



Six Attributes that Make an Excellent Sales Leader

Description

Effective leaders across an organization have a shared responsibility to increase profits through successful business strategies. The sales organization is no exception. That being said, there are specific characteristics that sales leaders, in particular, need to be successful in their role. The role of a sales leader goes beyond managing the sales team, setting goals and developing strategies. A sales leader needs to have the ability to inspire and motivate their teams towards achieving a common goal. They need to be able to effectively communicate the company's vision, understand their teams' problems, encourage open, transparent communication and most importantly, serve as a mentor and coach for the team.

The act of inspiring and motivating a sales team is no easy task. It requires experience, time and a set of characteristics that will make a difference at the end of the day. However, what is required to be an excellent sales leader? We have compiled a list of six attributes that make sales leaders stand out from the crowd.

Emotional Intelligence

Excellent sales leaders know how to manage their emotions. They can influence the emotions of other people as well, developing environments that help teams to collaborate and work together to solve problems or generate new ideas. It does not matter if their teams are experiencing success or going through a bad time, if they have a sales leader who knows how to manage emotions, they will be guided to take the right action and stay calm.

Sales Coaching

People tend to think leading is only giving directions, but it turns out to be more than that. Excellent sales leaders are those who transmit wisdom, help their teams to grow, develop new ideas, and have the power to influence them to achieve bigger goals. Nowadays, only 5% of sales leaders spend their time in coaching activities, one of the most important tasks in their roles. Coaching requires staying close to the team, understanding their problems, aspirations and needs. At the same time, good leaders are those who teach new things that will inspire and help their teams in their professional careers. Excellent sales leaders are excellent mentors.

Excellent Listeners With Empathy

Many times, we find ourselves with sales leaders saying they spend at least one hour per week listening to their team members. However, one thing is listening and another is understanding. We are all humans and have problems of different kinds; it does not matter if they are work-related or personal problems, the fact of having a leader who listens, understands and supports their teams is crucial. When people feel supported, their motivation and performance go up, and this will be reflected in their relationship with the customer.

Stay in Touch With the Client

One of the most important attributes any salesperson can have is the ability to build long-lasting relationships with their clients. However, what happens when they are promoted and become sales leaders? It does not matter how good they think their next sales strategy might be, if it does not have the customer in mind, it can be a failure. Excellent sales leaders never forget about the customer and stay in touch with them all the time. In fact, when they speak with their customers, not only they help to strengthen the relationship, but also this is when they start realizing what are their customers' challenges, needs, and desires.

Understand How to Sell the Value Proposition

Every company has a reason to exist and a set of attributes that make it different compared to others. Although it might seem clear for leaders what the business is about, why the company exists, and how it can generate value for the clients, it might not be the same case for their teams. Every sales leader has the task to clearly communicate the company's value proposition and enable their teams to effectively sell it in the market by providing insights and relevant information that will be useful while writing the sales pitch.

They Change Their Teams' Mindset

The ultimate goal for any sales leader is achieving bigger goals. Increasing sales, revenue and having their teams motivated are crucial tasks. However, where can they start? Sales leaders must be able to influence and change their team's behavior. Leaders who transmit positive emotions, push themselves to achieve bigger goals and stay hungry for new opportunities will influence their teams' behaviour. Excellent leaders know what needs to be done in order to have positive results, and are the first ones to join the strategy, change their mindset and behavior. By doing it, they will become the model for their employees and influence their behavior as well.

The role of a sales leader in any organization is as crucial as the CEO. Excellent sales leaders stay close to their teams and customers and know how to manage emotions even in the most adverse situations. Many people tend to think sales leaders only focus on numbers, hiring or administrative activities, when in reality, the role implies more coaching and human contact than anything else.

At Kaplan, we believe investing in your sales leaders is the best way to invest in your salespeople. We have been working with many organizations to upskill and develop their sales leaders. The result? Their sales leaders have improved their coaching skills and understood what is the true meaning of a leader; resulting in better results in their team's performance. Find out how we have worked with a global financial services corporation to [develop their sales leaders](#).

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