



WHITE PAPER

# The 5 Roles of High-Performing Sales Coaches

How the best sales coaches transform sales performance and maximize success.

by Mike Schultz and John Doerr

# Executive Summary

## The 5 Roles of High-Performing Sales Coaches

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### Report Summary

Coaching has become a hot topic in business as more and more companies see a significant return on investment. However, where executive coaching and personal-effectiveness coaching yield positive results, sales coaching lags behind. Whether it's a lack of time, inconsistent coaching conversations, unavailability of tools and resources to succeed, or weak coaching skills, sales managers and leaders simply aren't producing the same results.

Over the years, and through our own RAIN Sales Coaching program, we've learned there are three critical components to sales coaching success. A sales coach must:

- Play five roles in the coaching process
- Establish a regular rhythm and frequency to the coaching process
- Lead masterful coaching conversations

This report covers the five roles of a sales coach in depth, including how rhythm and conversation play an integral role in a coach's ability to maximize performance improvement.

### Successful Sales Coaches Serve 5 Key Roles

1. **Motivate:** Coaches motivate sellers to find and sustain their highest level of energy and action over the long term. By challenging the salesperson and causing him to take ownership over his own success, a successful sales coach creates an obvious connection between goals and actions that will inspire his coachee to devote maximum effort per work hour.
2. **Focus:** The best sales coaches help sellers focus their energy and efforts on the activities that will yield them the best return on their time. And once sellers choose what to do with their time, they need to maintain focus on those activities while avoiding the distractions that derail so many every day.
3. **Execute:** Coaches help sellers execute in the zone, the place where sole focus on one activity yields a feeling of energized focus, involvement, and enjoyment of the activity. In a selling context, if you are executing in the zone on the right activities, you will produce amazing results.
4. **Advise:** Coaches give direct advice as appropriate to maximize immediate sales wins. In some schools of thought, coaches should avoid giving direct advice because it will hinder the coachee's progress. In a live sales situation, a hands-off approach may mean losing an opportunity. A good coach knows when to give direct advice and when to allow his coachee to problem solve on his own.
5. **Develop:** Coaches develop coachee knowledge, skills, and attributes to improve performance fundamentally. Coaching must include both closing individual deals or opportunities and focus on helping the seller learn how to do it for themselves over the long haul.

### Key Takeaways

- General business coaching is not sufficient for sales situations where opportunities are often immediate and coaches lack sales experience. Programs must include a mix of different forms of coaching.
- To be successful, coaching must have a specific and regular rhythm of conversation and connection between coach and seller.
- Coaches help sellers build their goals, take ownership, and achieve results through motivation.
- Sales coaches are often instrumental in helping their coachees develop new habits and making sure they stay the course.
- Motivation is different for every person. Good sales coaches recognize this and are able to key in on what will drive each toward his New Reality.
- With a successful coaching program, clients report between a 25% to 40% increase in sales activity, leads generated, average deal size, and close ratio.

# Introduction

Most leaders agree the opportunity to improve sales performance through coaching is tremendous, including:

- Maximizing sales wins for their most important opportunities
- Filling the pipeline with new, qualified opportunities
- Maximizing sales to key accounts
- Focusing sellers' time on the most important activities
- Developing skills, knowledge, and attributes to get to the next level of performance
- Keeping sales activities and motivation at the highest levels sustainable

These leaders are turning to coaching because coaching is an increasingly popular—and increasingly proven—method of improving performance.<sup>1</sup>

Unfortunately, while companies are enjoying success with business coaching in general, sales coaching is often a major disappointment.

Commonly, we see sales managers and leaders who:

- Don't have the time to coach
- Aren't comfortable coaching
- Aren't sure what a sales coach is supposed to do
- Don't have strong coaching conversation skills
- Don't establish a consistent rhythm of coaching conversations
- Don't have the tools and resources to help them make coaching a success
- Try to apply general business coaching to sales and it doesn't work

It doesn't have to be like this.

