

6 SURPRISINGLY SIMPLE STEPS TO GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR ACCOUNT MANAGERS

According to [Gartner Group](#), 80% of your company's future revenue will come from just 20% of your existing customers.

So, whether your organization has a dedicated account management team, or your salespeople are in charge of managing their own accounts, it's important to prioritize account management.

The good news is that effective account management doesn't have to be overly complicated. Follow these 6 simple steps to get the most out of your account managers.

STEP 1

HIRE THE RIGHT PEOPLE FOR THE POSITION

Every position has a unique set of requirements for success. An account management role takes a high level of organization, strong communication skills, and the ability to collaborate and influence—among other qualities.

The person you bring onto your team to manage accounts will need to have a natural behavior and communication style that matches what your role requires day in and day out. You'll also want to be sure a candidate is motivated by what the account manager job rewards.

A comprehensive [hiring assessment](#) will help you find the candidate who is the best match for the position, and the most likely to succeed long-term in your organization.

STEP 2

PRIORITIZE ACCOUNTS

Some accounts provide more opportunity than others.

In order for your account managers or sales professionals to be efficient and effective, they should identify where to focus their time and attention based on factors such as company size, industry, fit, and strength of relationship.

Accounts that are open to new ideas and that welcome a more strategic relationship are usually better targets for growth. Likewise, when a company is growing aggressively, it may be more likely to provide growth opportunities for your company as well.

Have each of your account managers or sales reps maintain a target list of priority accounts, and spend time every week developing them.

STEP 3

DEEPLY UNDERSTAND YOUR CLIENT'S BUSINESS

In today's competitive marketplace, it's not enough to just know about your client's business and their goals.

Your account managers or sales reps must also understand:

- **The processes and operations within the client's organization**
- **The ins and outs of the client's industry**
- **Challenges the client faces now, and new challenges on the horizon**
- **The challenges and goals of the client's prospects and customers**

Having a thorough and holistic understanding of a client's business will allow account managers and sales reps to speak with authority and earn the trust and confidence of the client.

With that trust and confidence, recommendations are taken far more seriously.

STEP 4

LEAD WITH CONSULTING, NOT SELLING

If your team members are unable to convince your buyers that they have their best interest in mind, they'll never gain the trust needed to successfully manage the account.

Coach your account managers and sales reps to avoid starting off too strongly or too often with a sales pitch. Doing so can make the prospect or customer wary of connecting, and can degrade trust, rather than build it. Be sure that every touch point your team member has with a buyer has some added value, and have them always keep a buyer-focused approach.

An account manager who builds strong, genuine relationships with people from the beginning will be the most effective in the long-run.

STEP 5

COLLABORATE WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS TO BENEFIT THE CLIENT

Account management requires excellent communication skills—not only in communicating with the client, but also with the other departments in your organization.

An effective account manager will be able to identify exactly what a client needs, and then make it happen by collaborating with other team members and departments.

For example, could your Marketing department help the client out with a project they're not fully equipped to handle? Are there special instructions that the client has requested or will appreciate in relation to delivery?

Coach your account managers or sales reps to find out what's going to delight the customer, and then pull from any and all internal resources to make it happen.



STEP 6

MAINTAIN THE LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIP

As with any relationship in life, your account managers and sales reps must work consistently to build and maintain the strategic relationship with a client.

That means reaching out regularly—even if there's not an obvious opportunity to make a sale—just to check in and make sure everything is going well.

If your team members aren't consistently keeping up with your accounts and providing value, you run the risk of your competitors encroaching.

CONCLUSION

In today's crowded marketplace, customer experience can go a long way in differentiating your company from the competition. In addition, leaving untapped business opportunities behind simply isn't an option.

It's critical that your team has strong account management skills—whether you have a dedicated team of account managers, or a sales team that manages their own accounts.

Unfortunately, very few people come into an account management role with all the skills necessary for success, which makes training and coaching key.

The Strategic Account Management Training Program will help your account managers and sales professionals master the art of organizing, managing, and growing their most profitable business accounts.

Participants will learn a highly-practical system for developing each of their key accounts in ways that will strengthen the client relationship—and drive additional sales revenue for your company.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE STRATEGIC ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM NOW

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