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WHITEPAPER

9 Steps for Running Efficient & Effective Sales Meetings

Put these nine easy steps in place as a consistent and predictable meeting agenda for every sales meeting, and revel in the most efficiently run meetings you've ever experienced.

Picture this:
You are sitting at a meeting going into its fourth hour. The speaker is rambling on a tangent as you mentally tick off the load of work waiting for you. You are irritated, unengaged, and stressed. If asked, you would retort, "I hate meetings!" Unfortunately, this scenario plays out every day in a sales meeting near you. Inefficiently run meetings offer little value, causing sales people to harbor negative feelings about the leaders, the company, and their jobs.

The good news is that meetings don't have to be this way! Making a few tweaks in planning and execution bring focus and productivity to every meeting.

Step Zero:
Without a bit of preparation, meetings frequently run amok in record time. Before the meeting, create an Accountability Report, and an agenda. Set a time frame for the meeting, with one to three hours being ideal, depending on the number of participants. Choose a note taker who will send out the notes at the end of the meeting. Email a reminder the day before, and make it clear every person is expected to be on time and focused.

At the meeting time, once all the participants gather...

01

Begin with the Past

A review of the last month is an essential starting point. Ask each sales person to be prepared to provide a review of his or her accounts. The overview should last ten minutes or less per person, and the format should include their 3-5 top most important issues, including:

- **Pipeline:** Who is coming on now? Who is getting closer to a decision? Who else is in the pipeline? Ask the salesperson: "Why do you think so"? Requiring accountability makes the pipeline more relevant and vital.
- **Good, bad, and ugly:** Include an overview of good/bad happenings in the last month. Were there communication issues? Pricing obstacles? Did a trade show gain lots of leads? This step offers up great intel on actions that work and those that are lacking.
- **Competitive reconnaissance:** Each sales person should give a couple of minute's worth of detail on anything new or interesting the competitors are doing, new sales tactics, a fresh product offering, or updated marketing materials.

02

Dig Into Customer Information

Review customer churn. What customers are coming in, which customers are being lost? Are there any possible up-sells? Have any customers expressed a need for additional customer support? This helps sales people practice diligence about opening AND closing customer files.

03

Discuss Special Projects

This is the time to talk about new product/service rollouts, upcoming trade shows, new company product promotions, and such. Brainstorm on the specific plans of each project, who is involved, the timeline, and goals.

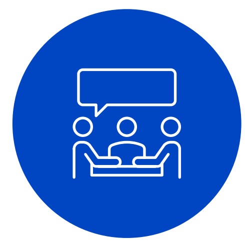
04

Review the Accountability Report

Analyze the report and assess the sales people who are doing well and who are doing poorly. Talk about the commissions being paid and any extra incentives or contests.

05

Talk Training



Training shouldn't only happen once a year. Top sales people consistently hone their craft. Devote a portion of the meeting to helping them improve in some way. Cover everything from stronger cold calling skills, to motivational exercises, to sharpening their closing prowess. Training is key to keep them engaged, motivated, and performing productively.

06

Alignment Effort

Bring in team members from other departments for a short update. The goal of this section is to avoid working in silos, helping sales stay in touch with other departments like Marketing, IT, Accounting, Warehousing, Research and Development. Think of it this way; the sales person is evaluated based on his/her production. Some departments are measured by how much they save the company, others on how fast they fill orders, and still others on accuracy. It's smart business for sales people to be appreciative and understanding of these other departmental challenges.

07

Share strategic plans

Using a particular tool such as Move the Dot, each individual charts their accounts with dots on a matrix that has to do with deepening customer relationships or acquiring more business. By plotting the dot where it is, and explaining where they're planning to move the dot before the next meeting, management and sales both understand their roles in the strategy. Managers should encourage sales to always be thinking about the 80/20 rule: Pareto principle – 80% of revenue comes from 20% of the efforts.

08

To Be Determined (TBD)

There are often issues and projects that arise that can't be filed under any of the other agenda categories. In these cases, sales people and managers need to submit these topics beforehand to be included in the agenda. Deal with unanticipated issues at this stage of the meeting, keeping it as short as possible.

