

PRESS RELEASE

14 March 2016

Scattergun sales approach shown in new survey

- *Most large companies (67 per cent) have no sales methodology*
- *Only 16 per cent of respondents in manufacturing say their organisation has a systematic approach to selling*
- *Only 12 per cent of respondents in construction have a sales methodology*

Some 70 per cent of business decision makers have admitted that their organisation's salespeople do not have a systematic approach to engaging with customers and prospects. Carried out for sales and negotiation experts [Huthwaite International](#), the national YouGov research found that only 22 per cent of British business decision makers said their organisation has a single sales methodology¹ and eight per cent do not know whether they did or not.

Tony Hughes, CEO at Huthwaite International, comments: "Considering most businesses have been set up in order to sell goods or services, it's simply baffling that so few have a systematic approach to it. The fact that 71 per cent of respondents in small companies (1-49 employees) say they don't have a single sales methodology is perhaps understandable for a variety of reasons. But for the 67 per cent in large companies (250+ employees) without a systematic approach there really is no excuse.

"Considering we've been a trading nation for hundreds of years, many companies still don't appear to have a professional approach to selling. 'Sales' is not a dirty word and giving salespeople the tools to succeed can make a huge difference to the growth of the business. A sales methodology - and the skills that bring that methodology to life - allows customer-facing staff to build the value of the product or service with buyers, along with the value of their organisation itself," says Mr Hughes.

While no industry does particularly well in the survey, retail has the highest proportion of organisations with a common sales methodology with 37 per cent of respondents from this sector saying they have one. At the other end of the scale, a paltry 12 per cent of respondents in construction say they have a systematic sales approach.

And manufacturing, with much talk of how it will increase trade to rebalance the UK economy, has just 16 per cent of respondents saying they have a single, commonly used and understood sales methodology.

Mr Hughes continues: "While manufacturing saw an upturn during the

¹ A "sales methodology" was defined as a systematic approach used to engage with customers and prospects, comprising the strategy, tactics and conversational behaviours used by salespeople.

economic recovery, that now seems like a distant memory. If manufacturers are serious about growing their slice of the pie, they need to start thinking about selling in a different way. Talking benefits – as opposed to features – is enough of a challenge for most manufacturers, but even this is not far enough. They need a systematic approach to exploring, uncovering and developing their customers' needs and a common language for presenting solutions and calibrating their progress in the sale.

“Our previous research has shown that salespeople are not listening to their customers enough and are not asking the right questions. These are just two of the skills gaps that need to be addressed if a company wants to improve the performance of its sales force. It's not just going to spontaneously get better, leaders need to take these skills seriously and invest in their employees' development.”

Ends

About the research:

The research was carried out for Huthwaite International by YouGov Plc. The total sample size was 559 senior decision makers from all business sizes. Fieldwork was undertaken between 2nd - 6th November 2015. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of British business size.

Notes to editors:

For further information, or to speak to Tony Hughes from Huthwaite International, please contact Ed Parshotam or Amy Murphy at Tungtree Communications on 020 7580 7025 or edward.parshotam@wearetungtree.com / amy.murphy@wearetungtree.com

About Huthwaite International

Huthwaite International is best known as the creator of SPIN[®] Selling – helping salespeople in all countries and most languages to improve their performance. Companies worldwide trust UK-based Huthwaite International, as a leading behavioural change consultancy and owner of the SPIN[®] trademark in over 50 countries, to deliver measurable results through its research-based models.

The company provides innovative skills training and advice for progressive individuals and organisations in sectors such as IT, financial services, healthcare, telecoms, manufacturing, legal and professional services. It has a client list of thousands of companies worldwide and trains some 14,000 people each year.

Besides the SPIN[®] Suite, Huthwaite International offers training and reinforcement based on its own original research models in negotiation skills, communication skills, customer service skills. Established in 1974, Huthwaite is headquartered in Wentworth, South Yorkshire and handles international projects through its national offices or associated companies throughout Europe, USA, South Africa and Asia Pacific. The company has won two Queen's Awards in 1999 and 2008 for International trade.

For more information on Huthwaite's cost-effective services and solutions, please visit www.huthwaite.co.uk.