



Sales Transformation

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Quick Reference Guide

By

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Outbound Excellence

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Improving Profitable Sales Growth Performance

But before we begin discussing the actual improvement process, we'll take just a moment to list the most common questions that arise during the presentation of the next phase of our profitable sales growth System along with the answers to each question.

What is a Sales Process?

A Sales Process is simply a series of steps and decisions involved in the way work is accomplished within a sales organization.

Everything that happens within an Outbound B2B Telephone Sales Organization involves processes and the sequential steps in which each sales process is executed.

Example Of Sales Processes

Developing A Job Description	Creating A Sales Compensation Plan	Recruiting New Sales People	Providing Sales Training To New Hires
Conducting Daily Call Blitz Sessions	Determining Sales Quotas & Sales Forecasts	Obtaining & Distributing Sales Leads	Conducting Pre-Call Research + Pre-Call Planning
Making An Introduction Sales Call	Ordering Desks & Supplies for	Matching Offerings To Customer	Generating Sales Quotes & Processing

	New Hires	Needs	Sales Orders
Effectively Managing Buying Accounts	Monitoring Sales Performance	Transitioning Accounts After Terminations	Improving Profitable Sales Growth Performance

... and the list of Sales Processes goes on.

Importance Of Sales Processes

As you can see, the Level of Importance of Sales Processes Varies.

Significant Sales Processes

- Some processes, such as **Hiring The Right Sales People / Not Making A Hiring Mistake, Providing New Hires with the Proper Sales Training, and Providing Sales People with Effective Sales Leads** are very important.

When developing a **Profitable Sales Growth Strategy for an Outbound B2B Telephone Sales Organization**, each process within each component of the following **Sales Growth Strategy** is deemed “**Significant**” in terms of the organization’s ability to maximize the **Sales, Profits and Customer growth** achieved by the **Outbound Sales Organization**.



If such processes perform poorly—if they are not doing what they were designed to do—the sales organization will not be able to Achieve & Maintain the level of Continuous Profitable Sales Growth Performance it is capable of achieving.

Less Significant - Sales Processes

Less significant processes involved in the efficient and effective running of the day to operations of an Outbound Sales Organization include – ordering office supplies, tracking attendance and vacation requests, providing access to system files and folders- are less significant in terms of the Sales Organization’s mission and objectives.

But, while they are less important to the day to day operation of the sales organization, such routine processes are still vital to the smooth running of the Sales Office.

Simple Sales Processes

Besides differing in importance, Sales Processes can be either be Simple or Complex. Some Sales Processes may be comparatively simple.

Placing a newspaper ad for new hires, for example, may be a relatively simple task involving only a few people and straightforward procedures.

Complex Sales Processes

On the other hand, some sales processes, such as conducting an Annual Performance Review, and Developing & Executing Individual Performance Improvement Plans, are very complex.

Many people from different departments are usually involved and numerous process steps and contributing processes are required.

What Are Associated Sales Processes?

Associated Sales Processes are those processes that are executed in part by members outside the sales organization (e.g. members of sales support functions / departments). These are better known as interdepartmental processes.

They involve the execution of steps of processes with the 12 Components of the Outbound Sales Growth Strategy, but are executed in part by members from different departments.

Who Owns Sales Processes?

Everyone within a company plays some form of a role in the effective execution of one or more processes within the sales organization.

Groups of individuals usually share in—and "own"—the activities which make up a Sales Process. The one individual who is ultimately responsible and accountable for the proper working

of the process is known as the "Sales Process Owner." The Sales Process Owner is the manager or leader who has control over the entire Sales Process from beginning to end.

What is Sales Process Improvement?

"Sales Process Improvement" means making the steps people take in executing a sales process, as well as the sequence in which the steps of a sales process are executed, more effective.

Often, the only time a sales process is diagrammed, analyzed and improved is when a crisis occurs and changes need to be made to fight the crisis fire.

You'll Find Whatever You're Looking For

What Sales Process Improvement means to companies that have achieved significant breakthroughs in improving the Profitable Sales Growth Performance of their Sales Organizations is setting aside the customary practice of blaming people for problems or failures.

It is a way of looking at how we can do our work better.

What's Wrong With A Problem Solving Approach

When we take a problem-solving approach or simply try to fix what's broken, we may never discover or understand the root cause of the difficulty.

Therefore, organization often spend value time "Patching Up Processes" to "Solve A Problem," just to learn sometime later that their efforts to "fix" things actually created or increased

problems in other areas of the Sales Organization and as for the Sales Organization as a whole, actually made things worse.

Identifying & Resolving Root Causes

However, when we engage in true sales process improvement, we seek to learn what *causes* things to happen in a sales process and to use this knowledge to reduce variation, remove activities that contribute no value to the results produced, and improve internal and or external customer satisfaction.

Factors Affecting Sales Processes

In order to Identify and resolve the root causes of Sales Growth problems, all of the factors affecting the process:

- + Materials Used In The Process**
- + People Involved In Executing The Steps Of The Processes**
- + Methods Used To Transform The Processes Into Results**

Who Owns Sales Process Improvement

A Sales Process Owner may choose to be a team leader and participate directly in the actions of a sales process improvement team. Or, the sales process owner may decide to delegate the team leadership role to another person who is knowledgeable about the process. Whatever the case, it is very important for the process owner to stay informed about the team's actions and decisions affecting the process.

How Does Process Improvement Benefit The Organization?