## Coaching Growing, Producing Strong Financial Results

The International Coach Federation (ICF) estimates the number of professional business coaches worldwide has grown from 2,100 in 1999 to 47,500 in 2012. And for good reason: coaching produces strong financial results.

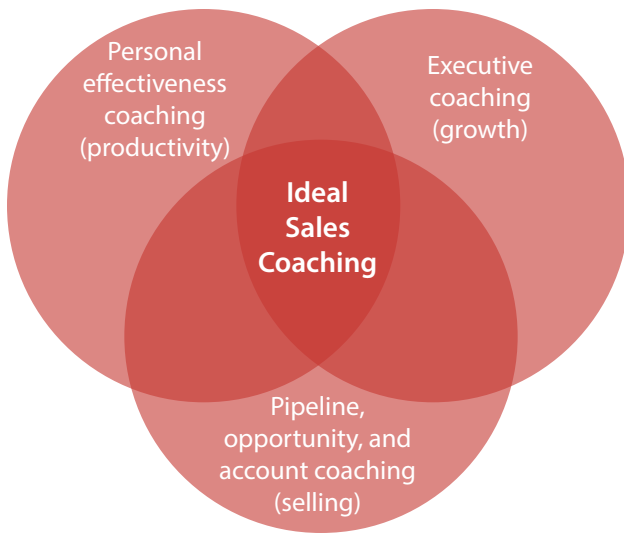
The vast majority of companies (86%) indicate that their company has at least made their investment back. In fact, almost one-fifth (19%) indicate an ROI of at least 50 times the initial investment, while a further 28% see an ROI of 10 to 49 times the investment. The median company return is 700%, indicating that a company can typically expect a return of 7 times the initial investment in coaching.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See call out.

<sup>2</sup> International Coach Federation, Association Resource Centre Inc., and PricewaterhouseCoopers LLC, *ICF Global Coaching Client Study* (Lexington: ICF, 2009), <http://icf.files.cms-plus.com/includes/media/docs/ExecutiveSummary.pdf>

Figure 1. Ideal of Sales Coaching



Getting sales coaching right starts with the realization that sales coaching, as a discipline, is not the same as other popular forms of coaching such as personal-effectiveness and executive coaching.

- Executive coaching can be inspiring and transformative over the long term, but it is neither directive nor immediate enough to be effective for sales.
- Habit and personal-effectiveness coaching can bring helpful action planning, rhythm, and motivation to the coaching process, but many habit and personal-effectiveness coaches are not knowledgeable about selling. Thus, they often aren't taken seriously by sellers.

That brings us back to sales managers. When (if!) they coach, they often focus exclusively on helping sellers win opportunities. Even then, they are frequently neither systematic nor rigorous about it. And they miss the opportunity to focus, motivate, and develop sellers so they can truly achieve top performance.

## The New Revolution in Sales Coaching

Several years ago, RAIN Group began an experiment. Our hypothesis was that by applying a coaching process and method designed specifically for sales, our clients would see a dramatic improvement in their sales results. We crafted the process, implemented the system, and refined it over time based on the results achieved by our clients.

While we had success with sales coaching previously, after we designed and implemented this coaching system, our clients report between a 25% to 40% increase in sales activity, leads generated, average deal size, and close ratios. But numbers like these fail to tell the story that individual cases bring alive:

- A large telecommunications company generated \$100,000,000 in additional pipeline after implementing RAIN Group's Extreme Productivity Challenge 90-day coaching program.
- A human resources firm increased the number of prospect meetings set by over 500% a short time after starting coaching.
- A major engineering firm increased the size of one of its strategic accounts by 14 times in a several-year period, and it grew its strategic accounts 110% overall. During the same period, the rest of its accounts (whose account managers did not participate in a coaching and training process) grew at only 4%.
- One of the world's largest accounting firms put a set of partners through our Extreme Productivity Challenge program with a 90-day intensive coaching process. They generated a 16x return on investment in 4 months measured in additional new business won.

