Sales 2.0 Whitepaper: Part II

Think. Think Different. Think Again.

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Executive Summary

Thomas Watson, Sr., builder of IBM's legendary sales force, became famous for the motto: Think. The subtext of this simple message? Before running off to do something, anything, take a moment to consider what you're about to do—and why. Apple made hay with its celebrated campaign a few years ago featuring famous personalities (Einstein, the Dali Lama, Marilyn Monroe) with the simple admonition to Think Different. This paper, second in a two-part series on Sales 2.0, suggests you Think Again.

If you think you know sales, you likely are bringing to this topic a history and track record that has served you well. This paper attempts to offer the cautionary warning that what has worked in your past may not serve your current sales reps as well today, and could actually hurt their performance.

The very notion of a "sales process" is incomplete, inaccurate, and obsolete even before becoming widely adopted. Why? Because it speaks to only half of what's going on—there is also a buying process occurring (likely starting sooner). And there is process improvement that requires discipline, feed-back, standards, and much more. These issues are addressed in the following pages, but there's one topic that isn't covered: CHANGE.

> "Sales 1.0 was about lone wolves, product superiority, proven skills, and making the number. Sales 2.0 is about leveraging teams and technology, total solutions, and continuous improvement, reflected in continuously improving results."

Even as you read this discussion of Sales 2.0 (S2.0), things are changing. Writing this paper is like trying to take a photograph of a very fast-moving race car while the camera morphs in our hands—everything is moving and morphing. Which is why everything you think you know about sales can quickly become wrong. The best you can do at this point is to use what you knew to anticipate what will be useful and appropriate going forward—and to recognize that even when you're right, you will have to keep current, keep innovating, keep questioning.

And keep collaborating. Sales 1.0 was about lone wolves, product superiority, proven skills and making the number. Sales 2.0 is about leveraging teams and technology, total solutions and continuous improvement reflected in continuously improving results. Relationships will not be simply who's in your contact database, but the quality and level of dialog your relationships enjoy. This has always been true, but "you" and "your" is not just the individual sales rep, but all the individuals and resources supporting the sales rep.

It's not even about your number (though there'll be hell to pay if *you* and *your* team don't make it). Sales is one functional area working with marketing, engineering, logistics, finance, support, and the rest of the company to hit this and next year's revenue targets. And the year after that. S1.0 is built upon the classic military model: Command, Control, Conquer.

The S2.0 model, on the other hand, has a different foundation: Collaborate, Choreograph, Capture.

Capture wallet share. Capture customer loyalty. Capture the imagination of your buyers, your sales reps, your peers. Capture an idea.

Read fast. A lot will have changed by the time you finish this paper.

Introduction

“ ***Nothing is so powerful as an idea whose time has come.*** ”
Victor Hugo

In Part 1 of this white paper we discussed the differences between Sales 1.0 (S1.0) and Sales 2.0 (S2.0). We also provided statistics on many of the business drivers underpinning the argument that a shift from the former to the latter is overdue. But what will the new sales workstyle look like?

We noted that when we look at how salespeople perform today, we often see reps employing processes that may have served their predecessors (and managers) well in the 1980's and 1990's, but which do not fit today's much more dynamic world. S2.0 is a process-oriented, technology-based way of targeting prospects, developing interest, creating urgency, quantifying value, establishing competitive differentiation, and building loyalty. Descriptions of early S2.0 examples at various stages of the buy/sell cycle are presented below.

How We Got Here

It would be easy, perhaps even tempting, to be judgmental about the activity-driven, chaotic nature of most sales organizations today. However, these organizations and their processes have evolved over time, and like most evolutionary processes, they have kept what worked—or seemed to—and abandoned what didn't.

Not so very long ago, companies like IBM, Xerox, NCR, and ADP trained America's sales force. It was not unusual for a new hire to attend extended sales training boot camps for a month or longer. Courses included both technical product training and general sales training. (At one time Hewlett-Packard even offered new sales reps guidance on how to properly order and taste wine when dining with a client or prospect.)

