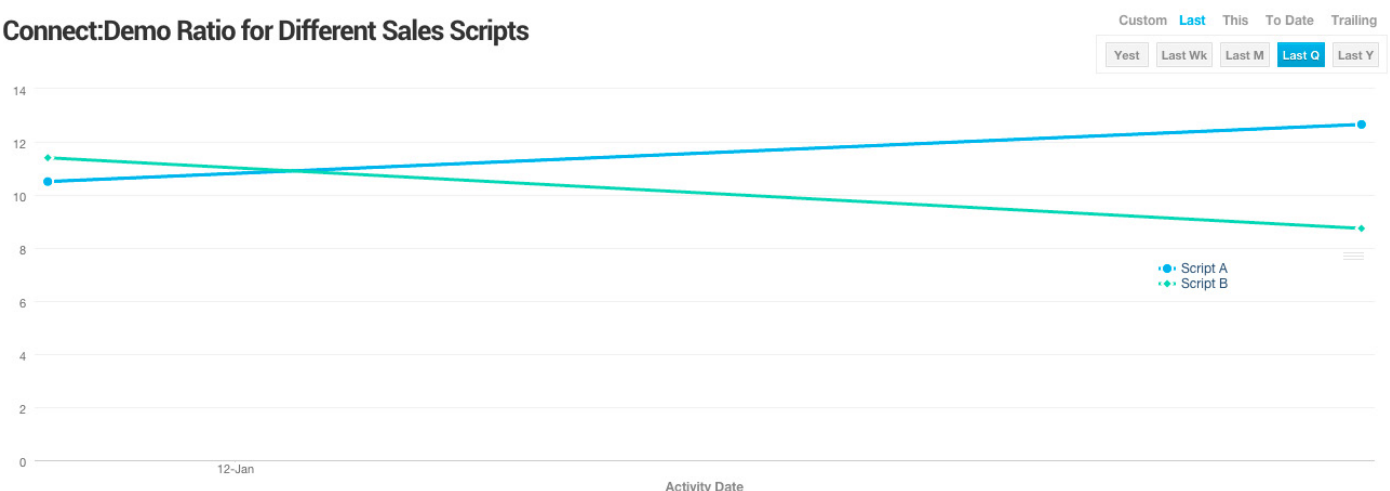
Hypothesis: Prospects respond better to Talk Track B, which emphasizes mobile connectivity before even talking about product features.

What to Look for: Talk times from conversations using each script; connect-to-demo ratio from each script.

How to Measure Success: Take two sets of leads and if the connect-to-demo and talk time (measured with a tool like ThinkingPhones) in one campaign is higher, you have a talk track that resonates better with prospects.

Other Talk Track Experiments to Run: Segmenting specific scripts by prospect type / company size / industry. Giving more experienced reps and newer reps different types of scripts.

Connect:Demo Ratio for Different Sales Scripts



3 Voicemails

Reps don't always connect with their prospects. When that missed connection happens, many reps opt to leave a voicemail. Not all voicemails are created equal; some will be deleted after the first five seconds, while more effective ones might actually elicit the desired result - a callback.



Experiment: Different types of voicemails - What types of voicemails get my prospects to call me back?

Hypothesis: Keeping the voicemail vague and mysterious - just enough information to pique the prospect's curiosity - will result in more callbacks.

What to Look for: Callback ratio - the number of callbacks you receive divided by the number of voicemails you leave.