When done well, sales coaching produces excellent results and produces them consistently. While it draws from practices in other coaching disciplines, sales coaching has its own characteristics and rhythm that make it stand apart as a distinct field (Fig. 1).

We've learned over the years that there are three critical components to sales coaching success. Sales coaching works when the coach 1) plays **five roles** in the coaching process; 2) establishes a regular **rhythm and frequency** to the coaching process, employing specific strategies along the way to inspire top performance; and 3) leads masterful coaching **conversations**.

**RAIN Sales Coaching** is the process of maximizing sales performance in the short and long term by executing the coaching playbook and holding regular one-on-one or group conversations over a sustained period of time. The system makes change systematic and best behaviors automatic.

In this report, we cover the five roles of a sales coach in depth. Throughout, we'll also discuss how sales coaching roles, rhythm, and conversation work together to help sales coaches maximize sales performance.

## The 5 Roles of a Sales Coach

The best sales coaches play five roles that allow them to maximize the performance of their coachees.<sup>3</sup>

1. **Motivate:** Coaches motivate coachees to find and sustain their highest level of energy and action over the long term.
2. **Focus:** Coaches help sellers choose their greatest impact activities, and avoid time wasters and distractions.
3. **Execute:** Coaches help sellers get the most done in their available time.
4. **Advise:** Coaches give direct advice as appropriate to maximize immediate sales wins.
5. **Develop:** Coaches develop coachee knowledge, skills, and attributes to improve performance fundamentally.

We cover each in turn in the pages that follow.

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<sup>3</sup> Note that these roles are not mutually exclusive. When a coach helps the coachee best define his goals, it's motivating. It also drives execution because the coachee can build action plans designed specifically to achieve the goals.

# The 5 Roles of High-Performing Sales Coaches

## 1. Motivate

Some sales leaders believe that a quota and a compensation plan are enough to ignite the hustle, passion, and intensity of a seller. It makes sense they think this way given that recent *Harvard Business Review* articles with titles like “Motivating Sales People: What Really Works” focus 100% on compensation.

But there’s much more to it than compensation. As Dan Pink, author of *Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us*, said in the *Washington Post*:

The old carrot-and-stick notion of motivation is failing—in large part because it works very well for a type of work that most [of us] aren’t doing anymore. It’s very good for simple, algorithmic, routine, rule-based sorts of tasks: adding up columns of figures, turning the same screw the same way. But there’s 50 years of science that says it’s ineffective for creative, conceptual, complex work. And that’s what most people in both the blue-collar and the white-collar workforce are doing today.

We’re not mice on treadmills with little carrots being dangled in front of us all the time.

Sometimes we are. There’s no question about that. But in the workplace, as people are doing more complicated things, the carrot-and-stick approach doesn’t work.<sup>4</sup>

Pink argues convincingly that autonomy (the urge to direct our own lives), mastery (the desire to get better at something that matters), and purpose (yearning to do what we do in service of greater fulfillment) are the greatest motivators.

And what fulfills one person is not the same as what fulfills another. A compensation plan and encouragement to achieve financial results are an attempt to inspire from the outside in. Compensation is a motivating factor for many sellers, but in most cases, it’s only a piece of a whole.

We can generalize to an extent about what motivates sellers, but deep down everyone is their own special snowflake. What motivates one person does not motivate another.

Some people are motivated extrinsically (e.g., money, products, vacations) and some intrinsically (e.g., feeling successful, innate desire to be the best, making a difference).

### Becoming a Top Performer

A review of assessment results of 400,000 sellers compared the top 5% to the bottom 5%. Among the results were the following:<sup>5</sup>

- **Top 5% of sellers:** 100% have written goals.
- **Bottom 5% of sellers:** Only 16% have written goals.

<sup>4</sup> Daniel Pink, “Daniel Pink on motivation,” *The Washington Post*, January 9, 2011, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2011/01/08/AR2011010800379.html>.

<sup>5</sup> Dave Kurlan, “Ultimate Comparison of Top Sellers versus Sellers That Fail,” *Understanding the Sales Force (blog)*, December 7, 2009, <http://www.omghub.com/salesdevelopmentblog/tabid/5809/bid/11304/Ultimate-Comparison-of-Top-Sellers-versus-Sellers-That-Fail.aspx>.