Once the initial training ended, these reps returned to regional sales offices housing dozens (and sometimes more) sales veterans. Technical support personnel and sales managers were close at hand for coaching, brain-storming, and offering experienced perspective. Many of these same resources were also available to accompany the rep on “6-legged sales calls,” where the rep, sales manager, and technical pre-sales person all visited a prospect.

In the late 70's margins on mainframe computers were 86%. The first megabyte storage device cost $1 million and was delivered in a pickup truck. These margins and a much slower pace of business allowed sales reps to come on board, be brought up to speed, be supported through their first year's selling, and operate from a company office.

That was Then, This is Now!

Contrast that almost pastoral description with today's reality. Reps are brought on board and given a drink of water from a fire hose in a one-week intensive training program at company headquarters. They fly home with a suitcase bulging with course handouts and a thumb drive (8Gb in your pocket versus the 1Mb above!) full of marketing collateral, technical specifications, ROI calculators, and more. They are parachuted back into their territory, often to operate out of a home-based office when they are not traveling and a hotel room when they are. Their laptop computer or smart phone keeps each rep tethered to the mother ship, suggesting they're not as alone as they feel—but they really are if they're in an S1.0 company.

While evolutionary development adapts to continuous change, it is less useful when discontinuous changes occur (e.g., dinosaurs vs. comets). And there have been and continue to be several discontinuous changes impacting sales:

- **Global Competition:** Advances in manufacturing, offshoring, and compressed product lifecycles all work against periods of large and/or sustained margins.

- **Speed of Business:** Response times have decreased dramatically from weeks, to days, to overnight, to instantaneous 24/7 access.

- **The Internet:** Buyers are armed with product information including pricing, customer and industry reviews, technical and other details before ever speaking with a sales rep.

And yet many of the activities of today's reps are modeled on what worked before these sea changes occurred. Many sales managers still schedule weekly conference calls to "review the pipeline." Forecasts are primarily assembled and massaged based on Excel, the same application that's been used for years. Opportunity management too often consists of asking the least useful, but most frequent question:

What's it going to take to do the deal?

Sales managers are both doing what was done to/for them and what, in their own experience, worked. While this is perfectly reasonable, it assumes a largely static environment and, of course, that is not reasonable.

Technology Without Change is not the Answer

Early in the sales force automation (SFA) and customer relationship management (CRM) movements, vendor demos began with a look at "a day in the life of a sales rep." The discussion would then turn to the need to organize contacts, activities, and opportunities. The demo would show how managing these elements with technology allowed sales reps faster and more accurate access, storage, and—key to many a CRM implementation—reporting (i.e., management visibility) of all these components. But did these systems actually improve what reps did, or change how they did them?

Years ago on the TV show "I Love Lucy," a famous scene showed the characters working in a candy factory. Their job was receiving candies coming down a conveyor belt, wrapping the individual pieces, then repeating this sequence. As the speed of the candies increased, the sequence became more challenging, and funny, as simple mistakes were made, then more serious mistakes followed and finally complete chaos ensued.

If you consider the description of CRM's impact on sales allowing reps to do essentially the same things faster rather than fundamentally differently, we are essentially replaying the "Lucy" scene on a grand scale. The result is not comedic, but rather the chaotic activity described in Part 1 of this paper. If the candy factory scene was re-enacted to represent today's marketplace, not only would the pieces be coming at blinding speed, they would be of varying shapes and sizes, with different flavors and ingredients and require specific and precise labeling on each piece!

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S1.0 looked to technology to allow sales reps to move faster and faster, but not necessarily differently or smarter; in essence the unstated ideal was for reps to become flawlessly performing automatons. But we're not talking about a comedic candy factory— today's competitive marketplace is much more complex and today's buyer much more informed. S2.0 considers how to anticipate what will happen next and improve the process by which the complex task of meeting customer needs is performed.

Sales 2.0—What Better Looks Like

Definition: Sales 2.0 focuses on aligning steps in the sales cycle with those in the buying cycle by leveraging technology, process improvement, and sales knowledge to effectively collaborate with the most appropriate individuals (internally and externally) and doing so in the preferred format of each.

