

Why Salespeople Fail

...and what you can do about it!

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Executive Summary

Your company survives on its sales numbers. Sales levels help determine the value of your company's stock, and whether your organization is investing in new facilities and markets and paying bonuses—or closing down operations and handing out pink slips.

This book is all about making and exceeding those all-important sales numbers and sales forecasts. It's an eye-opening look at the deficiencies of modern-day selling systems and sales management efforts, prepared by the company that literally rewrote the book on selling. The fact that you're reading it means you probably already have encountered some of these shortcomings:

- Painfully long selling cycles
- Unmet sales “forecasts”
- Bad sales habits that are eroding your margins
- Prospects demanding—and getting—costly price concessions
- Lack of a common sales culture or methodology
- Hiring salespeople that don't work out
- Bidding wars
- Over-promising that creates customer dissatisfaction

When David H. Sandler developed the Sandler Selling System®, it was a matter of his own professional survival. He had to find a better way to sell than the stale, rote methods he had been taught.

So, he began to innovate and track his results. Sandler's experiments extended far beyond developing new sales techniques. He gradually created a comprehensive selling system that included valuable self-management tools and a completely new sales and management philosophy and framework... decades ahead of its time.

Sandler training is provided by local Sandler Sales Institute® franchised training centers. With its emphasis on ongoing reinforcement training, role-playing, expert coaching, adult learning methodologies and quality support materials, Sandler sales training is different from any other training the industry has to offer. Long before “performance improvement” became a corporate buzzword, the Sandler Selling System®—and Sandler training—was making it happen for tens of thousands of salespeople and sales managers, across the business spectrum. Industry leaders such as Trane, EDS, Oracle, Cap Gemini, Ernst & Young, Minolta, DaimlerChrysler, Essilor Optical and Microsoft, to name a few, have all adopted the Sandler Selling System. They received training through an international network of Sandler training centers.

After you read this book, your view of selling will never be the same. The Sandler system completely changes the tenor of sales encounters. It provides an honest, no-nonsense, dignified approach to selling that places the salesperson firmly in control. And it has inspired a new level of honest dealing and mutual respect between sales professionals and their customers and clients. Sandler hopes that what you discover here—both about selling and sales management—will encourage you and your organization to continue to explore the benefits of Sandler sales training.

“Traditional selling always left me feeling that I was underpaid, overworked, and worn out. I had to work too hard to get a sale...”

David H. Sandler

[Chapter One]

What’s Happened to Your Promising Sales Career?

You didn’t go into sales to be “average.” Like everyone else in this line of work, you’re an optimist. You believe you can be a top producer and earn the highest possible compensation. After all, you can handle rejection, and you’re not afraid of hard work either.

Yet your close ratio is not what you (or your company) think it should be. What’s gone wrong? And more importantly, what, if anything, can you do about it?

This report examines *why salespeople fail*. It looks at what keeps so many otherwise talented, capable people from reaching the top of the selling profession. It explains why some sales careers rocket to great heights and then suddenly sputter—and why others never quite get off the ground. Sandler bases its findings on countless interviews with salespeople and sales managers performing at every conceivable level of sales success. These findings represent a distillation of what Sandler has learned in more than three decades of intense sales and sales management training activity.

The good news is that sales performance can be improved—dramatically and permanently. But first you have to know where to begin and what really requires fixing.

If you're like most salespeople who hit "dry periods," your first inclination may be to blame your sudden lack of success on the quality of your leads or the softening of the marketplace. Don't. By seeking to place the blame elsewhere, you'll cheat yourself of a valuable opportunity to learn. Instead, take a good, hard, dispassionate look at what you're doing. Chances are you'll find the fault lies somewhere within you: either with your attitude, your behavior or your technique. Sandler's research has shown this to be particularly true for salespeople experiencing any of the following common sales problems:

- Prospects increasingly want to "think it over."
- "Gatekeepers" easily turn you away, and you have no strategy for dealing effectively with voice-mail or e-mail.
- You're uncomfortable discussing money . . . unless and until it becomes an objection.
- Your answer to most competitors' selling advantages is an offer to lower your price.
- You're doing too much "unpaid consulting."
- You take rejection personally and let it affect your performance.
- You blame at least part of your problems on your manager's shortcomings.