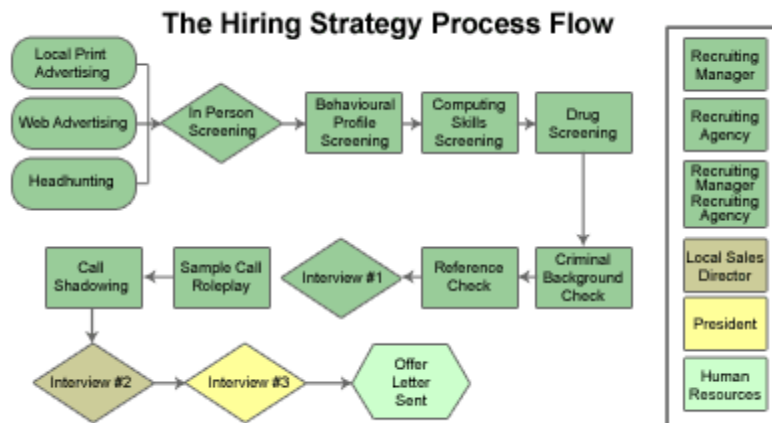
A standardized sales process improvement methodology allows us to take a close look at how work is being performed throughout our Sales Organization.

When all people involved in executing the steps of a Sales Process come together, to work on a process improvement project, they are usually seeing a complete picture of the entire process for the first time.

A Picture Tells A Thousand Words

So for the first time, each person involved with the execution of a large sales process can see exactly how their individual contributions to a sales process contributes to the quality and effectiveness of the product or service the process was designed to produce (e.g. quality of new hires, new hire ramp up time to profitability, account turnover, etc.)

The result of simply providing a complete and accurate image of a process to the entire group of people involved with the execution of that process allows for the collective focus on eliminating waste—of money, people, materials, time, and opportunities.



Anytime a proven scientific methodology for improving sales processes is effectively executed with the complete team of employees that execute the steps within a process, the outcome is that jobs can be done cheaper, quicker, easier, and—most importantly— while Improving – Profitable Sales Growth Performance.

Teamwork Teamwork Teamwork!

A teamwork approach is intrinsic to life in any Successful Outbound B2B Telephone Sales Organization.

Integrating sales process analysis and improvement tools and methods into an Outbound Sales Organization reinforces teamwork. And teamwork plays a vital role in achievement.

Using team members' collective knowledge, experiences, and efforts is a powerful approach to improving the profitability that improving sales processes provides.

Through teamwork, the whole becomes much greater than the sum of its parts.

How Does An Organization Get Started On Sales Process Improvement?

An essential first step in getting started on Sales Process Improvement is for the senior leader of the organization to make it a Strategic Initiative and to effectively communicate the importance of Sales Process Improvement to the entire organization.

The importance of sales process improvement must be communicated from the top. Leaders need to foster an organizational environment in which a Sales Process Improvement mentality can thrive and people are using quality-improvement tools and techniques on a regular basis.

Sales Process Improvement – Training

For the organization to reach this state, leaders must ensure that everyone receives the training that will enable them to carry out their process improvement efforts effectively.

Outbound Excellence provides Sales Process Improvement training and learning experiences for business and sales leaders and quality managers who can then train teams on a just-in-time basis.

A New Mindset - Problem Preventing vs Problem Fighting

Instilling a process improvement mentality in an organization can be difficult because it requires some different ways of thinking than we are accustomed to in most companies today.

Process improvement requires everyone to become a "Problem Preventer," rather than a "Problem Fighter."

The focus is on improving Sales Processes over the long term, not just patching up procedures and work routines as problems occur.

To get started on Sales Process Improvement, leaders who have been fighting problems need to set aside their battle armor and start thinking in these terms:

- + What Sales Process should we select for improvement?**
- + What resources are required to improve the Sales Process?**
- + Who are the right people to improve the Sales Process?**
- + What's the best way to learn about the Sales Process?**
- + How do we go about improving the Sales Process?**
- + How can we institutionalize the improved Sales Process?**



**Outbound Excellence's
Step-By-Step Guide**

For

Achieving & Maintaining

**Continuous Profitable
Sales & Customer Growth
Performance**

20 Steps To Achieving & Maintaining **Continuous Profitable Sales & Customer Growth**

Step 1: Conduct “Outbound Excellence” Sales System Analysis

Step 2: Select Sales Processes To Improve

Step 3: Select Sequence In Which Sales Processes Will be Improved

Step 4: Establish The Sales Process - Improvement Objective

Step 5: Organize The "Right" Team

Step 6: Flow Chart The Current Sales Process

Step 7: Improve The Sales Process

Step 8: Flow Chart The Improved Sales Process

Step 9: Develop A Data Collection Plan

Step 10: Implement The Data Collection Plan

Step 11: Determine If The Sales Process Is Stable?

Step 12: Determine If The Sales Process Is Capable?

Step 13: Identify Root Causes For Lack Of Capability

Step 14: Plan To Implement The Improved Sales Process

Step 15: Modify The Data Collection Plan, If Necessary

Step 16: Test The Change & Collect Data

Step 17: Is The Modified Sales Process Stable?

Step 18: Does The Improved Sales Process Meet Its Objective

Step 19: Standardize The Improved Sales Process

Step 20: Reduce The Frequency Of Data Collection

Step 1: Conduct “Outbound Excellence” Sales Strategy Analysis

The 1st Step in Improving the Profitable Sales & Customer Growth Performance of an Outbound B2B Telephone Sales Organization is to conduct a thorough Analysis of the organization’s Sales Growth Strategy.

