



WHITE PAPER

8 Drivers of Sales Performance

How to Improve Sales Effectiveness with
the Sales Performance WheelSM

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Contents

01	Introduction
02	The Sales Performance Wheel SM : A Framework for Analysis
06	Strategy
07	Structure
08	Operations
09	Enablement
11	Talent Management
12	Training
14	Capabilities
15	Motivation
16	Conclusion
17	Self-Check Worksheet
21	Sales Benchmark Analysis and Plan
22	About RAIN Group

Introduction

In the mid-1990s when I (Mike) first started working in sales performance optimization, it was fairly common to see a sales strategy that consisted of giving a seller a desk, a phone, a business directory, and saying, “Go.” Fast forward a few more years than I care to think about, and selling has become significantly more complex. TechCrunch declared 2016 to be the “Year of the Sales Stack,” referring to the hundreds of technologies available to support sales force performance.¹

At the same time, while selling has gotten more complex, most companies report ever-increasing challenges regarding:

- Increased services and product commoditization
- Proliferation of competition
- More informed and sophisticated buyers
- Attracting and retaining top sales talent

With the rare opportunity to dominate in sales based on product differentiation, with most companies having already squeezed excess cost out of their P&Ls, and with fewer opportunities to get ahead through mergers and acquisitions, many leaders are turning to the one last vast sea of opportunity for driving their sales and profits higher: sales performance optimization.

Like other kinds of initiatives that can drive a business’ competitiveness and success, sales performance optimization doesn’t happen overnight. Unfortunately, anything that takes successive quarters or years is a particularly odd fit in the world of selling where the line of sight rarely extends beyond the end of the current quarter.

Should sales leaders take a longer-term view, they tend to reap the benefits and get outsized returns, much like the Warren Buffet-led Berkshire Hathaway.² In the *Harvard Business Review* article, “What It’s Like to be Owned by Berkshire Hathaway,” a key takeaway is that leaders are encouraged to take a long-term view of investing in their business to gain competitive advantage, saying, “A long-term investment horizon improves operating performance.”³

Unfortunately, short-termism is rampant in sales. In one RAIN Group Center for Sales Research benchmark report, we presented a list of 19 challenges to sales and strategic account management leaders.⁴ The number one most prevalent challenge faced by 58% of average and below-average performers: “Pressure to focus on short-term vs. long-term results.”

For those leaders willing to pull their noses out of this week’s pipeline report and take the long-term view of sales performance optimization, the question remains: **what should you do and where should you invest over the long-term to get these outsized returns?**

That’s the focus of this white paper. In it, we share eight drivers you need to consider when looking to improve sales performance. At the end, we’ve included a self-check worksheet to help you uncover opportunities for improvement in your sales organization.

1 Falon Fatemi and Rebecca Hinds, “2016 Will Be The Year Of The Sales Stack,” *TechCrunch*, November 14, 2016, <http://techcrunch.com/2015/11/14/2016-will-be-the-year-of-the-sales-stack>.

2 Berkshire Hathaway has outperformed the S&P 500 by 10% over a 50 year period under Buffet’s leadership.

3 David Larcker and Brian Tayan, “What It’s Like to Be Owned by Berkshire Hathaway,” *Harvard Business Review*, December 14, 2015, <https://hbr.org/2015/12/what-its-like-to-be-owned-by-berkshire-hathaway>.

4 Mike Schultz, John Doerr, and Mary Flaherty, [Benchmark Report on High Performance in Strategic Account Management](#), RAIN Group, 2012.

The Sales Performance WheelSM: A Framework for Analysis

Walk into any conference room after a sales strategy meeting, and you might find something like this on the white board:

Motivate the team Change compensation Incorporate big data analytics Build sales playbooks
Change pricing strategy Build seller expertise Improve sales hiring New CRM system
Drive opportunity wins Change our culture Integrate selling teams
Implement insight selling Expand strategic accounts Drive seller effectiveness Drive value
Drive targets higher Align with marketing Create top sales managers Change channels
Incorporate social selling Innovate faster Improve proposals Change selling roles

It's difficult to know what to tackle, when to tackle it, what results the organization should be targeting, where you can get the biggest bang for your buck, and what it really takes to get those results without further analysis. This kind of analysis stymies many a company leadership team.









When we began analyzing sales forces two decades ago, we saw the need for an organizing framework to cut through all the complexity, and provide a lens through which to view a sales organization with a clear eye. The result: the Sales Performance Wheel.



The Sales Performance WheelSM categorizes the various influences on sales success into eight buckets. Based on over 70 years of sales research and behavioral science, the Sales Performance Wheel provides a guide to help leaders analyze where they are now and where they need to be, and to make the decisions on how best to get there.

The Sales Performance Wheel has been the central model in hundreds of sales organization performance analyses. In these analyses, we rank the organization in specific areas across the eight categories through the Sales Organization Maturity ModelSM.