While the telltale signs of sales underachievement may appear endless, the true causes are generally quite specific. More often than not, their roots can be found in the overall approach you take to the selling process.

“The key to successful selling is to have a better system than the one your prospect has been using on you for years.”

David H. Sandler

[Chapter Two]

Whose System are You Following?

In the “buyer-seller dance”—Sandler’s metaphor for a sales interaction—there are always two systems at work: the prospect’s system and the salesperson’s system. To lead in this process, you must know and apply a selling system that works. Merely showing up at the sales meeting and placing yourself in the arms of your prospect is not enough.

Ideally, the sales encounter should be viewed as a win-win situation. But as any salesperson who has spent time “in the trenches” knows, this simply is not the case. Prospects see themselves as individuals with something to lose: their money. This helps explain why prospects typically adopt an adversarial approach to salespeople. Under the prospect’s “system,” the goal is to get as much as possible from the salesperson without acquiescing to a sale. Prospects seek “free consulting.” They negotiate for the best possible price and terms for the salesperson’s goods and services while they play their own cards very “close to the vest.” Prospects seek to prudently manage their own time while they freely spend the salesperson’s, because they know that the more time a salesperson invests in a sale, the more eager that salesperson will be to “close” something. And that further strengthens the prospect’s bargaining position.

Many prospects believe they're doing the salesperson a favor merely by granting him or her an audience. They think salespeople should be grateful and should willingly assume a subservient role in the buyer-seller dance. That's why salespeople frequently find themselves cooling their heels in crowded reception rooms waiting to see their prospects. This situation closely resembles the medical model, where doctors place little value on their patients' time and routinely overbook appointments.

Salespeople must assume responsibility for the current sad state of buyer-seller relations. By tolerating their "subservient" status or frequently assuming the stereotypical "hard sell" approach, they have actually trained prospects to assume a superior, defensive posture. The status quo could not have existed as long as it has without the salesperson's active participation.

Whether you lead or follow in the buyer-seller dance depends largely on whose system prevails—yours or your prospect's. It also depends on how effective your system is. To take charge, you need to be fully aware of what's happening at each step along the way. And you have to be comfortable in the leadership role. Sandler's experience shows that most salespeople fail because they do not know how to be in control of the selling process. Most say they are not even aware of the manipulative measures prospects take—often in self-defense—during sales calls.

We believe there are no bad sales prospects, just bad salespeople. Prospects developed their current system in response to the behaviors and techniques of the salespeople they have met. If their system can derail your sales efforts, then you need to adopt a newer, more effective selling system. It's that simple. This report will show you that there is a better way. You may not always get every sale, but you will certainly know what's happening to you on each sales call. And more importantly, you'll know what to do about it! But first, let's take a closer look at how and why the prospect's system works so well.

“The prospect’s system is engineered to turn you into an unpaid consultant.”

David H. Sandler

[Chapter Three]

The Prospect’s System

Over the years, through exposure to countless sales pitches, prospects have learned enough about the selling process to thoroughly undermine it. They rely on a surprisingly small, but effective, bag of tricks to seize control of, and rapidly derail, sales efforts.

Step 1: Prospects don’t always tell you the truth and they play their cards “close to the vest.” First, you need to understand that in the prospect’s value system, it’s OK to withhold information from, and even mislead, salespeople. Otherwise honest, upstanding individuals believe they can say anything they want to salespeople.

They do not mislead you because they are bad people; they do so out of a desire for self-preservation. After all, prospects know that while they’re busy managing their affairs, you’re off attending workshops on how to become a killer salesperson. They know you’re learning how to maneuver them into making purchasing decisions. And they know your methods work. Each time they choose between meeting a salesperson on a Tuesday or a Wednesday, in the morning or the afternoon, or at 1 p.m. or 2 p.m., they realize they’ve been had. They might not be able to identify your technique as the “Alternative Event Close,” but they know you’ve pulled something. And with each new sales encounter they grow a little bit smarter as your competitors continue to wear out the same collection of time-honored closing techniques.