Some people are motivated by being altruistic— giving to others. Others are motivated economically, seeing “wins” as more important than anything. And yet, others are motivated to be creative, individualistic, authoritative, political, and so on.

The best sales coaches know this and take different approaches based on their understanding of each individual.

Fortunately, with today’s sophisticated assessment instruments, we can get a deep sense of what motivates an individual. And we can learn even more through focused conversation.

Defining the right personal goals and strategies is a critical step toward maximizing sales energy, focus, and engagement. If the goals are genuine and the seller’s desire to achieve them is strong, you tap into something very powerful: purpose.

When the coachee taps into his purpose, his dedication to action plans becomes stronger, sense of ownership for achieving strengthens, and perseverance in the face of obstacles becomes that much stouter.

Imagine an army of sellers who don’t just sell because it’s their job; they sell because their own sense of purpose is driving them to reach their potential. Powerful.

And the key to making this happen?

The right coaching process with the right goal planning approach and the right coach.

**Takeaway: Great sales coaches help sellers *define their goals and purpose*. Unleash purpose, and your likelihood of unleashing sales *motivation skyrockets*.**

## 2. Focus

Let’s assume that sales people are maximally motivated and ready to tackle each day with abandon. The question then becomes, what should they do?

In researching one of our books, we spoke to Dr. James Harter at the Gallup Organization. Gallup, in their famous research about employee engagement, has asked hundreds of thousands of workers 12 questions (which they call Q12) to measure how connected to and focused they are at work.

The first question is “Do you know what is expected of you at work?” Dr. Harter told us that close to 50% answer this question “no.”

In our experience, not only do sellers not know what they’re expected to produce, but even when they do know, they don’t know what’s most important to do every day to produce results.

The best sales coaches are laser focused on helping their sellers break their activities down into quarterly, monthly, weekly, and daily objectives and activities that will get them to their goals.

We’ve outlined the framework we use to help sellers and sales coaches define the activities that will help them most succeed in our ebook, [The 9 Habits of Extreme Productivity](#).

For our purposes here, suffice it to say that it’s contingent on sales coaches to make sure their teams know what to do every day to get the best results.

And once coaches do help sellers know what to do, they help sellers avoid the distractions that derail their days and take their focus off of their greatest impact activities.

**Takeaway: Clarify sales action plans, and help sellers stay laser focused on their daily greatest impact activities.**

### 3. Execute

We're all creatures of habit. Often, more so than we realize. From when we wake up to when we go to sleep, with everything that comes in between, much of what we do is without what psychologists call "effortful processing." We live by routines so ingrained they are almost involuntary. In fact, a Duke University study found that "More than 40 percent of the actions people performed each day weren't actual decisions, but habits."<sup>7</sup>

In sales, habits are prevalent, powerful determinants of success.

Effective sales coaches are masters of habit.

They understand:

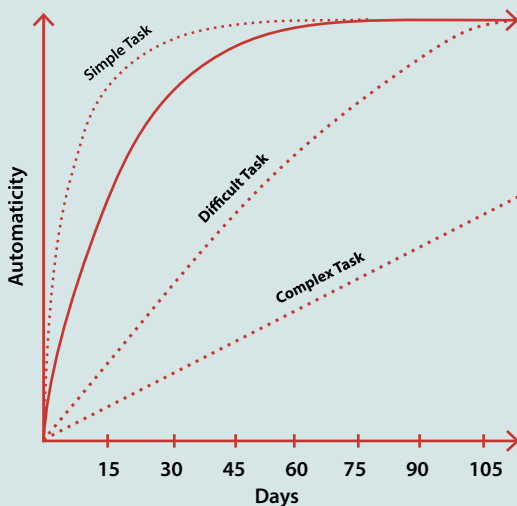
- How habits work
- Which habits drive sales success
- How to help people change habits that will help them sell more

Habits are behaviors repeated at specific times that are largely automatic. Again, no effortful processing.

