INTRODUCTION

AS ORGANIZATIONS STRUGGLE TO IMPROVE BOTH TOP AND BOTTOM LINES, THE SHIFT IN BUYER BEHAVIOR HAS MADE IT NEAR IMPOSSIBLE FOR ORGANIZATIONS TO RISE TO THE LEVELS OF PRODUCTIVITY AND EFFECTIVENESS NEEDED TO MEET REVENUE GOALS.

With over 58% of the buying process completed before a buyer ever engages with a vendor, sales reps need to be equipped to engage with the buyer at the precise point in the process and align with their needs and expectations. Additionally, with quota attainment being 50% on average, it is clear this alignment is not happening and buyers are not seeing value in their interactions with sellers. Thus, the inability to communicate value remains a top reason why sales reps can’t move the needle.

Layering on to that, sales reps spend 30% of their time completing administrative and non-sales tasks — a rise from about 15 – 20% in years past. With a more complicated sales process, more administrative requirements, and a buyer who expects more from a sales rep, it’s no wonder average turnover of sales professionals is 34%.

Many solutions are available in the market to help mitigate these risks. Most recognizable are CRM (customer relationship management) systems. While CRM systems are critical back-end infrastructure to ensure data capture and knowledge share, it remains an unfulfilled promise where improved customer engagement and better sales performance are not realized. CRM systems carry low user adoption, and simply store prospect and customer data, not delivering the results that organizations need for successful sales execution.

As a result, organizations have turned to sales enablement activities to try and fill the gap left by CRM. These tools are point solutions for smaller problems, supporting points in time across the sales funnel, and are not focused on end-to-end sales execution. They also tend to be ad hoc in practice, neglecting to support any structure to a sales process or strategy.

These efforts do not provide the scalability modern sales teams need to be competitive in today’s changed environment. Sales leaders continue to work overtime on enabling their sales force with repetitive maintenance strategies, while not spending nearly enough time on executing effectively to grow and scale their sales initiatives.
The Sales Execution Maturity Model™

Our Model identifies five levels of an organization’s sales execution maturity as relative to business impact. Each level includes specific elements that contribute to the success or failure of a sales organization’s ability to scale and succeed in growing its selling competency.

An organization’s overall sales execution can fall into the following levels of maturity:

- **CHAOTIC**
- **DEFINED**
- **OPTIMIZED**
- **AGILE**
- **PREDICTIVE**

Once an organization is aware of its level of maturity, an action plan can then be put in place to progress up the model to a more desired state; resulting in improved top and bottom lines, and achievement of business goals.

To determine your organization’s level, be sure you and other team members take the Sales Execution Index™ Assessment
CHAOTIC LEVEL

THE EARLIEST LEVEL OF SALES EXECUTION MATURITY IS THE CHAOTIC LEVEL. AT THIS POINT, ORGANIZATIONS ARE MOSTLY REACTIVE IN SALES SITUATIONS AND ARE AD HOC IN THEIR SUPPORT AND ENABLEMENT EFFORTS.

Traits of Chaotic Maturity Level:

— Ad hoc efforts —
— Poorly defined processes —
— Unrecognized returns —

A Chaotic level does not allow the organization much, if any, scalability of efforts. Often heroic efforts are required just to make goals, and sales reps feel uncertain and uneasy of pipeline forecasts. These ad hoc efforts, while providing short-term wins, do not allow for the scalability required to achieve any true business impact.

Additionally, customers are subject to inconsistent buying processes and often end up confused or frustrated at the lack of alignment to their process. As sales reps struggle to articulate value, buyers become impatient and often don’t get to any buying decision for lack of communication of value. What’s worse, investments in activities intended to help most often never realize any returns. As more and more investment of time and money is made, more inefficiencies and lost returns are the result.

Sales operations leaders are often frustrated with the inability to adapt to sales’ needs, while they are also not able to demonstrate a return on efforts to leadership. Disparate systems, tools, and activities are not integrated with each other, and often not integrated in to the core back-end system, CRM.
Indicators, in part or in whole, when an organization is the Chaotic level:

- Sales process is non-existent. Reps follow individual steps without a cohesive approach.
- Sales reps waste time searching for tools and content they need.
- Content and tools are located in many different systems, or not at all and created from scratch almost every time.
- There is a lack of any kind of sales analytics, and ability to accurately forecast is extremely low.
- Up-sell and cross-sell strategies are non-existent. Reps are only focused on the deal at hand.
- CRM is either nonexistent or not adopted by the sales team.
- High sales rep attrition and ability to ramp up new reps is very poor.
- Poor mobile device support for reps by corporate headquarters.