So how do prospects cope with your superior sales powers? They mislead you. Prospects know one of your first goals is to generate interest in your offering, so they often feign interest in order to pump you for information. Your prospect might start off by saying, “We’ve heard wonderful things about your company’s ability to . . .” or “We’d like to know how you can help us with” They will tell you their current system is working fine, when, in fact, it is in shambles. Meanwhile, they’ll volunteer as little information as possible about their true situation or intentions. They will offer no hint about how much they really need your product or service. They won’t talk in specific terms about how much money they have to spend. They won’t even tell you how they go about making buying decisions. What you must understand as a salesperson is that it doesn’t make much difference what your prospect says, because he or she is probably lying to you anyway.

Remember, you’re not the first salesperson your prospect has encountered. You may be a great, sincere professional with a wonderful opportunity to share. But your prospect doesn’t know this. Your prospect sees you as just another “salesperson,” with all the negative imagery that term implies.

Step 2: The prospect wants to know what you know. This would be *great news*, if the prospect wanted to pay for the information. But he or she wants it for free. Why does the prospect want to know what you know? Because your prospect assumes that you somehow have the capability to improve productivity and lower costs. Otherwise, why would your company have taken the time and trouble to bring your goods and services to the marketplace? The prospect figures you are good at what you do and that you have something of value. Your prospect wants to extract all your knowledge and to secure your very best price, but not in order to buy anything from you. Your prospect wants to use you to “beat

up” his current supplier. He needs your numbers so he can say to your competition, “I’ve got a better price than the one you are giving me.” And believe it or not, there are plenty of salespeople out there willing to give insincere prospects all the free information and competitive price quotes they can handle. That’s what corrupts the marketplace and helps turn valued goods and services into cut-throat commodities.

We call this kind of selling “unpaid consulting.” And as you can well imagine, the long-term outlook for unpaid consultants is not very good. Lots of salespeople retire early from selling each year when they discover unpaid consulting does not put food on the table. Yet rest assured, it’s the prospect’s system that turned them into unpaid consultants.

Step 3: The prospect commits to nothing. Even after your prospect obtains the pricing or information she wants, she may not be through with you. She may need you to do a little more “unpaid” work for her, so what does she do? She misleads you about what’s going to happen next. She dangles the hope before you that a sale may be imminent. “I need to think it over,” she says, or “I’ll get back to you,” or “This is very interesting. I’d like to take this to the committee,” or “We’re thinking about putting together a task force to study the feasibility. . . .” She’ll hold out just enough hope to continue to string you along as a willing, unpaid consultant.

Eventually, when your prospect has all the free information she needs from you, as far as she’s concerned, the process is over. You’re walking around saying, “Boy-oh-boy, I got one!” when, chances are, you have nothing.

Because the prospect may want the option to bring you back, for free, yet again, she may mail you a “humanitarian award” of sorts. This usually takes the form of a brief thank-you letter. What will it say? Something like this: “You wrote a great proposal. We got a lot

of information out of it. It was of great benefit to us. We like to keep abreast of what is going on in our industry, and you certainly have helped us do that. And, by the way, the wine was very nice. Thank you!”

Why do prospects use this system? Because it works! It's been around, in one form or another, since the dawn of recorded history. What are prospects after? Your free expertise. What does this process look like? What does it feel like? You usually don't realize it's happened until it's too late. “They got me again, and I still don't know what to do about it!” you tell yourself as you return to your car after yet another unpaid consulting session. Or worse, you do all kinds of additional work for them only to find out nothing is ever going to come of it.

Step 4: The prospect disappears. Suddenly, you find yourself held at bay by voice-mail or e-mail. Essentially, your connection has been severed, but you don't know it yet, because no one has bothered to tell you. Meanwhile, you continue to follow through, as you've been taught. You're temporarily stuck in this step, hoping you've still got a shot at a sale. But of course, the deal's been dead for quite some time. You just haven't admitted it, because you've already invested so much time and effort chasing this “phantom” opportunity.

It's a fact of life: If you don't have an effective selling system of your own, your prospect will take the lead in the *buyer-seller dance*. You will unknowingly default to the prospect's system. And at the end of the day, there will be no pay-off for you.