An Outbound B2B Telephone Sales Strategy consists of the following 12 Core Components:



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Each of the 12 Components are comprised simply of groups of inter-related identifiable sales processes executed in sequential steps or work flow patterns.

Since each Sales Process within a Sales Growth Strategy can be Identified, they can also be analyzed, measured, monitored and Improved.

Since each sales process within each component of a sales growth strategy can be improved, the overall performance of the sales growth strategy as well as the Performance of the Outbound Sales Organization it was designed to govern can be improved as well.

A great benefit of using a “defined System” to improve Sales Processes is that improvements can be made indefinitely, starting with larger increments of improvement and gradually improving in smaller and smaller increments.

Performance Benchmark Options

The analysis of the Outbound Sales Strategy can be conducted in-house based on the Actual Performance of each component against its Pre-Established Performance Goal, or we can analyze your Strategy for you using either our Patented Sales Strategy Analyzer or using Industry Standard Benchmarks.

Step 2: Select The Sales Processes To Improve



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Our Outbound Excellence – Sales Strategy Analyzer – provides:

1. An Accurate Performance Rating For Each Of The 12 Individual Components Of Your Outbound B2B Telephone Sales Strategy
2. A Performance Rating For Your Overall Sales Strategy
3. The Maximum Performance Rating Achievable
4. The Potential For Improved Profitable Sales & Customer Growth Performance By Improving Your Current Sales Strategy

Step 3: Select Sequence For Improving Sale Processes

Every component of an effective Outbound Sales Growth Strategy is tightly woven together, each component relying on the effectiveness of the other, with the overall Productivity, Performance & Profitability of the Outbound B2B Telephone Sales Organization limited to the least effective component of the sales strategy.

Systematically Improving The Effectiveness Of Each Component

So with a baseline value established for each component of your Outbound Organization's – Sales Growth Strategy – you can improve the effectiveness of your Sales Strategy, as well as the Profitable Sales Growth Performance of the Outbound Sales Organization it was designed to govern, by systematically improving the effectiveness of each component, beginning with the weakest component and systematically working toward the strongest component.



Step 4: Establish The Process Improvement Objective

Once a Sales Process is selected, the team needs to establish a well-defined **Sales Process Improvement Objective**. The definition of the objective should answer this question:

What Improvement Do We Want To Accomplish By Using A Sales Process Improvement Methodology?

The team can use interviews or written surveys to identify target values to use as goals for improving the product or service produced by the Sales Process.

If performance monitoring tools are not already in place to monitor and measure the performance of each process, a **Data Collection Plan** will be developed in Step #9 and **Baseline Data** will be collected to establish accurate benchmarks against which all future changes to existing sales processes will be measured to ensure **Improved Sales Performance** is being **Achieved and Maintained**.

Begin By Identifying Symptoms Of Sales Process Failure

Identifying a problem associated with the Sales Process helps define the **Sales Process Improvement Objective**. The people working in the Sales Process can identify activities that take too long, involve **too many man-hours**, include **redundant or unnecessary steps**, or are subject to **frequent breakdowns** or other **delays**.

This is not just a **Problem-Solving Exercise**; this is Sales Process Improvement Exercise.

Isolate The Process Deficiencies From The Symptoms

Problems are symptoms of **Sales Process Failure**, and it is the deficiencies in the Sales process that must be identified and corrected.

For a **Sales Process Improvement Effort** to be successful, the team must start with a clear definition of what the problem is and what is expected from the Sales process improvement.

Stay Within The Boundaries

It is crucial to make sure that the steps involved in meeting the process improvement objective are located inside the boundaries.

Examples:

- ❖ If the **quality of the way new sales candidates** are recruited and hired is described simply as "**unsatisfactory**," few people will know how to state the Sales process improvement objective.
- ❖ But, if the nature of the problem is clearly stated as "50 percent of our New Sales Hires do not meet the minimum requirements listed on our Recruiting / Hiring Performance Tracking Report.
- ❖ The objective can be stated this way: "**At Least 95 Percent Of Our New Sales Hires Will Meet The Minimum Requirements Listed On Our Recruiting / Hiring Performance Tracking Report.**

Hiring Objective Examples:

- 1) Increase Performance Rating of Hiring Strategy from 5.75 to 7.25**
- 2) Improve the Average Sales Aptitude Score of all New Hires by 35%**
- 3) Improve Net New Hire Growth by 20%**

Timeframe: 120 Days

Establishing The Sales Process Improvement Objective

A team formulating a Sales process improvement objective may find it helpful to proceed in this way:

- 1. Write A Description Of The Sales Process, Starting, "The Sales Process By Which We..."**
- 2. Specify The Objective Of The Sales Process Improvement Effort.**
- 3. Operationally Define The Sales Process Improvement Objective In Writing.**
- 4. Use Numerical Specification Limits For Sales Process Improvement Objectives Whenever Possible.**
- 5. Decide How Much Time The Team Will Devote To Sales Process Improvement. Sometimes, Improving A Sales Process Is Important Enough To Require A Full-Time Effort By Team Members For A Short Period. At Other Times, The Improvement Effort Is Best Conducted At Intervals In One- Or Two-Hour Segments.**

A Pareto Analysis can help the team identify one or more factors or problems which occur frequently and can be investigated by the team. This analysis would be based on some preliminary data collected by the team.

Step 5: Organize The "Right" Team

Sales Process Improvement - Team Members - are selected by the team leader or the individual who formed the team. Based on the Sales Process being improved, they may come from different departments, divisions, work centers, or offices.