09

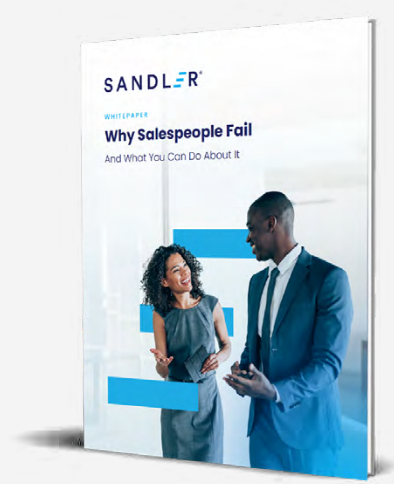
Wrap it up

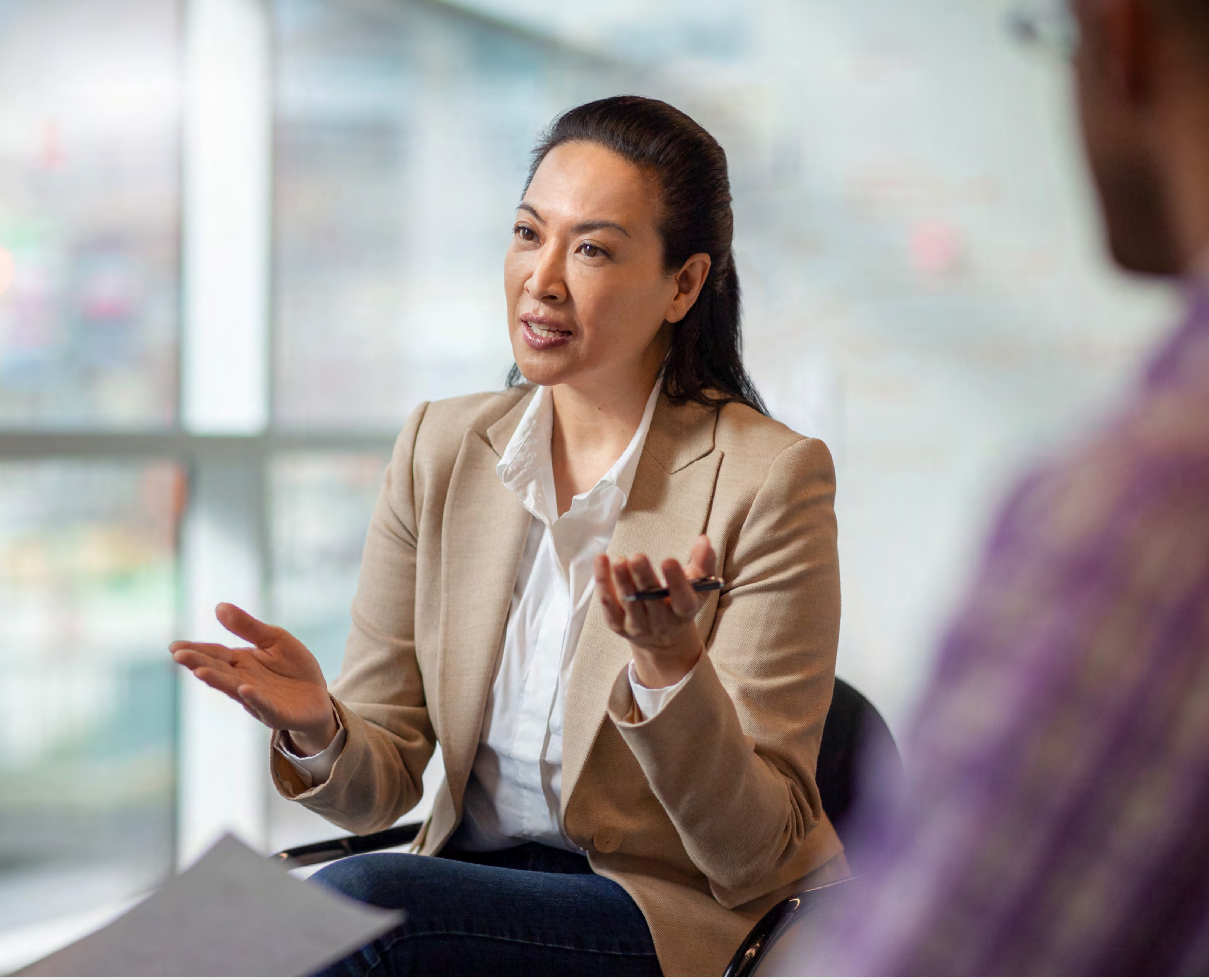
Take a few moments to tie everything together. Make sure every attendee understands the actions they are expected to take, their roles in special projects, and the timelines for each agenda topic. No one should leave the meeting with questions.

Effective sales meetings move important strategies forward, save shaky business, and keep projects on task. Don't leave them to chance. By putting these nine easy steps to work, with some upfront planning, you can run productive sales meetings where sales people leave invigorated, well-trained, and excited about crushing their goals and increasing the bottom line.

For an eye-opening, no-nonsense look at the modern-day world of sales, download our free eBook, Why Salespeople Fail… and what you can do about it!

Click here to get your copy





About Sandler

Sandler is the worldwide leader in sales, management, and customer service training. We partner with organizations of all sizes, across all industries, to help them improve their revenue performance. Sandler not only provides the initial and advanced strategies and tactics needed to excel, but we also empower your team to develop the attitudes and implement the behavior necessary to reach the highest levels of success.

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