“Most salespeople today use techniques that were popular before the advent of jet airplanes.”

David H. Sandler

[Chapter Four]

Traditional Selling Systems

If you're like most salespeople today, you employ some form of a traditional selling system. These systems have been evolving since the birth of professional selling. While they go by different “brand names,” their underlying structures and principles remain remarkably consistent.

Traditional sales training follows certain conventions. Salespeople schooled in these methods learn to:

- Sell features and benefits
- Withhold vital information—such as price and terms—until a clear sense of “value” has first been established (typically during the presentation)
- Rely heavily on presentation skills to close the deal
- Anticipate and handle prospect objections
- Employ a broad array of time-tested, manipulative sales closing techniques

Traditional selling systems can work; that's why they've survived as long as they have. But because these approaches and techniques are so widely used, they are no longer as effective as they once were. Meanwhile, the evasive, manipulative behavior they encourage has contributed to today's adversarial sales environment in which the prospect's system has flourished.

If you use a traditional sales approach and find that you frequently fall victim to the prospect's system instead of your own, you have plenty of company. Here are a few reasons why:

- You may be *selling* features and benefits, but people don't *buy* them. They buy solutions to their problems.
- By waiting until the end of the sale to disclose information about price and terms, you may waste valuable time pursuing dead-end sales opportunities.
- Similarly, if you rely too heavily on your presentation skills to seal the deal, you could devote a lot of time and energy to a sales call only to discover the necessary interest level was never there.
- By focusing on handling objections, you perpetuate a system of "positive selling" in which the prospect almost always assumes a negative role. Negative customers are the toughest ones to sell to.
- And finally, your traditional closing techniques are probably well known to your prospect. Closes like "the price goes up Monday" or "Would the beginning or latter part of next week be better for you?" have lost most of their effect. And one-liners such as, "The price is the best part about it!" are simply useless. Your prospect has heard them all before. He or she is on to you!

Be aware, if you follow a traditional selling system you will fall into the prospect's system that was described in Chapter Three, and wind up doing what the prospect expects. Don't follow the prospect's system and lose the sale!

“Of the 50 selling programs I have been exposed to, Sandler works best—hands down. This system has brought me overwhelming financial and personal success.”

C.R. Bedrosian, Director of Sales,
K’NEX Industries, Inc., Hatfield PA

[Chapter Five]

The Sandler System— A Better Way

To win at sales the majority of the time, you must employ a selling system that is more powerful than your prospect’s! And the system in the marketplace today that can restore your sales edge is the Sandler Selling System®. The Sandler Selling System is a direct, no-nonsense approach to selling that frames the sales call as a business meeting among equals. In the Sandler system, the salesperson behaves like a highly paid business consultant. Instead of treating your prospect to yet another sales call, you offer an honest, non-manipulative exchange of information. The effect is both refreshing and disarming. Here’s a brief overview of how it works:

Step 1: **Establish rapport (stop acting like a salesperson).**

Prospects erect a defensive “wall” when they think you are trying to sell them something. What you have to do at this point is get the prospect comfortable with you. Help her know that you understand her problem from her point of view. Make her comfortable with you so you can begin to establish a relationship. And continue to build that rapport and trust throughout the entire selling relationship, not just during the first five minutes.

Step 2: Establish an up-front contract. Before every baseball game, the umpire calls the managers from the two teams together at home plate. The rules of baseball are discussed, including the foul lines, the foul poles and the home run fence, and any unusual circumstances that may apply to that particular ballpark. When a batter hits the ball off the catcher's head and it lands on the screen behind the catcher, there can be no question about that being a foul ball. And, when the batter hits the ball over the fence between the left and right field foul poles there's still no problem: It's clearly a home run.

Can you imagine the confusion that would ensue if the managers and the umpire did not agree—up-front—to what the ground rules for the game would be? In sales, the up-front contract serves that purpose. It establishes a clear understanding between the salesperson and the prospect about what each has a right to expect from the forthcoming sales encounter. Ground rules establish behavioral boundaries, decision making steps and the necessary actions that must be taken to fulfill those expectations.