Recommendations for Improvement:

- **Create a high level sales process** for reps to follow and adapt to their selling situation.
- **Focus on defining a process and infrastructure** for your sales team to execute effectively. This includes rolling out a CRM if there is none, or if adoption is low to begin providing reasons for sales to use (ex. value-added apps, commission ties, etc.).
- **Audit available content** for your sales team and inventory what is needed.
DEFINED LEVEL

MOVING UP, ORGANIZATIONS IN THE DEFINED LEVEL FIND THEMSELVES BEGINNING TO PROVIDE THE INFRASTRUCTURE AND PROCESS FOR REPS, BUT STRUGGLE IN COMMUNICATING WHAT’S AVAILABLE AND REP ADOPTION IS VERY LOW.

As organizations move from Chaotic to Defined, they have realized the importance of CRM adoption across the entire sales team, as well as the need for some structured process for sales reps to follow. With goals and strategies defined and documented, sales teams are moving toward the same goals in an attempt to execute on the business strategy.

However, without reinforcement of both sales process and strategy, efforts become reactive to short-term requirements, and scalability is a struggle. This results in sales reps taking on more administrative tasks to try and appease the need for CRM reporting and process following, but losing actual selling time with no, or worse — negative, returns. The impact on customers is realized through many deals ending in no decision, or worse lost to competitors, because though sales reps attempt to follow a process, it is not aligned with the buyer or agile enough to adapt to every selling scenario.

Sales operations leaders, as well as executive leadership, are often frustrated at the lack of visibility into why reps are losing deals, and inaccurate forecasts make it extremely difficult to plan with confidence. To fill the gap, often new reps are hired to accelerate sales, but result in high losses of unrecognized returns while ramping up, as well as turnover of existing reps.

Traits of Defined Maturity Level:
— Strategies and goals defined —
— Documented process —
— Some reactive behavior —
## Business Impact Example at Defined Level

### Improve Sales Rep Productivity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CURRENT STATE</th>
<th>IMPROVEMENTS</th>
<th>FUTURE STATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Sales Reps</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Annual Revenue Per Rep</td>
<td>$2,000,000</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$2,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Time Finding Resources</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Time Recreating Content</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Time Spent On Proposals</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Wasted Time</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Revenue Lost</td>
<td>$140,000,000</td>
<td>$24,000,000</td>
<td>$116,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Indicators an organization is the Defined level:
- A sales process exists, but is not proactively communicated and reinforced
- Many sales reps spend an excessive amount of time on non-selling tasks
- Sales content is available, but in varied systems or sometimes through a sales portal
- Content tends to be inconsistent in quality and often outdated
- Sales analytics are only applied to tracking deal status and pipeline forecasts
- The ability to accurately forecast is inconsistent
- Strategies for up-sell or cross-sell are loosely defined and not often followed
- CRM usage is low and mostly considered compliance
- The ramp up process for reps is ad hoc and time consuming

### Recommendations for Improvement

- **Focus on defining a structured ramp up process** and expectations for new reps, outside of on-boarding process.
- **Provide motivations and resources** to increase CRM adoption.
- **Define up-sell and cross-sell strategies** more clearly.
- **Evaluate sales analytic capabilities** that provide visibility into your sales process.
- **Streamline the accessibility of sales content for reps** — reducing time spent on finding or creating content by sales reps.
At the Optimized Level, organizations start to see effective sales execution strategies and activities take place. Sales teams are achieving success, but there is room to succeed faster and more consistently.

Traits of Optimized Maturity Level:

— Adopted processes —
— Integrated systems thinking —
— Guided behavior —
— Proactive responses —

While sales processes are defined and becoming adopted, they are most often static and not adaptable to unique selling scenarios, resulting in sales reps needing to improvise or revert to other methodologies that don’t align with buyers’ needs. Sales reps are able to be more proactive than reactive in the selling cycle, but are still bogged down with manual, administrative tasks.

Without the required responsiveness to quickly align with buyers, organizations often leave money on the table with lower than should be deal sizes. Up-sell and cross-sell strategies, while defined, are not able to be followed or adopted by the sales team, resulting in even more lost opportunity. Additionally, inability to personalize or tailor content, process and other customer-facing elements are not optimizing the experience for buyers, resulting in lower win rates.

