



Understanding Your Team and Their Skills

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It's always tough to lose your star player – let alone some outstanding teammates who are out on injured reserve or traded. Remember the Fall of 2016? That didn't faze the Patriots! Why? A great coach can make a team great. Bill Belichick once again proved this, and in February 2017 the Patriots were once again Super Bowl Champions! The same is true in sales ... *Great Sales Leadership Makes Great Sales Teams!*

As a sales manager, you too need to understand your team and their skills. Assess the organization, rank the skill set and determine how to exploit the strengths while minimizing the weaknesses. Belichick changes his game strategy and always has new plays for the opponent to diminish the shortcoming and utilize his team's strengths. The challenge is to continually improve skills and tweak the plan to drive the results. Sometimes it may be an easy decision – the sales representative is better skilled at a quick sale versus a long strategic relationship selling opportunity. That's just a game time adjustment with immediate results. However, it may not be that easy of a task. You need to be active and involved with your team to improve their skills. If you can do this, even your "C" player can be coached to a "B," or maybe even an "A" player.

Here are some suggestions to "up" your Sales Leadership game:

Step 1: Get to know your sales representative, his/her selling style, what motivates them, and assess their skills.

Step 2: Make a plan and set goals. Just like coaching a professional football team, you need to have a win plan. Make sure the team buys into it and understands their individual accountability.



Step 3: Build in a regimen and follow the plan. Coaches have practice. A sales manager has one-on-one meetings with an agenda. Come prepared and make sure there is accountability. Your meeting should – at the minimum – include forecast review, pipeline review, skills discussion and improvement recommendations. Make sure to listen versus talk!

Step 4: Be engaged. Go on sales calls, review proposals, strategize and interact.

Step 5: Analyze the metrics. They provide the facts.

Finally, remember this is a continual process – so you adjust, assess and reassess. The facts will help you make the hard decisions, and sometimes you might just have to make that trade. Follow your game plan and you will see improvement and build a dynasty like the Patriots.

Need help with your team? Reach out to me for assistance in crafting and applying a game-winning strategy to your sales organization – kyenke@salesxceleration.com or (508) 878-4173. Better yet, take my 10-question [Sales Agility Assessment](#) to learn what your team is doing well, and where there is room for improvement.