RAIN Group Sales Organization Maturity ModelSM

		1. <i>Ad Hoc</i>	2. <i>Emerging</i>	3. <i>Defined</i>	4. <i>Managed</i>	5. <i>World-Class</i>
 Strategy		Non-existent	Some leadership and strategy emerging	Vision forming, strategy in place	Strategy and vision established, regular success with initiatives	Strong, innovative vision embraced, implementation leadership
 Structure		Chaos	Some structure and alignment; compensation disorganization	Structure in place and aligned, organized compensation	Structure supports execution, compensation success	Innovative structure drives growth, attractive compensation
 Operations		Operations and accountability chaos	Initial forays into operations, management, and accountability	Structures, process, and protocols defined	Smooth and effective operations, proactive accountability	Operations machine drives visibility, efficiency, and sales effectiveness
 Enablement		Lacking	Some process established; periodic coaching	Process and method defined, performance support established	Process, method, and performance support helps sellers succeed	Process and method constantly improving, support drives performance
 Talent		Low quality	Inconsistent	Average talent quality and attraction, some predictors identified	Strong quality and attraction, predictive performance	Top talent, attracting top performers
 Training		Non-existent	Some but inconsistent, underfunded, and ineffective	Established, some effectiveness, some funding	Consistent and across core topics, often effective, strong investment	Complete training curriculum, very effective, excellent investment
 Capabilities		Inconsistent	Pockets of competence across key areas	Established benchmarks across key areas, some top performers	Success and high performance across areas	Top performance across capabilities, consistently improving
 Motivation		Sluggish	Some negativity and inaction, flashes of motivation and execution	Average motivation, emerging examples of excellence	Positivity about organization and role, common motivation support	Very positive feelings, motivation is consistent and maximized

The word maturity is often defined as “full development” or “a perfected condition.” The RAIN Group Sales Organization Maturity Model establishes a framework of excellence for sales organizations, and consists of a series of stages to guide organizations from where they are now, to where they need to go, and the path they need to take to get there.

While we’ve never seen an organization at Level 5 across all categories, we’ve seen examples of Level 5 for each category in different organizations. We know what the “perfected condition” looks like, and we know how to help organizations get there.

Creating a Benchmark Database

With the Sales Performance WheelSM, RAIN Group has helped many companies analyze their sales organizations and define the right path to maximize their sales performance. In late 2015, the RAIN Group Center for Sales Research took the next step. We embarked on a major benchmark study to analyze statistical correlations between Top Performance in sales and the various areas of the Sales Performance Wheel.

We analyzed what 472 sellers and executives, representing companies with sales forces ranging from 10 to 5,000-plus sellers, did to achieve their results, and published our findings in the *Top-Performing Sales Organization Benchmark Report*.

We learned that Top-Performing Sales Organizations:

- Achieve higher opportunity win rates
- Capture maximum value in pricing
- Set challenging sales goals and achieve them more often
- Are better able to fill pipelines, win opportunities, and grow accounts
- Have highly motivated sales teams
- Are more capable of delivering value
- Have stronger cultures of sales success and motivation
- Attract top talent more frequently

Based on a subset of these factors,⁵ we bucketed respondents into three groups:

- Elite Performers, representing the top 7% of respondents
- Top Performers, representing the top 20%
- The Rest, representing the remaining 80%

It's worthwhile to note that though there were slight variations among industry groups and company sizes, their performance, win rates, and scores across categories were similar. Our findings are applicable to organizations of all sizes.

So whether you have 10 sellers or 10,000, Top Performance is an achievable goal. However, what each company must do across the Sales Performance Wheel to drive results depends on where they are now, their strategy and goals, and where their gaps are compared to Top Performers.

⁵ To learn more, read our article *What Defines a Top Performing Sales Organization?* here: <http://www.rainsalestraining.com/blog/what-defines-a-top-performing-sales-organization/>.

The Eight Categories of the Sales Performance WheelSM

There are eight categories in the Sales Performance Wheel. Four of them—Strategy, Structure, Operations, and Enablement—relate to the sales organization itself. With these, the organization sets the performance environment for the sellers. These categories form the ‘house’ in which sellers live.

The other four categories—Talent Management, Training, Capabilities, and Motivation—while influenced by the organization, relate directly to the people in sales and sales management roles. While the categories are mutually exclusive, they are all deeply interrelated. People often ask us, “What’s the one thing that we should do to drive our sales success?” You’re better off looking for a pink unicorn than for the silver bullet that will optimize your sales performance.

The secret is in finding the right mix of factors specifically relevant for you that will drive your results to the next level.

On the pages that follow, we outline the key components of each of the eight categories of the Sales Performance Wheel. On page 17, we provide a worksheet you can use to help you think about where you are in the various categories, where you need to be, and why.



The Strategy category of the Sales Performance WheelSM focuses on the factors that most affect the direction of the sales organization. It's what sets the direction and drives all other factors of sales success.

Key Components

81% of Top Performers agree that their sales organization focuses on driving maximum value for the customer vs. 61% of The Rest.

- **Go-To-Market Strategy:** Every sales organization has a direction. The question is whether it's the *right* direction. Sales leaders must make conscious decisions about how they drive value for their market, how they make money, how sales, marketing, and delivery operations work with each other, why they win and grow, and their expectations for what the sales organization needs to do to bring their vision to life.
- **Value Proposition:** When we say value proposition, we don't mean in the sense of an elevator pitch. We mean, from a strategic perspective, what value the overall organization, including the sales organization, actually brings to the table. This area also covers competitive position. Why buyers buy, and why they buy from you, are critical factors that shape the sales organization and how it operates.
- **Priorities:** Every sales organization (well, every sales organization that wants to make progress) has priorities. The question is whether they have the right priorities, the right plan to execute on those priorities, and the right leaders and team to execute them. Only 57% of The Rest prioritize improving sales force effectiveness compared to 69% of Top Performers. At the same time, only 51% of The Rest agree that "when company leaders set a priority, the priority gets done."
- **Pricing Strategy:** Some organizations discount because they must, and some do so as a strategy. Some seek to achieve premium pricing, while others are content with market rate. Some pursue high pricing to build strategic competitive advantage. Some pursue low pricing for the same reason. There are many pricing strategy decisions organizations must make.