Sales 2.0 does not necessarily change what salespeople do; it changes how they work to become more efficient and effective. The essence of Sales 2.0 is:

1. Increased communication and collaboration between sellers and buyers and within selling teams. The Sales 2.0 environment is heavily dependent upon technology (including Web 2.0 offerings) to do every thing from routine contact and account management to increasingly sophisticated opportunity management and prospect collaboration.

2. Proactive and visible integration of knowledge and measurement of the buying cycle into the sales cycle.

"The most exciting thing to me about Sales 2.0 is that while we are increasing sales performance and effectiveness, we are also improving the sales rep's quality of life."

Razi Imam, CEO & Founder
Landslide Technologies

These two dimensions of technology-enabled communication/collaboration and buyer behavior integration change the way salespeople sell and buyers buy.

Improvements can and over time will be made in every aspect of selling, more effectively aligning the sales process to the buying process. We've seen companies attain amazing increases by instituting (i.e., introducing, enforcing, and reinforcing) certain process improvements. The following are examples of just a few areas where technology is currently available to enable huge gains and where continuing to sell and manage in an S1.0 manner will only delay and possibly prevent impressive returns.

Synchronizing Buying and Selling Processes

"S1.0 tools generally do not provide the ability to capture information about the buying cycle of prospects."

As we highlighted both in Part 1 and in an earlier section here, the fact that selling processes are not in sync with buying processes is adding a great deal of complexity and uncertainty to the sales function. S1.0 tools generally do not provide the ability to capture information about the buying cycle of prospects. Combined with the scenario of remote (i.e., not face-to-face) selling, this leaves salespeople with very little information about exactly where the buyer is in his or her buying cycle.

In the Sales 2.0 world, there are tools available to close this gap. By using personal portals salespeople have the ability to track when prospects start engaging with information they've shared. New applications integrate these active alerts and provide a platform to formally capture the next steps in the buying cycle. This gives the salesperson clarity about the information the buyer needs at the particular stage; it also gives the sales manager a basis for understanding the probability and likely timeline of a deal closing.

"Even in those instances where data was captured in the CRM tool in a timely manner, it provided no information about why one deal closed successfully while another stayed forever in the pipeline."

Collaboration

Sales teams at most enterprises today have evolved into geographically distributed teams engaged in non-face-to-face selling to their prospects.

Their success increasingly depends on the ability to communicate and collaborate effectively with team members as well as prospects. In the Sales 1.0 world, managers and reps alike depend primarily on the telephone and email to stay connected. What used to be state of the art has been eclipsed by newer technologies that provide complete visibility into the deals being worked. CRM tools that were supposed to resolve transparency issues depend on reps entering data rather than intelligently anticipating it. Even in those instances where data was captured in the CRM tool in a timely manner, it provided no information about why one deal closed successfully while another stayed forever in the pipeline. Communicating with prospects provided additional challenges; in-person visits carried the hassles and expense of travel, and web conferencing took away the ability to read cues such as body language and facial expressions. Sending proposals and contracts via email amounted to sending the documents into a black hole—the salesperson had no clue if the proposal was received by the prospect or, more importantly, if it was even read.

Using Sales 2.0 tools, the workstyles of sales professionals are becoming dramatically more effective in communicating with their internal and external contacts. For instance, both sales team members and buying team members can view all documents related to a specific opportunity on a centralized web page, and they can share comments as well as upload related documents. Web 2.0 conferencing continues to evolve, providing better and more objective indicators of interest and engagement levels of attendees. Wikis enable sales teams and buying teams to make changes to shared documents concurrently, eliminating the emailing of contracts and proposals back and forth through multiple versions.

Territory/Account Management

Rather than looking at a "day in the life of" a sales rep, let's look at the challenges of managing a territory, key accounts, and opportunities in general. With very few exceptions, a universal condition for reps is too few qualified opportunities in their pipeline. As a result, reps pursue deals that are less desirable often to no conclusion. Our most recent survey indicated that 22% of all forecasted deals end in No Decision.