When anyone tries to form a new habit—working out, eating differently, changing work routines—it can feel like it requires a superhuman effort. That is, until it doesn't—the point at which it becomes automatic.

#### Time Needed to Form a New Habit

Figure 2. From Practice to Automaticity



How long does it take to make a new behavior feel effortless (Fig. 2)? Conventional wisdom says this takes, on average, 21 days. But according to researcher Philippa Lally and others in a study published in the *European Journal of Social Psychology*, the 21-day rule of thumb is way off.<sup>6</sup> In fact, the average is 66 days. And, depending on the complexity of the task, it can take up to 254 days to make a behavior become automatic.

66 days from practice to automaticity:

- Range from 18-254 days depending on activity
- 66 days on average
- Difficult tasks take longer than simple ones

<sup>6</sup> Lally, Philippa, Cornelia H. M. Van Jaarsveld, Henry W. W. Potts, and Jane Wardle, "How are habits formed: Modelling habit formation in the real world," *European Journal of Social Psychology* 40, no. 6 (Oct): 998-1009, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/ejsp.674>.

<sup>7</sup> David T. Neal, Jeffrey M. Quinn, and Wendy Wood, "Habits: A repeat performance," *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 15 (2006): 198-202.



An important question to answer when it comes to changing habits is: what should the new habits be? The answer: whatever habits will allow you to reach your goals. They'll be different from seller to seller. One thing that is always the same, though, is that sellers who have *written, current*, and at least somewhat *public* action plans are more likely to stick to them than those who don't.<sup>8</sup>

The action plans not only define what you will do and when, but also what you won't do. Essentially, the action plans become time management tools that help sellers reduce wasted time and energy in their day and increase activities that get results.

Changing habits also requires vigilant monitoring. The more someone knows his behavior is being observed, the more likely he will be to stick to the new routine and stay on target.

As W.C. Fields said, "Quitting smoking is the easiest thing I've ever done. In fact, I've done it a thousand times." People trying to do something difficult often get derailed. When they do, a good coach can help get them back on track.

Sales coaches worth their salt know this, and are instrumental in facilitating their coachees' behaviors from "new" and difficult to effortless.

Along with developing habits that allow sellers to best execute their jobs, sales coaches help sellers get in the zone when they are working.

When sellers are in the zone (also called flow), they are completely immersed in an activity, have no distractions, and are deeply productive.

The zone is not a new concept. It's common in sports, music, research, and other fields where deep focus and pursuit of excellence is critical.

Fortunately, getting in the zone is not difficult, but it takes discipline. Of course, not all sales people are known for discipline, but that's why they have coaches!

It's not our intent here to describe how coaches help sellers get in the zone (though we have done so in [The 9 Habits of Extreme Productivity](#) ebook).

It is, however, critical to point out that without sales coaches, sellers can float from activity to activity in a somewhat distracted state.

When coaches help them bare down and focus on one activity, and get in the zone on that activity, their production and results increase greatly.

**Takeaway: Great sales coaches help sellers execute through focusing on the best activities, developing winning habits, and getting in the zone when they work.**

## 4. Advise

A popular saying in the coaching world is, "Give a man a fish, and he'll eat for a day. Teach him to fish, and he'll eat for a lifetime." It's intended to warn coaches to avoid giving direct sales advice to coachees. It's advice given by those who argue coaches should allow coachees to figure out everything on their own and take their lumps as they learn.

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<sup>8</sup> Robert B. Cialdini, *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion*, rev. ed. (New York: HarperBusiness, 2006).

## Not All Sales Advice is Advisable

The sales approaches touted by company sales leaders and sales industry thought leaders don't just differ a little, they differ tremendously. In RAIN Group's *What Sales Winners Do Differently* report, we shared the results of extensive research that concluded that some of the common advice in the world of sales today, such as dismissing the importance of relationships and the concept of solutions, may be provocative, but they are terrible ideas.<sup>9</sup>

We found that sales winners are focusing their efforts in several areas, such as collaborating with prospects in the sales process, educating with new ideas and insights, and convincing buyers actively why they are the best option.