Looking at the Top Performers, 58% agree that "our pricing strategy allows us to capture maximum prices in line with the value we provide," compared to only 41% of The Rest.
- **Leadership:** Who leads the sales organization, with what styles, how they collaborate with the rest of the organization, and how they collaborate and communicate with the sales team are all critical factors in sales effectiveness and optimization.

Takeaway: You can take all sorts of action, but without the right strategy and leadership, it may simply be the noise before defeat.⁶

⁶ Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, 5th century BC.

2. Structure



The Structure category of the Sales Performance WheelSM focuses on the structure of the sales force itself, sales compensation, territory design, and territory, account, and lead assignment.

Key Components

71% of Elite and 52% of Top Performers agree that sales compensation drives top performance vs. 33% of The Rest.

- **Sales Force Structure:** Leaders must decide how they will structure their sales force to capture maximum revenue and margin. Direct sales force? Channels? Inside/outside sales hybrid? Something else? They also need to design the roles, including defining what sellers are supposed to produce in each role. It's critical to think about the sales force in light of the rest of the organization. How will they partner with marketing? To generate leads? To drive sales? To create a technology environment that meets mutual goals?
- **Sales Compensation:** Sales compensation is a topic near and dear to everyone's heart. Leaders love to jump to sales compensation to fix their problems. While it's certainly a factor in sales force effectiveness, it's just one. Still, compensation has a major effect on who you can hire, who stays, what sellers do (and don't do) on the job, their levels of motivation, and more. Only one-third of The Rest agree that their sales compensation drives top performance.
- **Territory Design:** The idea for most sales organizations is to capture all available profitable revenue from the market. The challenge is few sales organizations have the footprint to cover all available buyers. Leaders must apportion territories to help sellers find and win as much profitable business as possible. It's not as simple as assigning geographies, however. When it comes to territory design, leaders must consider industry, expertise areas, approach to strategic accounts, competition, and more.
- **Territory, Account, and Lead Assignment:** The charge here is simply this: getting the right people assigned to the right territories, accounts, and leads, who can deliver the most value and have the greatest success. This one might seem simple, but it's a great challenge to many a leader.

Takeaway: If you don't get the structure right, you might not attract or keep the right people, and you leave significant revenue-growth opportunity in the market untapped.

Leader Willingness to Drive Structural Change

Consider account and lead assignment. Only 36% of The Rest agree that accounts are assigned to the people best suited to succeed with them versus 77% of Elite Performers, and 60% of Top Performers. In other words, nearly two-thirds of The Rest do not agree accounts are handled by the right people. And remember, The Rest represent 80% of all respondents.

A gut response might be that this is inexcusable. However, it's understandable. Some accounts may have been sourced and built by a particular seller. Let's assume that an account represents \$1m in revenue. However, as the years have progressed, it should now be \$10m in revenue, and this account owner is not suited to grow it. Redistributing the account away from the person who sourced and managed it for years is not a decision to be made lightly. While it's understandable why accounts are sometimes led by people not up to the task, it doesn't make it a good business practice. Leaders must have the courage to make the change if it's best for the business.

In sales forces of any size, changing structure is one of the most difficult undertakings. Leaders willing to do it for the right reasons, and get it done the right way, give their teams better odds at achieving Elite and Top Performance.

3. Operations



The Operations category of the Sales Performance WheelSM focuses on the factors that most affect how efficiently the sales organization runs, how activities and outcomes are tracked, and how information is communicated to management for decision making.

Key Components

80% of Elite and 58% of Top Performers agree that their reports allow them to analyze sales situations, actions, and results effectively, compared to only 37% of The Rest.

- **Data Management:** A clean and updated database is essential to sales success. At organizations of all sizes, sellers call names in the database that aren't there, sellers don't update their accounts and pipelines, and leads don't get routed to sellers. A database can either enable selling success, or cripple it.
- **Analytics and Reporting:** Most leaders want to know where success is happening, where failures are likely to crop up, and where the opportunities are to drive success. The foundation of a clean database starts this process. Analytics and reporting—the ability to make sense of it all—fuels decision making.
- **Forecasting:** Many businesses succeed or fail based on their outlook for sales in the next quarter or two. Without good forecasting, a business can either spend too much and lose margin, or spend too little and miss out on sales opportunities. Getting a handle on forecasting is not easy—only 60% of Elite companies believe sellers forecast their own pipelines accurately. However, that's a lot better than The Rest at 19%.
- **Pricing and Proposal Operations:** Time kills sales. Buyers get fired, get reassigned, leave their jobs, bring in competitors, and more. Then there's the Law of Diminishing Intent: the longer someone waits to do something, the less likely they are to do it.

The faster sellers get help with pricing and proposals for important sales, the more sales they make. At Top-Performing companies, 75% of sellers adhere to established pricing guidelines, while only 56% at The Rest do. Pricing and proposal support needs to be fast, accurate, helpful, and designed to cater to the most important sales first, and with the right level of intensity.