The **Key Factor** is that the people selected for the team should be closely involved in the **Sales Process** that is being improved. Being a team member has certain obligations.

Sales Process Improvement - Team Member Responsibilities

Members are responsible for carrying out all team-related work assignments, such as:

-  **Data Collection**
-  **Data Analysis**
-  **Presentation Development**
-  **Sharing Knowledge**
-  **Participation In Discussions & Decisions**

Opportunity To Identify Future Leaders

Ideally, when actual Sales process workers are on a team, they approach these responsibilities as an opportunity to improve the way their jobs are done, rather than as extra work.

Organizing A Team To Improve A Sales Process Involves

- 1) **Selecting The "Right" People To Serve On The Team**
- 2) **Identifying The Resources, Requirements & Levels of Authority For The Improvement Effort:**
 - a. People
 - b. Time
 - c. Money
 - d. Materials
 - e. Setting Reporting Requirements
 - f. Determining The Team's Level Of Authority
- 3) **The Sales Process Boundaries Have To Be Determined.**
 - a. These are the Starting And Stopping Points of the Sales Process that provide a framework within which the team will conduct its Sales Process Improvement Efforts
 - b. It is crucial to make sure that the Steps Involved in meeting the Sales Process Improvement Objective are Located Inside The Boundaries.
 - c. A Pareto Analysis can help the team Identify one or more factors or Problems Which Occur Frequently and can be investigated by the team. This analysis would be based on some preliminary data collected by the team.

These elements may be formalized in a written Team Charter Worksheet.

Creating A Sales Process Improvement - Charter

- ✚ A Sales Process Improvement Charter is a document that:
 - Describes the Boundaries, Expected Results, and Resources to be used by a Sales Process Improvement Team
 - Is Usually Provided by the individual who formed the team or the Sales Process Owner
 - Is Always Required for a team working on a Sales Process that Crosses Departmental Lines
 - May Not Be Necessary for a team that is improving a Sales process found Solely Within A Single Work Center

✚ A Sales Process Improvement Charter Should Identify:

- ✚ Sales Process To Be Improved
- ✚ Time Constraints, If Applicable
- ✚ Sales Process Improvement Objective
- ✚ Team's Decision-Making Authority
- ✚ Team Leader Assigned
- ✚ Resources To Be Provided
- ✚ Team Members Assigned
- ✚ Reporting Requirements

Other information pertinent to the improvement effort may also be included, such as the names of the Sales Process Owner and quality advisor, recommended frequency of meetings, or any other elements deemed necessary by those chartering the team.

SALES PROCESS IMPROVEMENT

CHARTER WORKSHEET

PROCESS:

PROCESS OWNER:

PROCESS IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVE :

Team Leader:

Facilitator / Quality Advisor:

Team Member	Ext.	Employee #	Dept. Manager	Dept. Code	Ext.

DATE BEGIN:

DATE END:

MEETING FREQUENCY:

DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY:

RESOURCES AVAILABLE:

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:

OTHER INFORMATION:

CHARTERED BY :

DATE:

Establishing Team - Ground Rules

No Sales Process Improvement Team should begin Sales Process Improvement Work without developing a **Clear-Cut Set Of Ground Rules For The Operation Of The Team.**

1) Attendance: Expectation of regular attendance at meetings, acceptable reasons for missing meetings, whether to allow alternates to attend when members must be absent, number of members required to conduct business.

2) Promptness: Starting and ending time for meetings.

3) Preparation: Expectation that team members will complete assignments in advance and come prepared for each meeting.

4) Participation: Active listening, suspending personal beliefs, and free communication by all members.

5) Courtesy: One person talks at a time; no interruptions or side conversations; no personal attacks; all members treated as partners, not adversaries.

6) Assignments: Methods for making and tracking assignments and selecting the recorder.

7) Decisions: Decision-making procedures—consensus or open or closed majority vote.

8) Focus: Things to do to stay focused on the future, not rooted in the past.

Sales Process Improvement - Team Meeting Record

The Sales Process Improvement Team Meeting Record helps teams follow the guidelines for conducting effective meetings:

- A) Follow the meeting ground rules.
- B) Use an agenda. (See the agenda example.)
- C) List the items to be discussed in as much detail as needed
- D) State time available for each item.
- E) Name who is responsible for each item.
- F) Publish the agenda in advance.

Training for the Team

At this juncture, team members need to receive some training that will help them reach their Sales Process Improvement Objective.

The Team Leader should provide training on how to operate effectively as a team as well as just-in-time training in the use of statistical tools.

Step 6: Flow Chart The Current Sales Process

Define the current process using an “Original State” flow chart. This tool is used to generate a step-by-step map of the activities, actions, and decisions which occur between the starting and stopping points of the sales process.

Before a team can improve a sales process, each of the members must understand how it works. The most useful tool for studying a sales process is a flow chart.

Observing Sales Process – Work Flow

To develop an **accurate flow chart**, the team assigns one or more members **to observe the entire flow of work** from the starting point to the ending point of the Sales process.

It may be necessary for the observers to **follow the flow of activity** through the Sales Process **several times** before they can see and **chart what actually occurs**.

This record of where actions are taken, decisions are made, inspections are performed, and approvals are required becomes the **"Original State" flow chart**.