When you select a sales coach, you introduce the coach's points of view on what success in sales looks like. Thus, you should make sure you choose a coach who has sales philosophies that will work best at your company and with your culture.

This advice is common. Here's a CBS News story about business coaching myths that said much the same:

*Myth 8: Professional coaches tell their clients what to do and give them advice.*

*Fact: Bad or inexperienced coaches tell their clients what to do and are constantly giving advice. Good coaches do not...Instead, coaches help their clients explore and come up with the best choices for them based on where they are and the client's vision for their future. Coaches are experts at the process of changing behavior, which is much more valuable than giving instructions.<sup>10</sup>*

We agree that good coaches help sellers explore their own vision, and they help them change their behavior. However, doing these things does not mean coaches shouldn't give advice when needed.

In sales, taking a lump in the name of learning usually means losing an opportunity or making a mistake with an account. Sure, we learn from our losses, but the stakes are often too high to practice in live sales situations.

A great sales coach:

- Knows sales well enough to give advice
- Is willing to give direct advice
- Knows how to give advice
- Knows when to give advice and when to let people work out their own solutions

While the long-term, learn-and-take-lumps view might be fine in executive coaching, sales coaching must be much more immediate in its impact.

Don't get us wrong, there's nothing wrong with asking coachees questions and encouraging them to find their own answers. Doing so promotes ownership of the process and solution, gains commitment to finding the solution versus compliance in just using the coach's solution, and promotes learning of both sales tactics and concepts. It also motivates coachees to apply learning because they figured it out themselves.

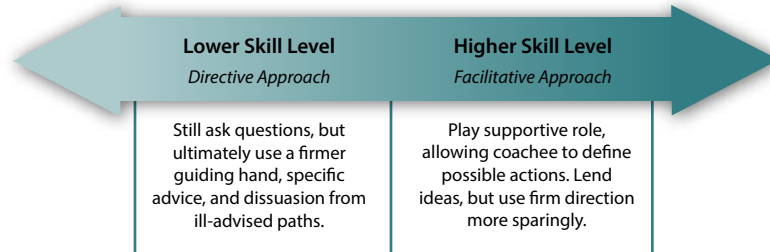
Sometimes, however, sellers need advice and ideas to create an opportunity, move a sale forward, and win. And they need advice now. They either can't work it out for themselves because they don't have the context or experience, or taking the time could cause them to lose the opportunity.

When the seller has less experience and a lower skill level (Fig. 3), the sales coach should be directive, giving the seller every chance to succeed with each sales opportunity. When the seller has more experience and skill, the coach can take a lighter touch approach and be more facilitative

<sup>9</sup> Mike Schultz and John Doerr, *What Sales Winners Do Differently* (Boston: RAIN Group, 2013).

<sup>10</sup> Robert Pagliarini, "Top 10 professional life coaching myths," *CBS News*, December 20, 2011, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/top-10-professional-life-coaching-myths/>.

Figure 3. Approach to Coaching at Varying Skill Levels



about giving advice. But if the coach has an approach most likely to maximize the success of a sale, should she hold back?

In a word: no.

**Takeaway: Great sales coaches give advice when helpful, allowing sellers to make the most of every sales opportunity.**

## 5. Develop

To our last point, sales coaches should help sellers win specific opportunities. The industry terms here are commonly “deal,” “opportunity,” or “account” coaching. Sometimes this type of coaching is the only type of coaching a sales coach does. The coach only gives a man a fish. Meanwhile, he misses opportunities to teach the seller how to bring in his own haul.

Great sales coaches do both. While individual coaching interactions may often focus on immediate sales effectiveness, getting sellers to the next level over the long haul has a huge impact. This takes time, of course, but that’s how development works.