Even if some of these lesser quality prospects are won, they can become problematic, hassle-ridden accounts—or perhaps they are just a poor fit to your company's capabilities. Yet you *know* there are better-qualified accounts and opportunities in your reps' territories.

Your marketing team may already have identified target companies based on industry, size, location, and other key demographics. In addition to these criteria, trigger-based technologies allow reps to define individual profiles—including behavioral aspects—without knowing the names of specific companies.

For example, if two key actions that benefit the positioning of your company/services are a change in top management personnel and a planned office relocation, these can be defined by your rep. The territory analysis technology then continuously crawls the web looking through press announcements, SEC and IRS filings, and thousands of other information sources to assemble the pieces that make a "suspect" a "prospect." When pre-set qualifying thresholds are reached, the system automatically sends an email notifying the rep of the lead.

One large computer company was only looking for an additional opportunity or two per quarter for each of its reps. It did not want the reps' attention diverted toward countless hours of research; it did not even want them reviewing lots of suspects. The company set high and relatively tight criteria so that only very qualified opportunities were sent as alerts to their reps. The system has paid off handsomely.

Other firms seeking broader coverage and more alerts could define multiple alert profiles. Either way, reps are not spending their time doing research and instead are being fed opportunities they likely would not otherwise be aware of. Typically these alerts, if accepted as leads, can then feed directly into the company's CRM system without the rep having to key in or even cut and paste data to contact records.

" The key point here is that the rep is not personally conducting the research, but is directing the technology to do the tedious searching. "

Of course, the same technology can be focused on named accounts to alert reps to changes, updates, or other triggering events. This is very similar to a traditional clipping service (only faster!); the rep is notified of news items regarding their key accounts.

The key point here is that the rep is not personally conducting the research, but is directing the technology to do the tedious searching. This has the tandem benefits of requiring the rep to do more (i.e., higher level) strategic thinking while freeing up the time to do so.

Pre-Call Planning

Of firms responding to our most recent survey, more than 70% said some effort was required to find basic information (e.g., customer objection handling information, competitive analysis, strategic account plans, etc.) in preparing for calls. Of these, one in six said they could rarely find such information. And yet today's buyers are demanding that sales reps have a higher level of call preparedness. In our research report featured in the Harvard Business Review (July-Aug 2006), we noted the level of information available to buyers today via the Internet, and the changes this imposes on the dynamics early in the sales process.

The salesperson who understands their prospects' business issues and can clearly relate how their product/service addresses these specific problems is empowered to fulfill their S2.0 role. Rather than focusing on speeds and feeds of their offering, S2.0 tools focus on the best ways to identify the challenges faced by their prospects: what questions to ask them; how to differentiate one's offerings from those of the competitors; how to facilitate the buying process. To successfully accomplish this shift, salespeople need access to appropriate pre-call planning tools.

Filling this need are new technologies better able to deal with both structured data (e.g., industry references, D&B ratings, marketing data) and unstructured data (e.g., PowerPoint presentations, best practices, notes, and histories), from internal and external sources. This entire suite of information can be brought to bear early in the sales cycle to better prepare for sales calls. Examples include previous campaigns the prospect has been exposed to and those they did or did not respond to; prior purchases and current contracts also should be readily available (although 70% of firms report that accessing such information still requires a level of effort than ranges from "some" to "significant").

Technology-based solutions are now available to share best practices, offer competitive analyses, and/or provide context-sensitive help to sales reps. However, despite the suggestion of many vendors and the proliferation of mobile devices, these services are not well suited to last-minute queries. A mobile application may guide you to the nearest coffeehouse with free WiFi, but it is less useful in guiding a rep through the sales process as he or she walks (or worse, drives!) down the street. If a rep uses a mobile device to update him- or herself on major changes in an industry or an event related to a specific company, even if that update happens just moments before a sales call, that information can arm a sales rep with relevant and timely talking points that can better position him or her as a consultant rather than a vendor.

