

## Living Sales™

Anyone who works in sales knows how important their skills are. The bottom line is, without sales there is no business. Sales skills touch more aspects of business than any other skillset and have the greatest potential to impact a company's sales performance – both positively and negatively. So why is it that, outside of the sales profession, sales is not taken seriously or valued highly enough?

If you need proof or convincing of the validity of this view, then look no further than the way in which we are nurturing and developing our super sellers of the 21st century. Fact: the basic skills of selling are virtually ignored by academia. Of the 300 business degrees and HND courses on offer in the UK today, only three offer sales-specific modules.

Marketing is widely taught in further education and yet sales skills are not. But 766,000 people in the UK work in sales compared with 545,000 in marketing. And, all in all, 99% of business graduates enter the career marketplace without even knowing the fundamentals of how to sell.

Precarious times, then, for any organisation hoping to compete in the 21st century. Since the advent of the global marketplace, doing business is harder now than ever before. Technology has spawned new sales channels and has shaped buyer behaviour; customers are much more savvy as to what's available, from where, and at what price. Emerging Far- and Middle-East economies are fast becoming the forces to be reckoned with.

Once-predictable markets are now fierce, shapeshifting entities and, with the rise and rise of the purchasing consultant, it's the professional buyers that are calling the shots. The playing field has never been less level.

### The status quo is not an option

With the commercial culture and attitude towards sales as it stands, there is a risk that, in the future, many once-successful companies will struggle to acquire and retain customers in long-term profitable relationships and will increasingly be forced to capitulate in negotiations just to hold onto their existing business.

But how to redress the balance? How to engage clients in mutually beneficial, win/win relationships? One thing is crystal clear: the status quo is definitely not an option.

At Huthwaite, our research proves that the companies which not only survive, but thrive, are those that develop a wholly sales-centric culture, those that embrace and champion sales. These are the organisations that have implemented the necessary sales skillsets as a core requirement – and not just for those involved directly in selling, but for employees at every customer touchpoint. They have realised that sales-oriented behaviour must be ingrained in the company ethos, that for their business to be truly successful, they must live and breathe sales at all levels. In short, sales must be a philosophy, not a department.



evolve issue seven December 2006  
publisher Huthwaite International  
telephone +44 (0)1709 710081  
facsimile +44 (0)1709 710065  
email [info@huthwaite.co.uk](mailto:info@huthwaite.co.uk)  
[www.huthwaite.co.uk](http://www.huthwaite.co.uk)



“Essentially, Living Sales™ is a company-wide cultural shift that restores the value of selling. While selling remains the domain of the professional team, each and every member of staff learns to appreciate the impact their own behaviour can have on the business' bottom line.”

And yet the 'career ghettoisation' of sales persists in wider business society. We, at Huthwaite, believe that it is time to give sales the credibility it deserves. In order to do that, its cause must be championed, its true worth made clear. It must be integrated and debated at board level and given its rightful place on the corporate agenda. Its high profile in global business operations must be seen in order to make sales a career destination of choice. As the experts in improving behaviour to improve sales performance of business, we're leading the way with Living Sales™, putting sales where it rightly belongs, at the heart of business.

### Living Sales™ : a new way to sell

Based on our continuous research into which sales behaviour impacts most positively on a company's bottom line, Living Sales™ is a unique philosophy of sales performance improvement that challenges and changes the perceived worth of the sales role. Essentially, Living Sales™ is a company-wide cultural shift that restores the value of selling. While selling remains the domain of the professional team, each and every member of staff learns to appreciate the impact their own behaviour can have on the business' bottom line.

To bring in the business and keep it, salespeople need the support of the rest of their colleagues. Whilst focusing on the sales function, Living Sales™ ensures that positive behaviours are learned, retained and applied at every level – from the way

incoming calls are handled through to accounting, technical support, and even in the post room. The new ethos penetrates deeply into every department: everyone works as a team, sharing a common goal – the success of the business.

### Giving clients what they haven't asked for

But it's much more than just good customer service. It's about understanding your client's organisation, how they are organised and, ultimately, how they sell. It's about adding and creating value at every given opportunity, having a greater understanding of and anticipating clients' needs, even before they themselves are aware of them, and finding exactly the right solutions for them. It's about nurturing relationships, being passionate about them and making sales a worthwhile and rewarding experience for all involved.

Living Sales™ is a new way to think, thrive and achieve. The successful organisations of the 21st century will be those that align sales with structure and process, incorporating Living Sales™ into the very fibre of their operations. They will be the businesses that understand the true science of selling.

Do you believe in what you do, and are you serious about improving the sales performance of your business? The Huthwaite approach to Living Sales™ will give you the positive results you're looking for.