- **Quota Setting:** How high should you set quotas for various groups? It's a question that many sales leaders grapple with. Quota-setting affects seller action planning, compensation expectations, turnover, motivation, and a host of other selling behaviors. Elite and Top Performers believe their performance targets are challenging at 83% and 82% respectively. The Rest come in at 72%. By definition, 100% of Elite and Top Performers meet their sales goals. Top Performers set higher goals and still achieve them.
- **Accountability:** Perhaps one of the most common ailments of under-performing sales organizations is a lack of accountability. Management at Elite and Top-Performing Sales Organizations is significantly more likely to address under-performance issues (63% and 48% respectively), while The Rest is much less likely (31%). Letting under-performers linger too long reduces revenue, increases costs and drags down margin, and has a negative impact on culture. This is an area where gains in effectiveness improve both revenue and culture. With only 31% of The Rest and 48% of Top Performers succeeding in this area, the potential for improvement is quite evident.

Takeaway: Without a good handle on operations, sales organizations are terribly inefficient and cost too much. Leaders have no visibility into how the organization is doing or what metrics need to change to drive performance higher.

4. Enablement



The Enablement category of the Sales Performance WheelSM focuses on sales management and coaching, sales process, sales method, and technologies, tools, and resources designed to enable sellers to sell at their potential.

Key Components

- **Sales Management and Coaching:** The fundamental leverage point in many sales organizations to improve sales performance is the sales manager. Sales managers help sellers take advantage of all of their resources, coach them on winning sales, help them manage their time and day to best effect, motivate sellers, and more.
- **Sales Processes:** Sales processes include prospecting, the core sales process, and the process for growing strategic accounts. When these processes are designed and implemented well, they can help sellers do the right things at the right time to drive results as high as they can possibly be driven. Elite and Top Performers are much more likely to have mature selling processes than The Rest (see page 10).
- **Sales Method:** Sales method differs from sales process in that it's not a series of stages, but a philosophy around selling. Having a common sales methodology creates a common language around selling, expectations for how to interact with buyers, skills needed for sales performance, and direction for how to achieve Top Performance.
- **Technologies, Tools, and Resources:** The list of sales performance support tools, resources, and technologies is too long to cover in this paper. However, having the best ones at the appropriate places and times in the process consistently drives sales performance higher.

62% of Top Performers have at least defined a sales methodology. Only 44% of The Rest have.

Takeaway: Where lack of operations maturity makes sales organizations inefficient, a lack of enablement ensures sales organizations are much less effective than they could be.

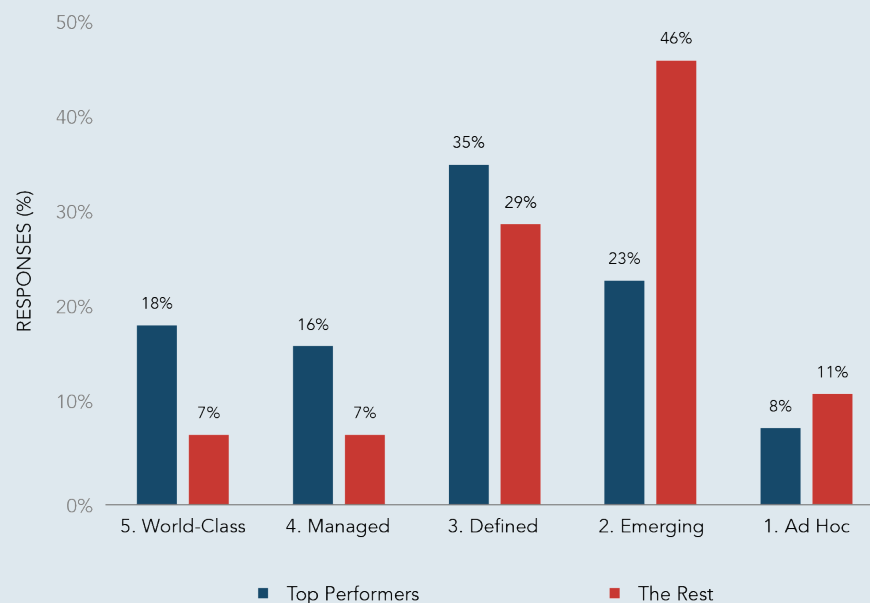
Top Performance and Sales Process

We asked: Which of the statements below best describes the organization's overall process for winning sales opportunities?

1. **Ad Hoc (Chaos):** No consistent process or framework for planning to win opportunities.
2. **Emerging:** Some consistency and planning framework, but still work to do to standardize and make it complete.
3. **Defined:** Our opportunity management process is defined and we have a tool to guide us to win opportunities.
4. **Managed (Adoptive):** Number 3, plus it's easy to use, includes specific details and guidance for selling, the process is managed well and helpful to sellers.
5. **World-Class (Adaptive):** Number 4, plus it's always being measured and improved, it includes best practices for strategies and tactics across the sales cycle, and the process and planning tools are embedded in sellers' workflow and technology.

Top Performers are much more likely to have World-Class and Managed processes, while The Rest are much more likely to have Emerging or Ad Hoc.

Figure 1. Sales Process Maturity by Sales Performance



5. Talent Management



The Talent Management category of the Sales Performance WheelSM focuses on overall strength of talent, the competencies of sellers and sales managers, recruiting, selection and assignment, and onboarding.