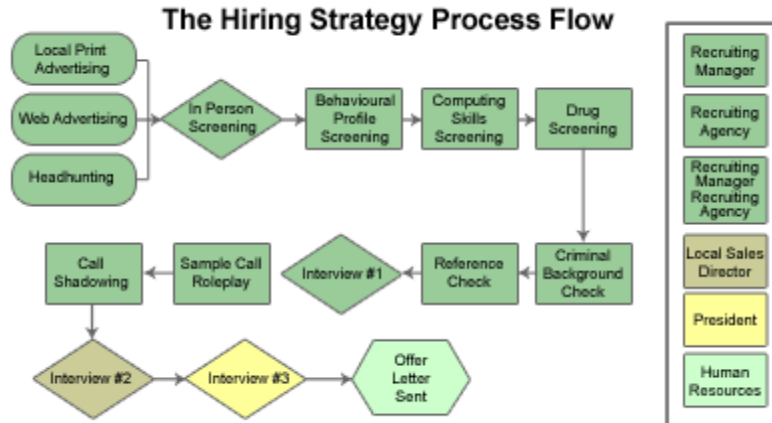
This “Original State” Flow Chart Is Often The First Accurate And Complete Picture Of The Entire Sales Process The Team Members Have Seen.

CAUTION: Distinguish Between Assumptions & Reality

As the team starts work on this first flow chart, they need to be careful to **depict what is really happening** in the Sales process, **and not:**

- ❖ **How People Think The Sales Process Is Working**
- ❖ **How They Would Like It To Work**
- ❖ **How An Instruction Or Manual Says It Should Work**

Only an **accurate and complete** "Original State" flow chart displaying the Sales process **as it is actually working today** can **reveal the improvements** that may be needed.



The goal of this step is for the team to fully understand the Sales Process before making any attempt to change it. Changing a Sales process before it is fully understood can cause more problems than already exist.

Elements Of Developing Accurate “Original State” Flow Charts

The team responsible for creating the “Original State” Flow Chart can define the current situation by answering these questions:

I. Does the Sales Process Flow Chart show exactly how things are done now?

II. If not, what needs to be added or modified to make it a complete and accurate picture of the Sales Process in its current state?

III. Has each person involved in the Sales Process contributed their knowledge of the Sales Process Steps and their sequence?

IV. Are other personnel involved in the Sales process, perhaps as vendors or customers?

Step 7: Improve The Sales Process

Improve the Sales Process by removing redundant or unnecessary activities.

Since often people see the Sales Process on paper in its entirety for the first time in the form of the “Original State” Flow Chart, this can be a real eye-opener which motivates and prepares them to take these first steps in improving the Sales Process.

Removing Redundant or Unnecessary Activities

The “Original State” Flow Chart depiction of how the Sales process “really works” helps team members spot problems in the Sales Process Flow.

- A. They May Locate Steps Or Decision Points That Are Redundant.**
- B. They May Find That The Sales Process Contains Unnecessary Steps.**
- C. They May Discover Procedures That Were Installed In The Past In An Attempt To “Safety Net” The Sales Process After Problems Were Experienced.**

All of these eat up valuable resources!

Bolstering Weak Links

Besides identifying areas where resources are being wasted, the team may find a weak link in the Sales process that they can bolster by adding one or more steps.

Questions That Determine Process Improvements

But before stepping in to make changes in the Sales Process based on this preliminary review of the “Original State” flow chart, the team should answer the following questions for each step of the Sales Process:

- ✚ **Can This Step Be Done In Parallel With Other Steps?**
- ✚ **Does This Step Have To Be Completed Before Another Can Be Started, Or Can Two Or More Steps Be Performed At The Same Time?**
- ✚ **What Would Happen If This Step Were Eliminated?**
- ✚ **Would The Output Of The Process Remain The Same?**
- ✚ **Would The Output Be Unacceptable Because It Is Incomplete Or Has Too Many Defects?**
- ✚ **Would Eliminating This Step Achieve The Sales Process Improvement Objective?**
- ✚ **Is The Step Being Performed By The Appropriate Person?**
- ✚ **Is The Step A Work-Around Because Of Poor Training Or A Safety Net Inserted To Prevent Recurrence Of A Failure?**
- ✚ **Is The Step A Single Repeated Action, Or Is It Part Of A Rework Loop Which Can Be Eliminated?**
- ✚ **Does The Step Add Value To The Result Produced By The Sales Process?**

Benefits Of Reducing Sales Process Inefficiencies

If the answers to these questions indicate waste, the team should consider doing away with the step.

If a step or decision block can be removed without degrading the Sales process, the team is recovering resources and reducing costs.

Eliminating redundant or unnecessary steps confers an added benefit: a decrease in cycle time. Only part of the time it takes to complete most Sales Processes is productive time; the rest is delay. Delay consists of waiting for someone to take action.

Analyzing Potential Redundant / Unnecessary Steps

When you identify a repeated step, determine if the step is a single repeated action, or part of a rework loop which can be similar unproductive activities.

Consequently, removing a step which causes delay reduces cycle time by decreasing the total time it takes to complete the Sales process.

Step 8: Flow Chart The Improved Sales Process

After making preliminary changes in the Sales Process, the team should create a Flow Chart of the “Improved Sales Process.”

Prior to creating a picture of the Improved Sales Process an audit check is necessary.