Ever hear a prospect say, “Well, George, based on what you're telling me so far, all things being equal, it certainly looks good. You're very close. I don't see any reason in the long run why you may not get this order, assuming things fall into place and everything works out well?”

The amateur salesperson who sets up weak up-front contracts or no up-front contracts deludes himself. He rushes back to the office and says, “Got one, boss!” when in fact, he has nothing.

Step 3: Uncover and probe your prospect's “pain.” People buy emotionally—they make decisions intellectually. The most intense emotion people experience is pain. What you must understand is this: If your prospect has no pain, there will be no easy sale. People will continue to do what they've done all their lives until the pain

of maintaining the status quo is greater than the pain of making a change to something new. If you do not learn how to uncover the prospect's pain, you will continue to sell using the most difficult of all antiquated principles, the law of averages!

Remember all that “unpaid consulting” the prospect is after? The Sandler Selling System® makes that a thing of the past. Your new goal is to uncover the prospect's pain, not to create new pain for yourself!

Step 4: Get all the money issues out on the table. You must not only address the cost of your goods or services to get a sale, but, more importantly, you must address the cost to your prospect if he or she does nothing. What is the financial impact of the issues (pain) you have uncovered? You must deal with the budget step in order to make sure that you can get paid for what you do. Once you have uncovered your prospect's pain (Step #3), and you are certain there is money available to get rid of his pain, you can move to:

Step 5: Discover your prospect's decision making process. Does he make decisions on his own? Does he get help from an associate or a spouse? Does he think things over or can he make a decision now? Can this prospect make the decision to spend the money to get rid of his pain?

OK. You've uncovered your prospect's pain and you've received a financial commitment to deal with it. You understand the decision making process your prospect goes through, and you and the prospect have a clear understanding regarding what it will take to do business. What's next? It's time to move on to:

Step 6: Present a solution that will solve your prospect's pain. Of course, using this new system, your presentation has little to do with the features and benefits the marketing department fell in love with. Instead, it has everything to do with showing your prospect

how your product or service can get rid of his pain. Prospects do not buy features and benefits . . . they buy ways to avoid or overcome pain. When you're sure your prospect has bought into your presentation, measure his "temperature" by using the "Thermometer Close."

Ask your prospect if he has an interest in your product or service: "Mr. Prospect, I get the feeling that you have some interest in my product or service. Is that a fair statement?" Continue with, "Let me ask you a question. On a scale of 0–10, zero being you have no interest in my product or service, and ten being you have already decided to use my product or service, where are you?"

If the answer is five or less, you have a problem. Chances are you "pushed" your prospect through the presentation and you didn't really show him how you could help him get rid of his pain. STOP and go back. See if you can't get him more emotionally involved in your product or service.

If, however, his answer is between six and nine, say, "What do you have to see to go to ten?" Deal with any additional problems he has. And, after solving each one, repeat, "Where are you now?" Continue this process until he gets to ten. This is extremely important. When you get to ten, don't use a worn out close like, "Want me to write it up?" Instead say, "What would you like me to do now?" This places the responsibility for the decision where it belongs: on the prospect. Let him close the sale. That way, he can never accuse you of putting any pressure on him.

Step 7: Reinforce the sale with a post-sell. Don't let this sale slip away. It may not happen in your business, but sometimes when salespeople take business away from a competitor, the competitor doesn't send flowers and a congratulatory note saying, "Nice going, George! Good luck with your new client!" Chances are, he will make a last-ditch effort to keep that customer by low-balling your

price. And he isn't going to be nice about it. The gloves are off. If you don't have a post-sell step, you may find yourself being assaulted by your competitor. You are going to need a strong and effective post-sell step so you don't receive a discouraging voice-mail which says, "Please call. We need to talk," or a pink message slip that reads, "Hold up temporarily. I've run into a problem."

The Moment of Truth: Business is NOT won or lost during Step #4 of your prospect's system when he does not answer or return your phone calls. Business is won or lost on the sales dance floor—right after you establish rapport. That's when you determine whose selling system is going to prevail: Yours or your prospect's. If you don't have a system of your own, you will default to your prospect's system and find yourself giving up control.