Key Components

- **Talent Strength:** Sales performance starts with having the right people in place at the organization, yet only 28% of The Rest say “the quality of people in selling roles is as high as it should be.” Elite and Top Performers? 66% and 45% respectively.
- **Competencies:** Only about one-third of The Rest have well-designed sales roles and competency models for each role. That means about two-thirds of The Rest hire people without a profile of what skills, knowledge, and attributes someone needs to succeed in the role. It’s very difficult to recruit, hire, and assign sellers to jobs when you don’t know what the profile of the person who will succeed in those roles looks like.
- **Recruiting:** Sales organizations of any size need to be able to source qualified candidates for roles. Under-performing sales organizations seem to struggle universally when it comes to finding candidates who are likely to be top performers.
- **Selection and Assignment:** Choosing who to hire and what roles to place them in confounds many a sales organization. People are hired based on interviews—mostly focused on whether the managers “like” someone. However, too many organizations lack good assessment instruments or don’t vet a seller’s history or competency profile.
- **Onboarding:** Both the effectiveness of onboarding and speed of onboarding at Top Performers is better than The Rest. Onboarding is the launch pad for either success or failure in sales roles. Fortunately for sales organizations, they can choose which launch pad they want their onboarding to be.

Only 31% of The Rest have effective onboarding processes for new sales hires compared to 44% of Top Performers.

Takeaway: Sales organizations need the right people to succeed.

6. Training



The Training category of the Sales Performance WheelSM focuses on the development of sellers as well as the organization's culture and investment around training and education. In addition to overall effectiveness, it also addresses training effectiveness in specific areas such as driving and winning opportunities and account growth.

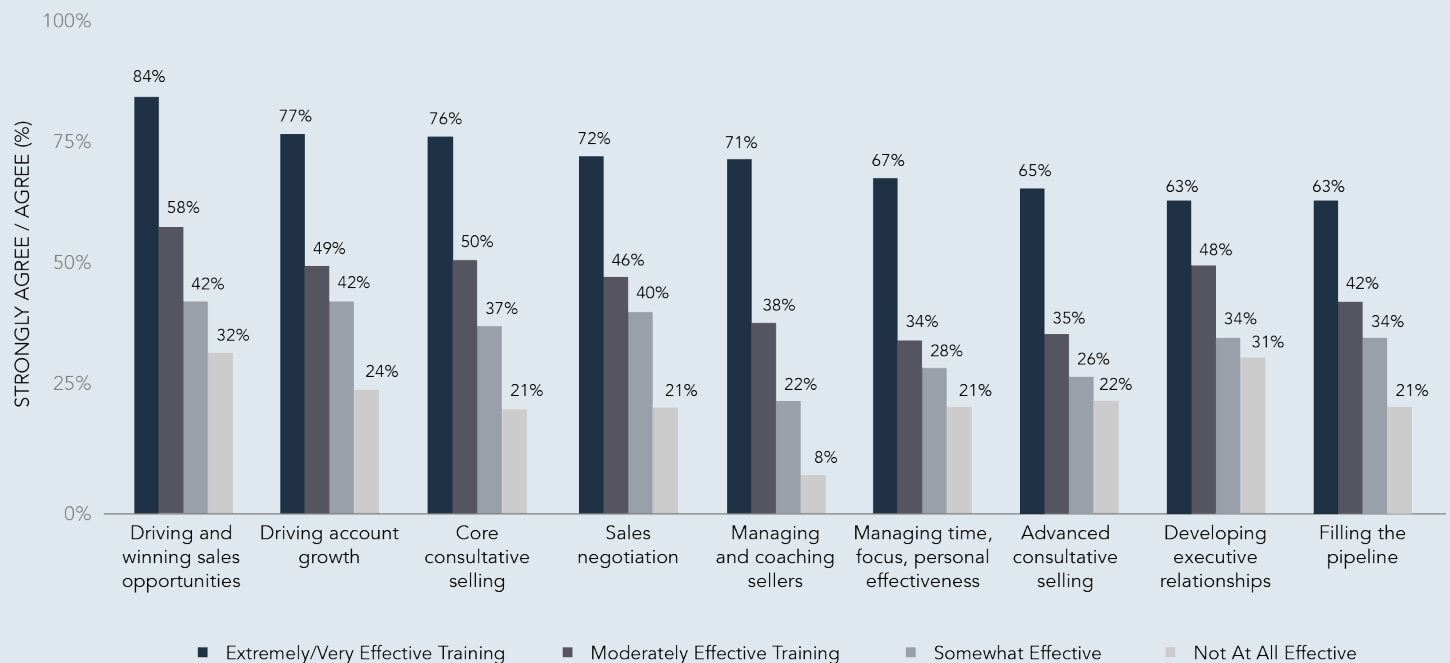
Key Components

- **Education System:** The lowest score for The Rest across 75 factors that we studied in our *Top-Performing Sales Organization Benchmark Report* was for sales training effectiveness. Only 14% of The Rest believe they have very or extremely effective sales training. Sales education has evolved greatly in the past 15 years. For those companies keeping up, it's making a difference.

Effective Sales Training and Seller Capabilities

Companies that have strong sales training effectiveness and investment also have much higher skill ratings than those that don't. Statistically, the correlations couldn't be more evident.