Improved Sales Process – Audit Check

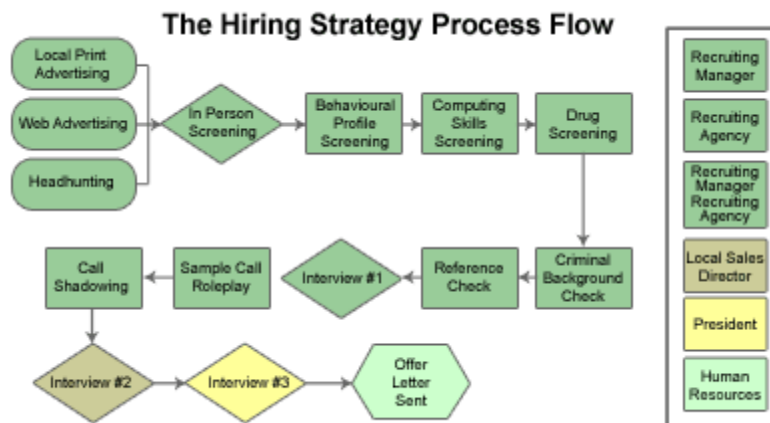
A Process Improvement Audit Check requires verification that the “Improved Sales Process:”

A. Produces Results That Meets The Needs Of The Customer(S) It Serves?

B. Meets The Process Improvement Objective?

C. Meets All Applicable Directives?

If the answers to these audit checks are all "yes," the team should obtain the necessary approval to institute the “Improved Sales Process” Flow Chart as the new standard picture of the Sales process.



Obtaining Process Improvement Approval

If the team needs to be granted approval prior to making the recommended changes, a comparison of the “Improved Sales Process” Flow Chart with the “Original State” Flow Chart can become the centerpiece of a briefing to those in a position to grant approval.

Improved Sales Process – Training

At this point, the people working in the Sales Process must be **trained using the new flow chart** of the Improved Sales Process.

It is **vital** to ensure that they **understand and adhere to the new way of doing business**. **Otherwise**, the Sales process will **rapidly revert to the way it was before** the improvement team started work.

Step 9: Develop A Data Collection Plan

Develop a Sales Data Collection Plan and Collect Baseline Sales Data. These data will be used as the **yardstick for comparison** later in the model.

In the **previous 8 Steps**, the team went through the **development phase** of Sales Process Improvement where all **decisions** were **based on experience, qualitative knowledge** of the Sales process, and perceptions of the best way to operate.

For the **remaining steps** of the Process Improvement Model, a more **Scientific Approach** will be required. These steps of the model will rely on **Statistical Data** which, when **collected and analyzed**, will be used to **make decisions** about the Sales process.

Developing A Data Collection Plan

When the team develops a **Data Collection Plan**, they must first **identify the characteristic** of the product or service that has **to be changed** in order to **meet the objective**.

Identify Data Collection Points

The key to this segment of the model is to use **Sales Process Knowledge** and common sense in **determining where to take measurements**.

The team should ask:

Will The Data Collected At This Point Help Us Decide What To Do To Improve The Sales Process?

Once the team determines **What Data To Collect & Why, How, Where, And When To Collect It**—they have the core elements of a data collection plan.

Step #10: Implement The Data Collection Plan

This begins the **evaluation of the sales process against the process improvement objective** established in Step 4.

The flow chart in Step 6 helps the team determine who should collect data and where in the process data should be collected.

To Implement The Data Collection Plan, the team develops a **Data Collection Sheet**. This **Data Collection Sheet** must include explicit directions on how and when to use it. The team should try to make it as user-friendly as possible.

The Team Can Collect Baseline Data When, And Only When:

- 1) Data Collection Plan Is In Place
- 2) Data Collection Sheet Has Been Developed
- 3) Data Collectors Have Been Trained In The Procedures To Use.

Step 11: Assess Whether The Sales Process Is Stable.

The team creates an Outbound Excellence Control Chart or Run Chart out of the data collected in Step 10 to gain a better understanding of what is happening in the Sales process.

The follow-on actions of the team are dictated by whether special cause variation is found in the Sales Process.

Both the Control Chart and Run Chart tools organize the data and allow the team to make sense of a mass of confusing information.

Control Charts & Run Charts

Outbound Excellence Control Charts are better at revealing whether a Sales Process is stable and its future performance predictable.

However, even if a team begins with the simpler Run Chart, they can convert it to a Control Chart with a little extra work.

These two tools are important because they help teams identify special cause variation in the Sales process.

Whenever an individual or a team repeats a sequence of actions, there will be some variation in the Sales process.

Sales Process Variations

Think about the average amount of time an Outbound Sales Representative spends on the telephone each day contacting prospects and customers.

Although the average time might be 128 minutes, no two days are exactly the same. On one occasion maybe 212 minutes of Customer Contact Time was achieved, another resulted in just 48 minutes.

This is where an Outbound Excellence Control Chart or a run chart can help you analyze the data. Outbound Excellence Control Charts, and to a lesser extent run charts, display variation and unusual patterns such as runs, trends, and cycles.

Data which are outside the computed control limits, or unusual patterns in the graphic display of data, may be signals of the presence of special cause variation that should be investigated.

Sales Process Change vs Variation

For example, say that on a single day the entire sales team's customer contact time was only 48 minutes vs their goal of 128 minutes.

Investigation revealed that on the day the Sales Team achieved only 48 minutes of Customer Contact Time, there was a power outage in the sales office which disabled both the lights and phone service.

The data provided a signal of Special Cause Variation in your Customer Contact Time process.

But what if, over a period of 10 days, a series of times is recorded for a large group of sales people that averaged 48 minutes?

Investigation determines that the Sales Manager responsible for Running the Customer Contact Reports stopped running the

Customer Contact Times hourly, as the processed called for, and began running them just twice a day, making it harder for the sales people to monitor the amount of time they were on the phone contacting customers.

This is not just a variation. The data indicate that your Sales Process has changed.