As technologies such as web conferencing proliferate and companies feel increased pressure to manage their cost of sales, further changes are being imposed on the way salespeople sell. As previously mentioned, these changes increasingly include a shift in the selling environment from face-to-face interactions to remote selling over the phone and web. This is especially true in the early stages of the sales cycle. In this new environment, where early communication is often not in person, there is a complete absence of physical and obvious cues about the buyer's behavior and interest level. Prospects can end conversations in seconds if the salesperson fails to grab their interest and attention.

Whether meeting face-to-face or remotely, the S2.0 sales rep needs to be well prepared before each call to quickly establish trust and rapport with prospects. The sales rep also needs to be able to qualify and rank prospects better, ideally based on some objective measures such as website visits, emails opened, etc. Adequate pre-planning activity will prove increasingly critical in the S2.0 environment.

“... your CRM system should be able to automatically present the documents most appropriate for this deal at this stage.”

You can build an S2.0 sales organization today by providing the most relevant support material to your sales team in a timely fashion. This means going beyond simply providing reps with a library of hundreds of documents to sift through. Instead, your CRM system should be able to automatically present the documents most appropriate for this deal at this stage. These documents can be as specific as conversation guides or questionnaires that help salespeople ask the right questions in the right order.

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Needs Analysis and Proposal Creation

It has always been a best practice to take a few moments in advance to analyze a prospect's situation, but the previous example demonstrates how this can be significantly enhanced with available technology. Especially with new prospects, market and industry information, competitive analyses (both the prospect's and yours), business drivers and, as a result, potential value propositions can now be served up in short order. In addition, information aggregators, social networking applications, and combinations of these and web crawlers can identify key players, background information, and peers.

The Internet obviously enables sellers to access a wealth of background information to better position value; it has also desynchronized selling and buying cycles. Buyers now have unprecedented access to product and other information. This often causes them to feel they no longer need a salesperson to provide information. But what remains constant and ever more present is that buyers need solutions to their problems.

With industry information, not only can reps ask better questions, today many of the best questions can be kept in an online library and presented at the appropriate step in the sales process (this point is discussed in great detail later). With rifle-shot questions—as opposed to shot-gunning random questions—reps can zero in on acute business pains. These become the basis for better-targeted, punchier proposals.

Proposals also benefit from tailored responses by industry, business problems to be solved, buyer role, relevant references—and less boiler-plate. Pre-packaged information nuggets or sound bites can be quickly and intelligently assembled, reducing turnaround times from days to minutes. One investment firm is now able to have representatives conduct interviews with prospects and either print or email the custom-tailored proposal before leaving the call.

Not Your Grandfather's Sales Manager

“The key to shifting from old-style management to Sales Management 2.0 is to truly become process oriented.”

Which brings us to what is perhaps the most vital aspect of S2.0—Sales Management 2.0! If sales management remains firmly rooted in the past, all of the amazing solutions described here will have little impact. The key to shifting from old-style management to Sales Management 2.0 is to truly become process oriented.

Traditional sales managers have focused on results: quota attainment, deals booked, new accounts opened. But nobody does results. Rather, results are the output of the activities individuals do and how well they do these: research accounts, make calls, diagnose needs, propose solutions. These activities culminate in some result. 2.0 sales managers focus on the doing of these things—that is, the quality of execution.

“In the Sales 2.0 world, ability to easily define what works (process), implement it, and fine-tune it is making the difference between companies that are succeeding and those that are struggling.”

In the Sales 2.0 world, ability to easily define what works (process), implement it, and fine-tune it is making the difference between companies that are succeeding and those that are struggling. Just as process revolutionized the world of manufacturing and production, it is now changing the field of sales. Companies recognize that in order to grow, they cannot hope to keep hiring experienced, proven, expensive “A” players. Rather, they need to provide process and tools to their ”B” and “C” players and new recruits to help them increase their performance levels. The new approach to process goes beyond just marking the phase of the sales cycle to actually showing what activities the salesperson needs to consider in order to complete that phase effectively; the system then can present any tools that might help him complete those activities. Let us distinguish methodology from process.

Figure 1

In Part 1 we showed the pipeline model (Figure 1), with a large arrow representing leads entering on the left and a smaller arrow representing orders exiting the pipeline on the right. We then introduced the same pipeline graphic with process steps overlaying the left-to-right progress of opportunities.