Figure 2. Sales Skills by Sales Training Effectiveness





- **Skills, Knowledge, and Attribute Development:** Along with the sales education system overall, it's important to know how well an organization builds specific skills, knowledge, and attributes as each is accomplished in different ways. Skills are built through training and application, but knowledge is best built through blended learning, including ongoing self-study and one-on-one practice. Regarding attribute development, the more successful organizations do this through coaching and mentoring.

Takeaway: Sellers need the skills to be able to succeed. Without effective training, they can't get them, and results suffer.

7. Capabilities

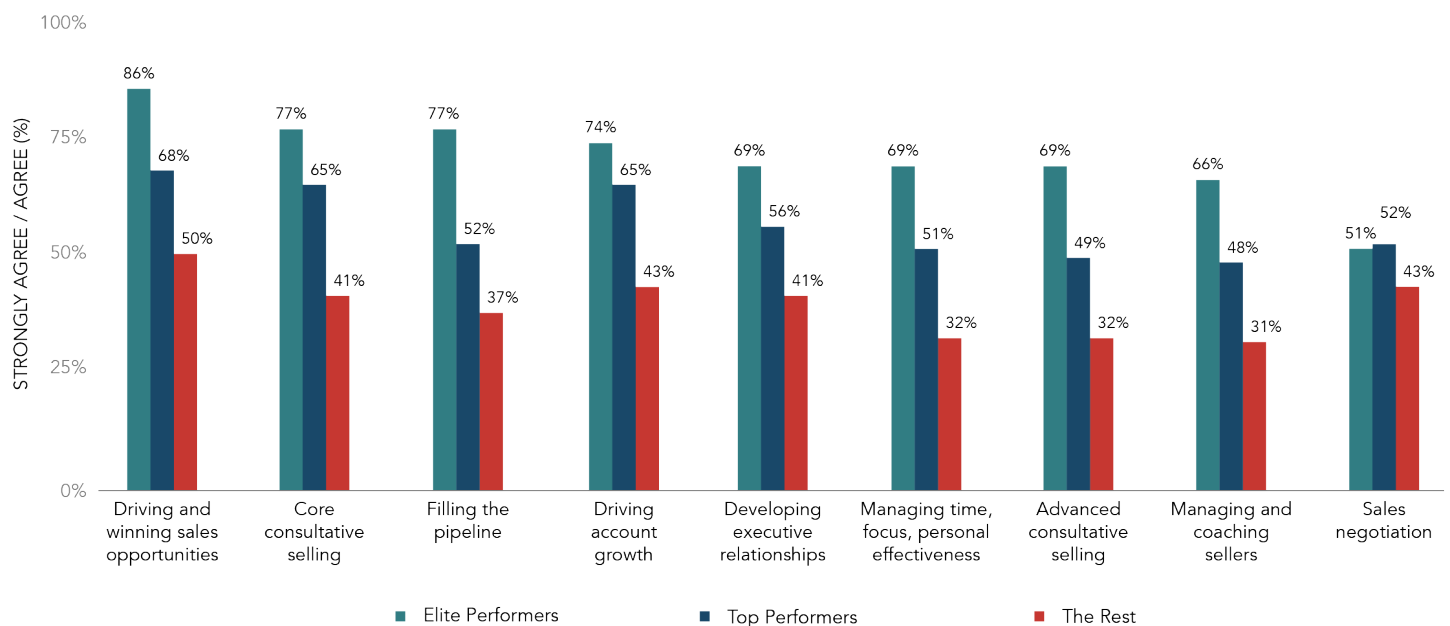


The Capabilities category of the Sales Performance WheelSM focuses on the skills and knowledge needed to drive sales performance.

Key Components

- **Filling the Pipeline:** Perhaps one of the most prevalent areas of stress in sales organizations is generating new opportunities. Even now in the age of inbound marketing, over half of sellers are expected to generate their own leads to succeed.
- **Driving Opportunities:** This area includes both the strategy and understanding of how to win sales opportunities, and the skills needed to do so. Sellers need to be able to sell in order to succeed. Seems obvious, but many sellers don't have these skills.
- **Driving Account Growth:** Most companies agree there is significant opportunity to grow existing accounts. The biggest difference between Top Performers and The Rest is "our sales organization is effective at maximizing sales to existing clients." Only 32% of The Rest agree compared to 61% of Top Performers and 77% of Elite.
- **Managing Sales:** Less than 50% of even Top-Performing Organizations have sales managers with the skills they need to manage their teams. The Rest come in at 31%. That means if you line up 10 sales managers at these companies, seven of them don't have the skills they need to do their jobs well.
- **Seller Knowledge and Expertise:** You can't sell what you don't know. Sellers need to know so much, including their offerings, customers and their context and needs, competitors, marketplace and industry trends, and more to be successful.

Figure 3. Sellers Have the Skills They Need to Find and Win Business Consistently and at a High Level



Takeaway: Sellers need skills to succeed, but many have significant skill deficits.

8. Motivation



77% of Elite and 55% of Top Performers agree that managers are effective at creating and sustaining maximum selling energy, compared to only 32% of The Rest.

The Motivation category of the Sales Performance WheelSM focuses on seller attitudes, leadership's ability to create and sustain selling energy, and the organization's culture with respect to selling.