While this example portrayed an obvious change in the Sales process, subtle changes often occur without the knowledge of the workers.

Locating Cause Of Special Variation

These minor changes produce enough variation to be evident when the data are analyzed. If special cause variation is found in the Sales process, the team is obliged to find the cause before moving on to the next step in the model.

Depending on the nature of the special cause, the team may act to:

- ✚ Remove It
- ✚ Take Note Of It But No Action
- ✚ Incorporate It In The Sales Process

When Special Cause Variation Requires Action To Remove It

When special cause variation reduces the effectiveness and efficiency of the Sales Process, the team must investigate the root cause and take action to remove it.

If the team fails to investigate a signal of special cause variation and continues on with their improvement activities, the Sales Process may be neither stable nor predictable in the future.

This lack of stability and predictability may cause additional problems to occur, preventing the team from achieving the Sales Process Improvement Objective.

Step 12: Assess Whether The Sales Process Is Capable

To assess whether a sales process is capable, the team plots an Outbound Excellence - Sales Process Histogram to compare the data collected in Step 10 against the process improvement objective established in Step 4.

To prepare the Sales Process Histogram, the team superimposes the target value for the Sales process on the bar graph. The target value was established in Step 4 as the Sales process improvement objective.

If there are upper and/or lower specification limits for the Sales Process, the team should plot them also.

(Note: Specification limits are not the same as the upper and lower control limits used in control charts.)

Once the data, the target value, and the specification limits (if applicable) are plotted, the team can determine whether the Sales process is capable .

How To Determine If A Sales Process Is Capable

The following questions can be used to guide the team's thinking:

- ❖ Are There Any Unusual Patterns In The Plotted Data?

- ❖ **Does The Bar Graph Have Multiple Tall Peaks And Steep Valleys?**
- ❖ **Are Other Sales Processes Influencing The Sales Process The Team Is Investigating?**
- ❖ **Do All Of The Data Points Fall Inside The Upper And Lower Specification Limits (If Applicable)?**

If not, the Sales process is not capable.

If An Improved Sales Process Is Capable

If all of the data points fall within the specification limits, the team has to decide whether the shape of the bell curve is satisfactory and whether the data points are close enough to the target value.

If the team is satisfied with both the shape and the clustering of data points, they can choose to standardize the Improved Sales Process or to continue further process development.

Identify-Analyze-Measure-Develop-Improve-Monitor Cycle

From here until the end of the Sales Process Improvement Model the team is going to use a scientific methodology for conducting Sales process improvement called the **Identify-Analyze-Measure-Develop-Improve-Monitor cycle.**

They will plan a change, conduct a test and collect data, evaluate the test results to find out whether the Sales Process Improved, and decide whether to Standardize Or Continue To Improve The Sales Process.

The Identify – Analyze – Measure – Develop – Improve - Monitor cycle. is just that: a cycle. There are no limitations on how many times the team can attempt to Improve The Sales Process Incrementally.

Step 13: Identify Root Causes For Lack Of Capability

Usually the Sales Process Improvement Actions in Step 7 are not enough to make the Sales Process Capable of meeting the objective and the team will have to continue on to Step 13 in search of root causes.

Identify the root causes which prevent the Sales Process from meeting the Sales Process Improvement Objective.

Even if the data indicate that the Sales Process is meeting the Sales Process Improvement Objective, the team should consider whether it is feasible to improve the Sales Process further before going on to Step 14.

Use the Identify-Analyze-Measure-Develop-Improve-Monitor – Repeat cycle here. Additionally, use either our Outbound Excellence – Cause & Effect Diagram or Brainstorming Exercise to generate possible reasons why the Sales Process fails to meet the desired objective.

Determine Cause & Effect

Once the team identifies possible root causes, it is important to collect data to determine how much these causes actually affect the results.

People are often surprised to find that the data do not substantiate their predictions, or their gut feelings, as to root

causes. The team can use a Pareto chart to show the relative importance of the causes they have identified.

Step 14: Plan To Implement The Improved Sales Process

After considering the possible root causes identified in Step 13, the team picks one to work on. They then develop a plan to implement a change in the Sales Process to reduce or eliminate the root cause.

The major features of the plan include changing the Improved Process Flow Chart created in Step 8 and making all of the preparations required to implement the change.

Key Questions For Sales Improvement Plan Development

The team can use the following list of questions as a guide in developing the plan:

- ✚ What Steps In The Process Will Be Changed?
- ✚ Are There Any Risks Associated With The Proposed Change?
- ✚ What Will The Change Cost? The Cost Includes Not Only Money, But Time, Number Of People, Materials Used, And Other Factors.
- ✚ What Workers Will Be Affected By The Change?
- ✚ Who Is Responsible For Implementing The Change?
- ✚ What Has To Be Done To Implement The Change?

Key Questions For Sales Improvement Plan Development

- ✚ Where Will The Change Be Implemented?
- ✚ How Will The Implementation Be Controlled?
- ✚ At What Steps In The Process Will Measurements Be Taken?
- ✚ How Will Data Be Collected?
- ✚ Is A Small-Scale Test Necessary Prior To Full Implementation Of The Change?

- ✚ How Long Will The Test Last?
- ✚ What Is The Probability Of Success?
- ✚ Is There A Downside To The Proposed Change?

Once the Sales Process Improvement Plan is formulated, the team makes the planned changes in the process, if empowered by the team charter to do so.

Otherwise, the team presents the improvement plan to the individual or team to obtain approval to proceed.