Sales coaches should:

- Assess coachees’ needs for skill, knowledge, and attribute development
- Help coachees understand the “current state” of their capability as well as their own potential “New Reality”
- Help coachees build development plans to raise their game, and take ownership of their own development destiny

This doesn’t mean sales coaching should morph into one-on-one sales training. Each conversation and interaction should help the seller develop, but often it’s the coach who recognizes the need for, and recommends, appropriate sales training.

For example, one of our coachees—let’s call him Bill—lost a few sales at the final presentation stage he thought he would win. We asked Bill to describe how the presentations went and even share a bit of the presentation.

We recognized Bill’s presentation strategy and skills were sorely lacking. We talked about it. Bill then got some rigorous sales presentation skills training.

A month later, Bill won two sales he didn’t expect, and at least one of the buyers commented, “Your presentation was much stronger than the others, so we’re going with you.” Within three months, Bill directly attributed more than a million dollars in sales to his improved presentation skills.

Bill didn’t even know he needed presentation skills until the coach recognized it and guided him to improve.

**Takeaway: Great sales coaches help their teams develop skills, knowledge, and attributes that raise their sales games significantly.**

# Challenge Sellers to Achieve

The most popular and effective diets. The most popular and effective workout routines. The ones that lead to the most dramatic changes have very specific guidelines and rules for how to follow the system. No such system existed for sales, until now. And it works.

It all starts with people challenging themselves to achieve. When people challenge themselves to bear down and focus on their sales success, they can achieve dramatic differences in their results.

Our system, the 90-Day Extreme Productivity Challenge, has specific rules—honed over time—that, when followed exactly, have a dramatic effect on sales activity and results.

[To learn more about the 90-Day Extreme Productivity Challenge, click here.](#)

## Give Sellers Ownership

Force something like a 90-Day Extreme Productivity Challenge on someone, and the best you'll get is *compliance*. At worst, he will try to sabotage the process.

Allow him instead to elect to follow the process and you'll gain *commitment*.

Sellers need to take ownership of their own success. Until they do, they'll never reach their potential. The best sales coaches recognize this, and they work to get sellers to accept, and maximize, their sense of ownership.

For example, when sellers begin working with a RAIN Sales Coach, they are given the option to accept the 90-Day Extreme Productivity Challenge. The purpose of the 90-Day Extreme Productivity Challenge is to allow the seller to test the limits of his potential.

Why optional? You can't force anyone to do something like this. The person has to want it. He has to elect it. Not everyone does.

But those who do, those sellers who have strong desire and commitment for achievement, those who take responsibility for their own success, often accept the 90-Day Extreme Productivity Challenge. And when they do, they typically surprise even themselves with what they can achieve.

## Pygmalion & Galatea Effects

Two psychological principles that have a powerful effect when used in sales coaching are the Pygmalion and Galatea Effects.

**Pygmalion Effect:** People tend to act in ways consistent with expectations of them, even if the expectations are quite high. Set clear expectations, and sellers will work to achieve them.

**Galatea Effect:** When people believe in their efficacy, and believe in their ability to fulfill an expectation, they are more likely to achieve it.

Great sales coaches help set clear and challenging expectations, and they help the seller build confidence that they will, indeed, achieve them.

## Connect Goals to Action

Coaches help sellers build their own goals. This is not only important to help the seller take ownership, but also affects the desire to achieve.

Then the coach helps the seller create specific action plans to achieve the goals. As we know from the “What Counts Most in Motivating Your Sales Force” research, the clarity of the tasks of the job is a major factor in salesperson motivation.<sup>11</sup> When the coach helps to clarify the goals and connects them to the tasks, the effect on the seller’s motivation is often significant.

## Create Rhythm

Too often sales coaching is infrequent, ad hoc, and sporadic. In itself, this isn’t bad. Ad hoc coaching on winning specific opportunities can be great. But unless there’s a specific and regular rhythm of conversation and connection between coach and seller, motivation can be hampered and uneven.

Leading regular meetings on a set schedule designed to cover sales opportunities, as well as actions and commitments, is a difference maker.