Key Components

- **Culture and Company:** Sometimes selling is respected and viewed as vital. Other times not so much. Sometimes leaders support sellers. Other times not so much. The extent to which the culture and company supports sellers has quite the effect on sales motivation.
- **Management:** If a seller doesn't have a fire in the belly, it's very hard to light one. But if a seller does have a fire—even a flicker—the right manager can help the flame burn bright. Elite Performers are more than twice as likely to have managers who motivate sellers.
- **Intrinsic Motivators:** The conventional wisdom is that sellers are motivated by money. While this is often the case, there's a lot more to the story. Sellers can be motivated by many factors: recognition, advancement, winning (not necessarily related to money), personal development, and a host of other factors. When sales managers and leaders know what motivates any one individual person, they can focus on drawing that motivation out on a regular basis.
- **Execution:** Execution is affected by factors across the Wheel from talent to skills to operations to enablement, but nothing gets done unless a seller drives themselves to do it. And, as you might imagine, sellers at Top and Elite Performers get a lot more done.

Takeaway: To optimize your sales force, you need to have a highly motivated team bringing their “A game” day in and day out.

Conclusion

If you are one of the many companies that knows there is huge untapped revenue-growth potential in your sales organization, but don't know where to begin to make that potential a reality, start by using the self-check on the following pages and consider the key components across the categories of the Sales Performance WheelSM.

Organizational Factors

<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Structure</i>	<i>Operations</i>	<i>Enablement</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Go-to-market strategy	<input type="checkbox"/> Sales force structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Data management	<input type="checkbox"/> Sales management and coaching
<input type="checkbox"/> Value proposition	<input type="checkbox"/> Sales compensation	<input type="checkbox"/> Analytics and reporting	<input type="checkbox"/> Sales processes
<input type="checkbox"/> Priorities	<input type="checkbox"/> Territory design	<input type="checkbox"/> Forecasting	<input type="checkbox"/> Sales method
<input type="checkbox"/> Pricing strategy	<input type="checkbox"/> Territory, account, and lead assignment	<input type="checkbox"/> Pricing and proposal operations	<input type="checkbox"/> Technologies, tools, and resources
<input type="checkbox"/> Leadership		<input type="checkbox"/> Quota setting	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Accountability	

People Factors

<i>Talent Management</i>	<i>Training</i>	<i>Capabilities</i>	<i>Motivation</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Talent strength	<input type="checkbox"/> Education system	<input type="checkbox"/> Filling the pipeline	<input type="checkbox"/> Culture and company
<input type="checkbox"/> Competencies	<input type="checkbox"/> Skills development	<input type="checkbox"/> Driving opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/> Management
<input type="checkbox"/> Recruiting	<input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge development	<input type="checkbox"/> Driving account growth	<input type="checkbox"/> Intrinsic motivators
<input type="checkbox"/> Selection and assignment	<input type="checkbox"/> Attribute development	<input type="checkbox"/> Managing sales	<input type="checkbox"/> Execution
<input type="checkbox"/> Onboarding		<input type="checkbox"/> Seller expertise	



On the following pages are several questions you can ask yourself across the 8 categories of the Sales Performance WheelSM as a quick self-check.

When RAIN Group works with clients to analyze their sales performance, we ask a standard 75 questions across the Sales Performance WheelSM. Not all questions, however, are applicable to each organization, and each organization has other specific areas that must be studied in depth. We tend to ask an average of 90 to 120 questions from our database of 450 questions about factors that often affect sales performance.

It's also important to note that while a survey can produce extremely worthwhile data, it's critical to perform deep dive analysis across the various areas to learn what's really going on, and make decisions about what needs to change and how to bring that change to life to improve sales performance.

Unless otherwise noted, rate the degree with which you agree to the following questions on a scale of 1-5:

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

	WHERE YOU ARE NOW (1-5)	WHERE YOU NEED TO BE (1-5)	IMPACT OF CHANGE (Notes)
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Strategy

Our sales organization focuses on driving maximum value for the customer			
Company leaders prioritize improving sales force effectiveness			
Our pricing strategy allows us to capture maximum prices in line with the value we provide			
Our sales organization is effective at maximizing sales to existing clients across capability areas			



Structure

Accounts are assigned to people best suited to succeed with them			
Leads are assigned to people best suited to succeed with them			
Our sales compensation plan drives top performance			
Our sales territory assignment maximizes revenue generation in each territory			



	WHERE YOU ARE NOW (1-5)	WHERE YOU NEED TO BE (1-5)	IMPACT OF CHANGE (Notes)
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Operations

Seller performance targets (quotas) are challenging			
Our management and tracking of key metrics allow us to improve performance, address problems, and inform decision making			
Leaders and managers quickly address under-performance and enforce consequences			
CRM data is accurate and complete enough to provide guidance for effective selling and management			



Enablement

Sales managers are effective in getting maximum performance from their sellers			
We have well-integrated technology systems that enable all aspects of sales (e.g., sellers managers, operations) to achieve top performance			
Our lead generation is highly effective			
Our sales playbooks are comprehensive – including job aids, tools, and guides across the sales and account cycle-to help sellers in every component of selling			
Our overall process for winning sales opportunities is best described as (see definitions on page 10): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ad Hoc 2. Emerging 3. Defined 4. Managed 5. World Class 			



Talent Management

Sales roles are well-designed and defined using competency models specific to our company and job roles			
We are effective at assessing seller skills, knowledge, and attributes that support top sales performance			
The quality of people in selling roles is as high as it should be			
We are successful at finding and hiring our desired sales candidates			