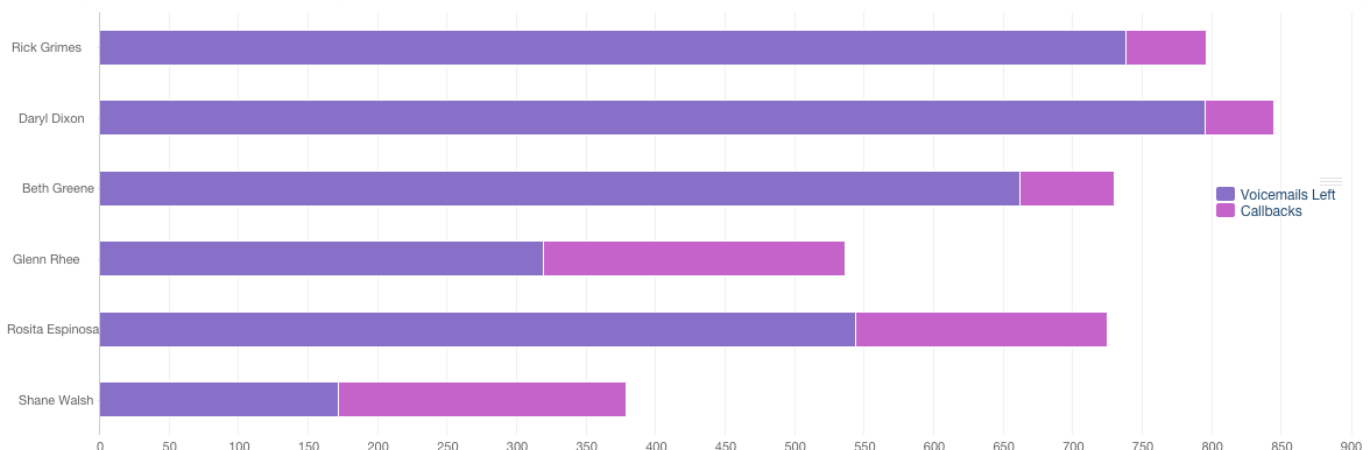
How to Measure Success: Create a Task Type in Salesforce for callbacks, allowing you to trace them back to the original voicemail. Measure the number of voicemails you leave against the number of callbacks you receive. Look further downstream to see if these callbacks actually convert to opportunities and deals before committing your whole team to this voicemail strategy.

Other Voicemail Experiments to Run: Only leaving voicemails at specific times of day. Leaving voicemails on weekends (for when the prospect checks first thing on Monday).

How Effective are Rep Voicemails?

23 employees with activity last month (May)

Custom **Last** This To Date Trailing
Yest Last Wk **Last M** Last Q Last Y



4 Calling Power vs. Calling Low-Level

There are multiple ways to prospect into an account, each with varying degrees of success. Knowing where in an organization to start when prospecting into the account is critical. Should you start with a low-level employee (a gatekeeper) and try to get referred up to someone with buying power? Or should you shoot for the moon on your first attempt and try to reach the CEO or VP-level buyer immediately?



Experiment: Calling Power vs. Low-Level - Which initial call is more likely to lead to a fruitful relationship and an eventual opportunity and deal?

Hypothesis: Calling a VP of Sales will produce a lower initial connect rate, but once you do connect, the likelihood of converting to an opportunity and deal is much higher.

What to Look for: Segment your calls into power vs. low-level, and then track the call-to-connect, lead-to-opportunity, and opportunity-to-deal ratios for each of these buckets.

How to Measure Success: Have your reps spend two weeks calling into power first, and then the next two weeks calling into low-level employees first. Throughout these call blast periods, measure the effectiveness of those calls by call-to-connect ratio, as well as lead-to-opp ratio. Which two-week segment produced more efficient activities as well as more overall opportunities? Then, track the downstream conversions to see if either calling into power or calling gatekeepers ultimately produces more deals.

Other Calling Power / Low-Level Experiments to Run: Have more senior sales reps / sales directors call into power, while more junior reps call into gatekeepers. Or vice versa.

5 **Encourage and Enable Your Reps to Design Their Own Experiments!**

OK, so this isn't a specific experiment per se, but the point remains - it is critical for your sales team to build and maintain a culture of experimentation. Short-term failures or setbacks should not be treated as a disaster, but rather a learning opportunity.

The beautiful thing about experiments is that there's never really a finish line - you simply find new learnings that can then be further tinkered with. There is always some aspect of your sales process that can be optimized. Even seemingly small gains in efficiency can have very dramatic effects over a large enough scale, and across your entire sales team.

Enabling your reps to design their own experiments begins with giving them the framework to do so. This means not only a long-enough leash to experiment, but an actual experimental structure: dedicated time in their schedules for research and planning; large enough sample sizes to gain statistical significance; the right tools (such as Yesware, ThinkingPhones or Optimizely) to track and measure results.

Once you have a team and culture full of experimenters, improvement and innovation will be a constant on your sales team. And the bottom line results will be there.



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to Sales and Marketing KPIs

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