Step 15: Modify The Data Collection Plan, if necessary

The data collection plan was originally developed in Step 5. Since the process is going to change when the planned improvement is instituted, the team must now review the original plan to ensure that it is still capable of providing the data the team needs to assess Sales Process Improvements.

Modifying The Data Collection Plan

If the determination is made that the data collection plan should be modified, the team considers the same things and applies the same methodologies as in Step 5.

Step 16: Test The Change & Collect Data

If feasible, the change to the Sales Process should be implemented on a limited basis before it is applied to the entire Sales Organization.

For example, the “Improved Sales Process” could be instituted on a single Sales Team or Sales Division while the rest of the Sales Teams or Sales Divisions continues to use the “Original Sales Process.”

Sales Process Improvement – Data Collection Goals

Whatever method the team applies, the **goals** are **to prove the effectiveness of the change, avoid widespread failure, and maintain organization-wide support.**







In some situations, **a small-scale Sales Process Improvement Test** is **not feasible.** If that is the case, the team will have **to inform everyone** involved of the nature and **expected effects of the change** and conduct training adequate to support a full Sales Organization wide test.

Verify Process Improvement Occurred

The information the team developed in Step 16 provides the outline for the **Improved Sales Process test plan.**

During the Process Improvement Test, it is important to collect appropriate data so that the **results of the change can be evaluated.**

The team should take the following **actions in conducting the test** to determine whether the change actually resulted in process improvement:

-  Finalize The Test Plan.**
-  Prepare The Data Collection Sheets.**
-  Train Everyone Involved In The Test.**
-  Distribute The Data Collection Sheets.**
-  Change The Process To Test The Improvement.**
-  Test And Collate The Data.**

Step 17: Is The Modified Sales Process Stable?

During the test of the new procedure, data were collected. Now the team checks whether the expected results were achieved. The procedures in this step are identical to those in Step 11.

The team uses the data they have collected to check the process for stability by preparing the Outbound Excellence Control Chart or Run Chart.

Since the Sales Process has changed, it is appropriate to re-compute the control limits for the control chart using the new data.

If the data collected in Step 16 show that process performance is worse, the team must return to Step 8 and try to improve the process again. The process must be stable before the team goes on to the next step.

Step 18: Does The Improved Sales Process Meet Its Objective

The procedures are similar to those in Step 12. This is a good place for the team to identify any differences between the way they planned the process improvement and the way it was executed.

Process Objective Evaluation Questions

- 1) Did the change in the Sales Process eliminate the root cause of the problem?
 - a. Whether the answer is "yes" or "no," describe what occurred.

- 2) **Are the data taken in Step 16 closer to the Sales Process Improvement Objective than the baseline data?**
 - a. This indicates how much or how little the Sales Process has improved.

- 3) **Were the expected results achieved?**
 - a. If not, the team should analyze the data further to find out why the Sales Process Performance improved less than expected or even became worse.

- 4) **Were there any problems with the Sales Process - Improvement Plan?**
 - a. The team needs to review the planned improvement as well as the execution of the data collection effort.





Step 19: Standardize The Improved Sales Process

In this step the Sales Process Improvement Team makes some important decisions.

1st They must decide whether or not to implement the change on a full-scale basis.

Full Scale Implementation Analysis

In making this decision, the team should answer the following:

-  Is The Process Stable?**
-  Is The Process Capable?**
-  Do The Results Satisfy Customers?**
-  Does The Team Have Authorization?**

If the answers are affirmative, the Improved Sales Process can be installed as the New Standard Process .

Choosing The Next Course Of Action

The Sales Process Improvement Team must decide what to do next. Even when everything is in place for implementing and standardizing the process, the team still has to choose between two courses of action:

Making Further Sales Process Improvements

Identifying possibilities for making further process changes.

Assuming that resources are available and approval given, the team may choose to continue trying to improve the sales process by reentering the **Identify-Analyze-Measure-Develop-Improve-Monitor –Repeat** cycle

Standardizing The Improved Process w/o Further Efforts

If the team chooses to standardizing the changed process without further efforts to improve it, the team will still need to remain involved:

- ✚ Documenting The Changes
- ✚ Monitoring Process Performance
- ✚ Institutionalizing The Process Improvement

Steps To Standardization

To standardize the changed process:

- 1) **The team initiates documentation changes involving procedures (e.g. Instructions, manuals, and other related documentation.)**
- 2) **Training will have to be developed and provided to make sure everyone is using the new standard process.**

Step 20: Reduce The Frequency Of Data Collection

The team continues to use the data collection plan developed in Step 15, but significantly reduces the frequency of data collection.

Data Collection should be reduced to 25% of what is called for in the data collection plan. The team can then adjust the frequency of measurement as necessary.

The team must periodically assess whether the process remains stable and capable .

Monitoring Sales Process Stability & Capability

To do this, the data collected in Step 16 should be entered into the control chart or run chart and histogram developed in Steps 11 and 12 respectively.

Whichever course of action the team pursues, they should complete documenting the lessons learned during the process improvement effort and making the information available to others.

Sales Process Improvement - Resources

Outbound Excellence - Run Chart

Outbound Excellence - Pareto Chart

Outbound Excellence – Histogram Tutorial

Outbound Excellence - Defining The Objective

Outbound Excellence - Flow Chart Instructions

Outbound Excellence - Cause & Effect Diagram

Outbound Excellence – Effective Decision Making

Outbound Excellence – How Brainstorming Works

Outbound Excellence –Collecting Sales Process Data

Outbound Excellence – Sales Process Improvement Flow Chart