	WHERE YOU ARE NOW (1-5)	WHERE YOU NEED TO BE (1-5)	IMPACT OF CHANGE (Notes)
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Training

How would you describe the overall effectiveness of the organization's sales training and education overall:			
1. Not at all effective			
2. Somewhat effective			
3. Moderately effective			
4. Very effective			
5. Extremely effective			
How would you describe the effectiveness of the organization's sales training in the following areas:			
Filling the pipeline			
Driving and winning individual sales opportunities			
Driving account growth			
Managing sales			
Developing knowledge expertise for sellers			
Which of the statements best characterizes your organization's culture around investing in improving sellers' skill and knowledge?			
1. Little to no investment/focus on sales training			
2. Some investment/focus on sales training			
3. Average investment/focus on sales training			
4. Good investment/focus on sales training			
5. Excellent investment/focus on sales training			



Capabilities

Our sellers have the skills they need in the following areas to find and win business consistently and at a high level:			
Driving and winning sales opportunities			
Driving account growth			
Core consultative selling			
Sales negotiation			
Filling the pipeline			
Developing executive relationships			
Managing time, focus, personal effectiveness			
Advanced consultative selling			
Managing and coaching sellers			
Our sellers have fluent, expert-level knowledge in the following areas:			
Your capabilities			
Industries and the market (yours)			
Customers			
Your company's messaging			
Industries and the market (your buyers')			
The competition			
Your company's best sales practices			



	WHERE YOU ARE NOW (1-5)	WHERE YOU NEED TO BE (1-5)	IMPACT OF CHANGE (Notes)
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Motivation

The people in selling roles have a positive and enthusiastic attitude about our organization			
Our culture drives and supports sellers' motivation to succeed			
Managers and leaders are effective at creating and sustaining maximum selling energy from sellers			
People in selling roles manage their time and day effectively—they're great at execution			

Sales Benchmark Analysis and Plan

Benchmark Your Organization Against Top Performers

Most leaders know there is huge untapped revenue growth potential in their sales organization. However, structuring and organizing for growth, finding and developing the right people, and enabling them to achieve their sales potential is frustratingly elusive. In the name of sales performance improvement, companies try many different tactics that often fall short of their goal.

In *The Top-Performing Sales Organization Benchmark Report*, we studied 472 sellers and executives, representing companies with sales forces ranging from 10 sellers to 5,000+. Our goal was to learn what the Top-Performing Sales Organizations—those with higher win rates, that meet their sales goals, and achieve maximum pricing in line with the value they provide—do to reach Top Performer status.

We've identified 75 specific factors, organized around the eight drivers in the Sales Performance Wheel, that impact a sales team's ultimate performance and growth. In our Sales Benchmark Analysis and Plan, we will benchmark your organization against these Top Performers, and our consultants will perform an analysis of the greatest areas of improvement opportunity in your sales organization. You will:

- Find out how you stack up against our database of Top-Performing Sales Organizations in each category
- Learn the best avenues for sales performance improvement for your company
- Identify current strengths and areas of improvement across sellers
- Put a Sales Growth Plan of Action in place to implement improvements as quickly and effectively as possible

RAIN Group's Sales Performance Wheel



The Sales Benchmark Analysis and Plan will uncover your greatest, and often hidden, opportunities for growth. You'll be equipped with a Sales Growth Plan of Action allowing you to implement with confidence.

Contact Us to Discover How You Stack Up Against Top Performers

Top Performers:

- Achieve higher opportunity win rates
- Meet their sales goals more often
- Capture value-based pricing
- Grow revenue more often and more dramatically than The Rest

To benchmark your organization and learn what you need to do join their ranks, contact RAIN Group today at 508-405-0438 or info@raingroup.com.

About RAIN Group

Unleash the Sales Potential of Your Team with RAIN Group

RAIN Group is a sales training, assessment, and performance improvement company that helps leading organizations improve sales results. We've helped hundreds of thousands of salespeople, managers, and professionals in more than 75 countries increase their sales significantly with RAIN Group's consulting and sales methodology.

We can help you:

Implement Sales Training that Delivers Real Results

RAIN Group's sales training system inspires real change and delivers real results that last. Our rigorous approach includes sales team evaluation, customized training programs, robust reinforcement, and coaching to help you and your team develop sales and negotiation skills, and maximize your results.

Grow Your Key Accounts

At most companies, there's a huge, untapped opportunity to add more value—and thus sell more—to existing accounts. We help our clients capitalize on these revenue growth opportunities. Whether it's simply increasing cross-selling and up-selling or implementing a major strategic account management program, we can help.

Identify Who Can and Will Sell with Great Success

Our assessments measure sales attributes and skills, identifying the factors that really make a difference in sales performance. Whether you're looking to hire someone who can and will sell, or looking to improve sales performance, we'll help you build the most successful sales team.

Implement World-Class Sales Coaching

We coach sellers, professionals, and leaders individually and in groups to achieve the greatest and fastest increase in sales results. And we train and certify leaders and managers in our RAIN Sales Coaching system. Often, it's RAIN Sales Coaching that truly unlocks the team's potential, and keeps them motivated to produce the best results consistently.

Find out more about how RAIN Group can help you
unleash the sales potential of your team by visiting
RAINGroup.com or calling (508) 405-0438.

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