In addition to defining these milestone steps and seller actions is the equally important exercise of delineating the buyer actions at each step to advance the sale. [For a complete introduction and more in-depth discussion of this approach, visit www.csoinsights.com and download our primer: Sales Process: What Is It, Why Bother?!]

With all of these sales process components defined, whole new realms of sales insight can be available to you if you keep track of opportunities against this standard. For example, everyone wants to reduce sales cycle length. The logic is that if a nine-month average sales cycle can be reduced to six months, one-third more sales capacity has been created.

This is not strictly true, but rather than debate the fine points of that argument here, there are plenty of good reasons to get deals off the table and booked earlier rather than later, so let's simply agree on this premise. Any increased sales capacity that accrues from this improvement will be an added bonus.

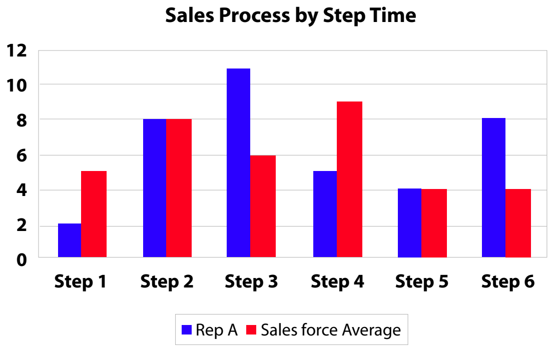

Figure 2

But where is the time spent? Are the nine months spread evenly across all steps and, even if they are, is this appropriate?

With today's CRM capabilities and accompanying analytics, individual performance metrics can be compared against a specified group (e.g., similar roles, regional performance, sales force average, etc.) to determine where above- and below-average performance occurs.

Figure 2 shows an example of the average step time for opportunities to move from one step to another totaling the nine months average described above. It would appear that this individual rep (Rep A) is jumping on opportunities more than twice as fast as the average sales force member (2 weeks vs. 5 weeks), but taking nearly twice as long to get through steps 3 and n. Clearly there are other considerations, such as overall performance, deal size, types of accounts called upon, etc., but it appears Rep A has both

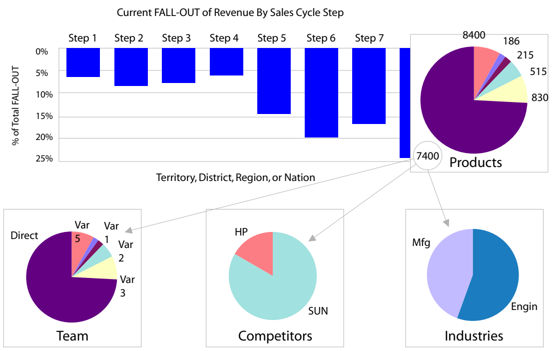

Figure 3 (Zoom in to view)

some things to offer (steps 1 and 4) as well as some things to learn (steps 3 and n). Note that the total cycle time is nine months (36 weeks) in both cases, but the distribution is very different.

These same types of comparisons can be made for any metric including forecast accuracy, close rates, percentage of repeat business, and as many others as you can think of. Consider the detailed information on deals lost at step 7 of the sales process presented in the graphic (see Figure 3) . Now assume you are a sales manager with a rep forecasting a deal to close which is currently at step 5. This deal is against Sun, in an engineering application, with your 7400 product. What would be your confidence level? Might you want to offer some additional coaching?

Since deals of this type, against this competitor, comprise 80% of late-stage losses (i.e., fallout) the cards are stacked 4:1 against your rep winning this deal. Knowing this in advance, you are both forewarned and fairly armed to have a coaching conversation with this rep. Particularly if you are told, “This one is different,” or “Trust me, I’ve got it covered.” Rep comments such as these tell you nothing—but your ability to translate overall sales force performance into improved, timely, and effective strategy can mean everything.