If you are presently involved in a selling cycle and you realize you're not leading the "dance," what can you do? Not much! Relax, and enjoy the ride. Look at this experience as a valuable part of your professional education. The sale was lost right after the introductions, when you lost your nerve. But next time, you'll do better. Next time, you'll apply the Sandler principles. Next time, you'll make the sale. Nevermore will you surrender the initiative and sell out your goals, your income, your family . . . and your future.

[Chapter Six]

Why Most Sales Training Doesn’t Work

Have you attended a half-day, full day or even a two-day sales training seminar lately? Did it make you feel good? Did you leave all fired up with new ideas, slogans and one-liners, determined to put them to the test? Well, now that a little time has passed, how much of that training would you say you continue to use? If you’re like most salespeople, the answer is, “Not much.”

Acquiring new information won’t improve sales performance; only *applying* it will! Selling is applied knowledge. It’s behavior. And changing behavior is difficult. It takes time—and practice—to alter behavior, improve attitudes and outlooks and master new techniques. And time and practice are two things you just don’t get enough of at a typical sales training seminar. In fact, psychological studies have shown that most people forget most of what they learn at seminars within the first 48 hours.

Just as a bandage cannot heal a broken bone, a “quick fix,” pump-me-up sales training seminar will never be sufficient to positively redirect a languishing sales career.

To master the Sandler Selling System®, most salespeople must undergo a complete behavioral overhaul. That’s because the Sandler system requires real, sweeping change. Using a traditional training

seminar format was, therefore, always out of the question. Instead, Sandler has based its training initiatives on a model designed to facilitate ongoing, lasting change. Each Sandler Sales Institute® training center combines live, classroom instruction with professional sales coaching, interactive role-playing, support group dynamics and quality review materials to create a powerful program of ongoing “reinforcement training”—something no sales training program has ever used before.

Sandler sales training works because it incorporates reinforcement training, uses the latest adult learning methodologies and builds its efforts around committed trainers who have first-hand sales experience. These elements are part of all Sandler training programs.

“To get to the top of the sales profession, you’ve got to practice, practice, practice. Find a system that works, and learn it.”

David H. Sandler

[Chapter Seven]

Create Your Own Performance Improvement Program

Whether you are an independent sales representative, a sales manager, a non-selling professional, or the head of corporate sales or customer service, the Sandler Sales Institute® has effective sales training programs that address your specific needs.

The President’s Club

Through the President’s Club, independent salespeople and sales teams can learn to master the Sandler Selling System®—the most powerful sales methodology ever developed. The President’s Club provides continuous, ongoing reinforcement training in a flexible, off-site, supportive classroom environment. Each training center offers as much as 20 hours or more of interactive classroom training a month, and you can attend as many of the sessions as you like.

Classwork consists of an exciting combination of workshops, real-world role-plays, problem-solving clinics and ongoing reinforcement. Knowledgeable and experienced trainers lead classes that focus on trainee participation. Participants are encouraged to share their personal experiences in applying the Sandler system.

President’s Club members get plenty of individual attention, too. Sandler trainers help them apply the selling system to their own unique sales situations, prospects and customers. Trainers also

provide sales call pre-briefings and debriefings to further reinforce lessons learned.

The President's Club constitutes an ongoing personal development program grounded in proven theories, hard skills, powerful techniques and workable strategies that you can use on every call, with every prospect . . . for the rest of your career. This program will help you master the Sandler Selling System® through the use of some of today's most advanced adult learning methodologies.

President's Club members receive valuable review materials and courseware to further reinforce training. These include an attractive set of workbooks and a set of cassette tapes or CDs

Corporate Consulting and In-House Training

The trend in corporate America today is to downsize in-house training staffs, primarily for two reasons: First, it is costly to maintain an in-house training department. And second, it is hard—except in some of the larger organizations—to attract, keep and maintain dynamic training teams. Moreover, effective sales and management training requires instructors who are trained and experienced in the real-world application of those disciplines.

Still, many companies prefer to maintain the “feel” of a traditional training program and will engage the services of outside trainers, who deliver one- and two-day intensive workshops, followed up by periodic refresher courses. The Sandler Sales Institute's Corporate Consulting and In-House Training Programs are designed to give clients total flexibility in course design and service delivery. Services include customized training manuals and course materials, on-call coaching services and on-line training and reinforcement components.