Here’s an example: One of RAIN Group’s clients is a management consulting firm. The firm’s sellers are senior partners who deliver work, but who also must bring in the work. When any selling job is split with another job (e.g, seller/doer, seller/sales manager), oftentimes it is the selling that takes a back seat to other priorities.

With this client, we held a group meeting at a set time every other week with a specific agenda, including reviewing commitments made at the previous coaching meeting. A few months after getting started our client told us, “About three or four days before your coaching meeting, we see spikes of activity in our CRM system of about 40%. Turns out that nobody wants to be seen by their peers as having not met their commitments.”

These meetings have motivation built into them. The team shares wins, the coach helps the team build confidence, and the coach works to inspire and challenge the team to keep its members’ energy and focus high.

The regularity of these meetings, and the inclusion of commitment reviews, create an informal accountability that is motivating.

Without the rhythm of set meetings and set check-ins, this kind of motivation can disappear.

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<sup>11</sup> Stephen X. Doyle and Benson P. Shapiro, “What Counts Most in Motivating Your Sales Force?” *Harvard Business Review* (July 1980), <https://hbr.org/1980/07/what-counts-most-in-motivating-your-sales-force>.

# Conclusion

Interest in sales coaching has grown tremendously—the opportunity to achieve strong ROI is eminently clear—yet success has been elusive for many companies.

This isn't surprising because, in most companies, there is no systematic approach to sales coaching designed specifically to maximize the performance of the sales teams. Applying a sales-specific approach as outlined in this report will yield significant results, including:

- Maximizing sales wins for the most important opportunities
- Filling the pipeline with new, qualified opportunities
- Maximizing sales to key accounts
- Focusing sellers' time on the most important activities
- Developing skills, knowledge, and attributes to get to the next level of performance
- Keeping sales activities and motivation at the highest levels sustainable

When sales coaches play the five roles of a sales coach well, they also establish the right rhythm of sales coaching and lead masterful sales coaching conversations. They truly maximize and transform sales performance.

# RAIN Sales Coaching

## Drive Peak Sales Performance by Improving Productivity through Sales Coaching

More than ever, sales teams struggle with managing their time and day, missed sales goals, and lost opportunities. Coaching is an effective way to tackle these issues—but sales leaders and managers are at a loss for how to implement a productive coaching system.

In the RAIN Sales Coaching program, sales leaders learn how to help sellers and professionals achieve their greatest potential and get the most out of each sales opportunity.

This program introduces participants to the 5 roles of sales coaching, the rhythm of sales coaching, and the conversations coaches need to lead to unleash the potential of their teams.

In RAIN Sales Coaching, sales leaders and managers learn how to:

- Craft and implement a structured rhythm for helping sales teams achieve great success
- Lead masterful sales coaching conversations
- Excel with the 5 roles of sales coaching
- Use the PATHS to Action<sup>SM</sup> framework to lead masterful coaching conversations and gain commitment in each coaching conversation
- Coach sellers in Extreme Productivity and hold them accountable to action plans
- Dramatically increase their win rates on their most important sales opportunities

Your team will be introduced to the 90-Day Extreme Productivity Challenge, 10 Crucial Coaching Questions, and the Sales Opportunity Planner, three proprietary tools that will help your managers and leaders improve their productivity and results and that of their teams.

### Top-Performing Sales Organizations Prioritize Sales Coaching



### Program Approach

- Extreme Productivity Assessment
- 2-Day Live Training
- 90-Day Extreme Productivity Coaching
- Ongoing reinforcement

## Contact Us to Transform Your Team

If your team needs to learn to:

- Create a comprehensive plan and define a rhythm for coaching a sales team
- Learn to tie seller monthly, weekly, and daily action plans to achieving goals
- Listen effectively and connect with sellers who have different communication styles

Contact RAIN Group today at 508-405-0438 or [info@raingroup.com](mailto: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 sellers, managers, and professionals in more than 73 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](http://raingroup.com) or calling (508) 405-0438.

## RAIN Group's Clients

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## Global Locations

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## Connect with Us