Feedback: The Key to Process Improvement

“Sales 1.0 solutions focused on helping salespeople do more of what they were doing irrespective of whether it was working or not”

Sales 1.0 solutions focused on helping salespeople do more of what they were doing irrespective of whether it was working or not (refer to the “Lucy” example). Tools were built with a data-management orientation for capturing more data, not for improving performance. They were all about recording data, not about helping to sell more. In the 2.0 selling environment, this focus shifts to actually enabling salespeople to change how they work and become more effective. SW 2.0 really is about working smarter.

Once a standard is defined and used as the basis for tracking opportunities, meaningful feedback is possible. This is a critical differentiator between S1.0 and S2.0. And the key distinction is not whether a sales process has been defined or even systematically adopted; it’s whether sales managers and reps are dedicated to using and improving the process over time.

With regard to sales cycle times, CSOs are not looking for cycle times, they’re looking for *shorter* sales cycles; *higher* close rates; *larger* average deal size; etc. They are looking for *improved* performance, whatever the metric. Figure 4 depicts a simple process model, and that same model with a feedback loop.

The feedback loop is essential for process improvement. This is precisely what has been missing in CRM systems and their implementation. Reporting has been the weak link in most of these systems; management's inclination to study these reports and translate their meaning into coaching has mirrored this lack. Still, many managers have persisted and had great results to show for their efforts.

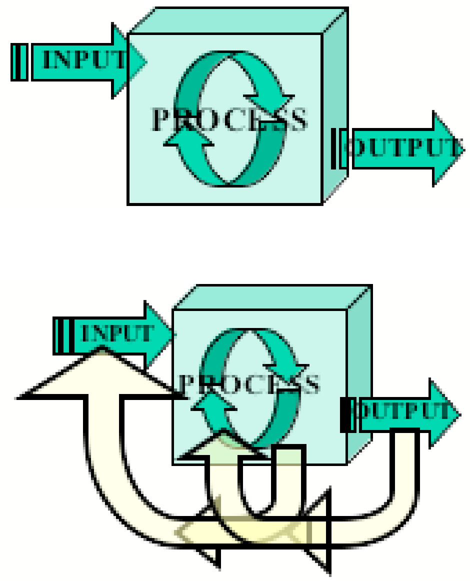

Figure 4

For feedback to be meaningful, it must meet five tests.

1. Relevant: Many managers offer insights based on what worked when they were selling, rather than on current performance metrics, market conditions, and customer expectations.
2. Timely: Quarterly, or worse, annual performance reviews are meaningless in terms of coaching. The shorter the interval from performance to feedback the better (think videotape of your golf swing).
3. Individualized: Quoting sales force averages when discussing individual performance has no impact. OK, the sales force call activity is down 20%. Are we done here?
4. Accurate: Without accurate performance measures everyone is arguing their opinion. You think I could try harder, but I'm telling you I'm tapped out. What do you want from me—blood?
5. Consistent: Last month it was calling higher in the decision-making chain; the month before that was time management. What's this month's special?

The idea is to agree upon specific, high-leverage metrics that, if improved over time, will have high payoff for the individual. What you're looking for is higher performance and lower variation in that performance (i.e., increased consistency) over time. This is also the basis for first identifying and then sharing best practices across the sales force.

Putting it All Together

The pipeline metaphor serves another valuable purpose. In addition to being a container of opportunities and a roadmap of milestones for each opportunity's progress, the pipeline also provides a *context* for determining what's relevant. Think of a directory map when you're at the mall. Once you've located yourself (i.e., You Are Here), you can also see what's nearby, and the relationship between these things.

The same is true of deals. A deal at step 1 in the process probably needs some initial benefit statements and proof cases, customer testimonials, and as noted earlier sales knowledge management components like customer objection information, competitive analyses, etc. A deal at step 4 of a six-step process probably needs more useful proposal templates and/or business case samples. Consider a workflow engine that both suggests and enforces business rules such as “Deals over $100,000 must be signed off by finance and legal before a proposal is sent,” or “Discounts over 5% must be approved by a regional sales director.”