Specialized Training

Though Sandler emphasizes ongoing reinforcement training for lasting change and success it offers several shorter-term curriculums, which pinpoint specific business issues.

Sandler's Professional Advantage[®] offers a proven—yet refined—approach designed for accountants, engineers, lawyers, and anyone who needs to build a client base for their services.

Quality Service: Defining It, Building It and Sustaining It uses a quality management approach to improving customer service at all levels of an organization. This program is not industry specific, and is flexible enough to be applied to any company.

In addition to an extensive sales training curriculum, we offer **Sandler's Management Solutions**, training which takes the methodologies of the sales industry's most powerful selling system, and applies them to the issues of sales management in a comprehensive training package. Read more about **Sandler's Management Solutions** in Chapter Eight.

“There are no bad salespeople... only bad sales managers!”

David H. Sandler

[Chapter Eight]

Effective Training for Sales Managers

If you're like most sales managers working today, you probably started your career in sales. Yet the managerial skills you learned through selling are of only limited value to you now. As a salesperson, you only had to manage and motivate yourself. But as a sales manager, you now have to effectively manage and motivate others. As a salesperson, you had to hit the sales targets you were given. But as a sales manager, you now have to get your department to make the company's numbers—no matter how unreasonable or unrealistic they may seem. And you must achieve those numbers by effectively redistributing your sales quota to your sales team, according to the varying capabilities of each member. As a salesperson, you worked to be the best member of the team. But as the sales manager, you now have to recruit, assemble, direct and inspire that team to greatness.

Your sales background may make you an effective sales coach, but as you've already discovered, sales coaching only accounts for a fraction of your time—and your responsibilities. Where once you could afford to be fiercely independent, you now rely completely on the performance of others—the very same people who are

depending on you! These demands on the sales manager can make his position a lonely, frustrating and sometimes discouraging one.

Unfortunately, where do most sales managers turn for the training they need to survive, and thrive, in their positions? Most attempt to get it from general management training, which may or may not apply directly to their situation or from attending sales management seminar programs. But now there's a more effective alternative: sales management training from the Sandler Sales Institute®—an organization that truly understands salespeople and sales management, possibly better than anyone else.

Sandler's Management Solutions training provides you with comprehensive instruction on every major facet of sales management:

- **Assembling Your Team.** Master the interviewing skills and techniques necessary to help you identify winners each time you field a new pool of sales recruits.
- **Managing the People.** Learn to apply Sandler sales management techniques to achieve “buy-in” from your sales team members. Discover how to teach and lead rather than manage and reprimand. Sandler will show you how to use a simple 10-minute test to gain powerful insight into your salespeople, and teach you how to motivate your salespeople to become self-directed sales closers.
- **Managing the Process.** Build your own uniform sales management system based on the Sandler model by breaking the sales process into templates. Learn to set realistic goals, monitor progress and handle paperwork. Improve your team's ability to gather and analyze competitive market intelligence.
- **Managing the Numbers.** Master accurate sales forecasting methods, and learn how to teach them to your salespeople. Improve your ability to develop budgets. Let your Sandler

trainer show you how to establish performance measures that provide useful feedback and that foster process improvement.

Like all our training, Sandler's Management Solutions helps you master your new managerial skills with powerful reinforcement training methods. What's more, this program has been tested and refined through years of application in real-world sales management situations.

You'll find Sandler's Management Solutions training to be:

- **Flexible**—you start the program at whatever level you feel most comfortable.
- **Interactive**—you work, in a classroom setting, with your Sandler trainer and fellow participants using role-playing exercises and active discussion.
- **Customized**—you'll apply Sandler techniques to training issues and situations directly from your sales team's daily work environment, and then further hone and refine them to meet your specific needs.
- **Led by superior trainers**—Sandler trainers lead every session as they take you on your own personal journey of discovery and enrichment. Meanwhile, you reap the benefit of Sandler "best practices" gleaned through workshops with clients from every type of organization and industry.

For more information about this valuable training opportunity, call your local Sandler training center today.