

HOW TO WRITE AN INSIDE SALES PITCH

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Inside Sales Executives

On-demand Inside Sales Leaders

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Overview

Inside sales is a high stakes game. For many companies, it is the primary revenue driver within their sales organization. As such productivity, performance, and efficiency of their inside sales team are of paramount importance.

Experience has taught us that the fastest way to gain a lift in inside sales results is to optimize your company's pitch because it drives and impacts all key sales metrics. In our view, it's the most underleveraged, misunderstood component within a company's inside sales process.

For productivity to improve, it's imperative that inside sales leaders provide their teams with a presentation designed, tested, and proven to work with the most valuable prospects.

A PROPERLY STRUCTURED INSIDE SALES PITCH IS A TOOL THAT WORKS CONSISTENTLY. IT'S A CORNERSTONE OF A SUSTAINABLE REPEATABLE CALLING PROCESS.

This white paper will present ideas on how to improve inside sales results by calibrating an existing pitch or creating a new one from scratch. The basis of our perspective is twenty years of pitch development with some of America's top companies.

The Problem With Not Having Or Using An Improperly Designed Pitch

COMPANIES THAT DO NOT USE A PITCH BASED ON AN UNDERLYING STRATEGY AND CRAFTED BY INSIDE SALES LEADERS INADVERTENTLY CAUSE THEIR TEAM TO AD LIB EVERY CALL.

Problems arise when productivity stalls. It may seem like there's something invisible dragging down sales numbers when the underlying cause may be a pitch that is no longer effective.

Inside sales metrics should provide insight and inform plans. They become distorted when each rep, each call, each day is saying and doing something different. Metrics become even more convoluted if your strategy includes incorporating promotional campaigns into your inside sales process e.g. (We have a special offer this month on widgets.)

The problems associated with not having or using an improperly structured pitch can amplify as you scale including:

- Pitches fail to work consistently with the most valuable prospects
- Negatively impacted revenue
- Inefficient calling process and higher cost of sales
- Longer ramp up times for new hires
- Caller fatigue

Myth Vs. Reality

Company leaders may at times have certain biases about prestructured inside sales pitches. Here are the myths vs. realities.

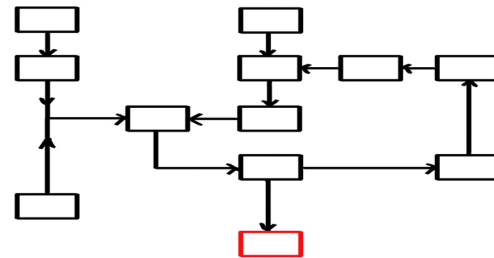
A pitch will sound scripted.

A script is something that is read at somebody with no regard for the listener's heart and mind and without an understanding of the dynamics of inside sales calls. A pitch is a mechanism that facilitates a conversation and is a clear, concise articulation of the value of your offering.

A properly designed pitch will not sound scripted, it's invisible to the listener. Additionally, individual selling styles and personalities will continue to shine through as usual.

We already have a pitch.

A flow chart is not a pitch. These are unusable in real-time for nearly all sales reps.



Reps won't use the pitch we provide.

Inside sales is a grind and reps (even veterans) will use a tool that makes their job easier. Using a prepared presentation is less exhausting than winging every call. Reps will welcome this resource on days when they are fatigued by the day-to-day monotony of calling. It gives them something to lean on when they are having a bad day for whatever the reason.

**TO GET TEAM BUY IN, SALES LEADERS MUST EXPLAIN
HOW AND WHY THE COMPANY'S PITCH WORKS.**

We provide training to our reps.

Training is not a pitch. Train reps on how and why to use the pitch. A best practice is to have the two working in concert.

We don't need tools, we'll just hire sales rockstars.

This idea is fundamentally flawed and not a scalable, repeatable strategy. In today's hyper-competitive hiring environment, inside sales talent is in high demand. Everybody is vying for the superstar.

If you do hire a rockstar, and that person is the linchpin of your strategy, sales numbers will tank when they leave. The reality is your team will need process, tools, and infrastructure for long-term sustainability and viability.

Technology will drive up our numbers.

Installing power dialers, CRMs, and other technology will not sell your product, service, or idea for you. Making more calls faster using an ineffective pitch will only waste time, energy, and resources.

An Optimized Pitch Can Drive A Quantifiable Lift In Sales

When inside sales leaders provide a proven, tested, presentation for their team:

- Reps are productive more quickly
- Less training time for managers and reps is required
- There is less caller fatigue
- Calls are more efficient
- Cost of sales is lower
- Metrics are accurate and insightful
- Everyone is on the same page moving in the same direction

How To Craft A Pitch That Drives The Intended Outcome

There are different kinds of inside sales calls (appointment setting, sales, demos, lead gen/lead qualification). Start with intent. What do you want the call to do? Align the structure, flow, and languaging of the pitch with the intended outcome. A presentation should be designed to draw somebody into a conversation, rather than talk at them.

A pitch is not written word, it is the spoken word. Design in accordance with this principal. Use sound bites. Read your pitch into a voice recorder; play it back, listen, refine as needed.

Pitch Structure

The pitch structure must accomodate the natural flow and phases of a call as illustrated below:



Elements Within The Pitch Structure

Within the pitch structure above the following must be embedded:

Strategy (Align The Pitch With The Strategy)

- Who will you call?
- Why? Based on what supporting data or rationale?
- With what offer?
- What is the intent of the call?
- Where will you get the most traction most quickly?
(Geography, specific product offering, lack of competitors, etc.)

Simplicity

Declutter your pitch by stripping out every non-critical element, word, phrase, idea.

CASE STUDY

DESIGNING A SIMPLE INSIDE SALES PRESENTATION IS NOT EASY. SALES LEADERS FROM A MAJOR US OFFICE SUPPLY COMPANY SPENT 32 HOURS CRAFTING A 27-SECOND PRESENTATION.

THE UNDERLYING STRATEGY AND COMMENSURATE PITCH WERE TO SELL ONE COMMONLY USED ITEM JUST BELOW MARKET VALUE AS A MECHANISM TO ACQUIRE NEW CUSTOMERS AND THEN CROSS SELL THEM OTHER SUPPLIES.

THE CAMPAIGN WAS A SUCCESS WITH DOZENS OF NEW CLIENTS ACQUIRED AND SUBSTANTIAL NEW REVENUE GENERATED.

Test The Pitch

Test offers, territories, products, and services. A reasonable test period is 150-200 hours of calling to set baseline metrics. Do not test on your best prospects. Have reps make calls, listen to how the pitch is working, adjust as needed. Making lots of changes is the norm. Expect multiple iterations.

Test in-house first, then test live in real time with real (but not important) prospects. Use the new presentation when the kinks are out and you can see and hear that it is working.

Avoid

- Trying to accomplish more than one objective in one call
- Starting a pitch with: “How are you today?”
- Using data and stats at the start of the call

Pitch Decks

Pitch decks are a separate science and conversation beyond the scope of this white paper.

Conclusion

With inside sales, everything is at stake. Every pitch matters. Providing your inside sales team with the resources and tools to succeed is imperative for long-term viability, scalability, and repeatability. The inside sales pitch is a tool that when properly leveraged can generate an immediate lift in productivity and performance.

About the author

Joe Culotta is President of Inside Sales Executives. He is a speaker and mentor at the prestigious 1871 business incubator, a mentor at the American Society of Inside Sales Professionals, and the publisher of the Inside Sales Salary Guide and several other hiring white papers for the inside sales industry. He started his career as the Director of Inside Sales for Cellular One.

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