Further, when the opportunity is initially defined, the system can parse up the relevant pieces and serve up to the rep appropriate resources. A $500,000 professional services contract for an accounting firm will require different case studies, best practices, ROI calculations, sales and delivery team members than a $5,000/month subscription to a software as a service (SaaS) solution to a manufacturing company.

This is the unrealized potential and the ongoing story of CRM over the past two decades. It is also the legacy of an S1.0 mind-set. Need more revenue? Increase headcount. Need to increase productivity? Run faster, try harder!

S2.0 is built upon a foundation of sales process and is guided by a vision of working smarter, not just harder. It is powered by an engine of amazing technology and fueled by information that is accurate, timely, and previously unavailable.

“S2.0 is built upon a foundation of sales process and is guided by a vision of working smarter, not just harder. It is powered by an engine of amazing technology and fueled by information that is accurate, timely, and previously unavailable.”

Conclusion

Sales 2.0 empowers the salesperson to recognize, measure, and incorporate the buying cycle into the selling cycle. This enables salespeople to clearly identify the buying cycle, adjust their selling to meet the needs of the prospect’s buying phase, and incorporate prospect activity and buying cycle stage data into building forecasts. The pipeline no longer reflects a one-dimensional sales perspective, but now ties in buyer behavior and activity to more accurately reflect the likelihood of deals closing.
In Part 1 of this discussion we presented the analogy that showed the difference between traditional sales (exemplified by the chaos of the traditional three-ring circus) and S2.0 (exemplified by the modern Cirque de Soleil). In the latter comparison there are numerous characters elegantly choreographed, seamlessly supporting one another creating an experience that is both pleasurable and memorable. Could the same be said of the customer’s experience with your company?

There is also amazing vision, technology, and commitment (financial, personal, corporate) to realizing the quality of each Cirque performance; again, the same can be said to be true and requisite to realizing the promise of CRM and the potential of quality sales. Does this exist today? It does. But it exists more often in glimpses than in perpetual process.

There are companies with management that have already begun turning their ships by first turning their cultures. Rather than focusing on growing the numbers, they focus on growing their people. They operate largely on the philosophy that by doing the right things, the right things will happen. It is a philosophy that has proven itself over time—and has resulted in dramatic increases in other functional areas of companies. It may seem in some respects the antithesis of S1.0, where the perception is that fast talking and product knowledge conquer all. But what we have tried to show is that S2.0 has grown not as an antidote to, but an advance beyond, where sales was; it is a natural next step in the evolution of sales as a profession.

Varying but ever increasing levels of technology, corporate will, customer demands, competitive pressures, speed of business, complex products, and connected communications all require today's practitioners to step up to S2.0. It is an idea whose time has surely come.

We hope the insights shared in this paper will spur your own thinking of how the nature of sales is changing, and how you will address and manage these changes within your own organization going forward. If you have any questions regarding these trends, please contact us directly.

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About Landslide Technologies, Inc.

Landslide Technologies is a pioneer in Sales Workstyle Management, the industry's first offering to address the workstyle needs of individual salespeople. Built by salespeople for salespeople, our Landslide product combines software, collaboration and a live administrative assistant to support the activities and habits of salespeople, helping maximize their time, drive action and generate results. It codifies proven sales processes, provides step-by-step sales guidance, creates a high-touch and unique buying experience for the customer, and provides each salesperson with a live assistant to help them offload mundane administrative tasks that prevent them from staying in selling mode. As a company comprised primarily of seasoned sales veterans, we celebrate the life of the salesperson and are dedicated to helping them achieve more success, more often. To learn more about Landslide visit **www.landslide.com** or call **1-866-450-8522**.

About CSO Insights, LLC

CSO Insights is a research firm that specializes in benchmarking how companies are leveraging people, process, technology, and knowledge to optimize the way they market and sell to customers. Over the past thirteen years, CSO Insights' sales effectiveness survey of over 7,500 sales effectiveness initiatives has become the benchmark for tracking the evolution of how the role of sales is changing, the challenges that are impacting sales performance, and most importantly, what companies are doing to address these issues. For more information on this research, visit **www.csoinsights.com**.