With good foundations in place, sales operation leaders start to look toward automating tasks and activities to make sales reps more efficient, and thereby effective. Tools and systems are streamlined, with an emphasis on integration with the core CRM.
Business Impact Example at Optimized Level

**Reduce Sales Rep Ramp Up Time**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CURRENT STATE</th>
<th>IMPROVEMENTS</th>
<th>FUTURE STATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of New Sales Reps</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Annual Revenue Per Rep</td>
<td>$2,000,000</td>
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<td>$2,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time It Takes to Ramp Up (Months)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness During Ramp Up</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost Revenue Per Rep Ramp Up</td>
<td>$37,500,000</td>
<td>$187,500</td>
<td>$562,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Revenue Lost</td>
<td>$18,750,000</td>
<td>$9,375,000</td>
<td>$28,125,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Indicators an organization is the Optimized level:**

- The sales process is defined and followed by the sales team, but is not easily adaptable to unique selling situations.
- Sales reps spend as much time as possible doing selling activities with limited wasted time on administrative activities.
- Sales content is easily accessible by the sales team, but is generic and not easily customizable to specific buyers or selling situations.
- Up-sell and cross-sell strategies are defined, but not implemented by sales resulting in lost revenue opportunity.
- New rep ramp up process is defined, but time consuming and not streamlined.
- Sales reps frequently use mobile devices but are limited in what they can access.

**Recommendations for Improvement**

- **Leverage innovative technologies and infrastructure** to provide ability for sales process to be adaptable to individual buyers and situations in real-time.
- **Begin tracking what’s working and what’s not in your sales process** to tune it to improve win rates.
- **Eliminate administrative and searching tasks** — your sales team is already effective, so ensure you are giving them as much selling time as possible.
- **Provide your sales team with personalized selling content** to differentiate with buyers.
- **Roll out a process to ensure your selling content is updated regularly** so reps are using the best and most compelling all the time.
- **Go beyond deal probability and forecasting** with your sales analytics. Invest in tools to help understand what is working and what is not to be able to rapidly and effectively tweak process and content as needed in real-time.
- **Invest in technologies to ensure your CRM data is up-to-date** in real-time. Mobile, integrated applications, etc will allow for seamless syncing while not distracting sales reps.
- **Look for improvements in your new rep ramp up process** to get new hires to full productivity faster.
- **Enable sales teams via mobile devices** that sync with corporate systems.
AGILE LEVEL

Organizations who are at the agile level are teams truly working at maximum efficiency. They are successful in providing an adaptable infrastructure for sales reps to react to buyer needs effectively.

At this level, sales reps are able to provide superior buying experiences by having adaptable, dynamic processes and guided play books allowing them to deliver tailored, personalized experiences for each unique selling scenario. Agility in the selection and use of methodologies to react to changes in buyers’ needs, allow for maximum effectiveness, resulting in reps becoming true trusted advisors to their buyers and forging long term partnerships. This optimizes deal sizes as well as allows for adoption and execution of cross-sell and up-sell strategies, maximizing opportunities even further.

CRM adoption is high, so sales leaders have good visibility into pipeline management, as well as entrusting more predictable forecasts. Operations leaders have analytics to provide real-time dashboards into what’s working and not, allowing them to make better and faster decisions impacting the sales team.

Traits of Agile Maturity Level:

— Shared vision —
— Flexible methodologies —
— Continuous improvement and success —
— Repeatable best practices —
Business Impact Example at Agile Level

**Improve Competitive Win Rates**

<table>
<thead>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual Sales Revenue</td>
<td>$100,000,000</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$100,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pipeline Factor</td>
<td>4x</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>4x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales Pipeline</td>
<td>$400,000,000</td>
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<td>$300,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Pipeline Lost to Competition</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Revenue Lost</td>
<td>$160,000,000</td>
<td>$40,000,000</td>
<td>$120,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Indicators an organization is Agile:**

- The sales process is easily adaptable in all selling situations, allowing for sales reps to react to buyer needs timely and effectively.
- Sales reps do not spend wasted time searching for content and tools needed.
- Sales content is easily accessible and able to be customized and personalized for each individual buyer for the sales rep.
- Analytics are used to understand what’s working and what’s not in the selling process.
- Up-sell and cross-sell strategies are successful, when sales reps remember to apply them.
- CRM adoption is high, but its time consuming for reps to enter information and is often in batches.

**Recommendations for Improvement**

- Integrate up-sell and cross-sell strategies into your sales process seamlessly.
- Automate the personalization of content for sales reps to provide tailored selling content faster.
- Invest in sales analytics that provide early warning indicators of risk within deals allowing you to mitigate that risk and appropriately plan and shift strategies before deadlines or opportunity is lost.
- Focus on optimizing new rep ramp up to reduce time to revenue so new hires contribute to revenue almost immediately.
- Invest in systems to provide push notifications to sales reps and management to take real-time action.
THE MAYBE NOT-SO-ELUSIVE PREDICTIVE LEVEL IS THE EPITOME OF WHERE ORGANIZATIONS WANT TO BE. ORGANIZATIONS AT THE PREDICTIVE LEVEL HAVE TRULY BALANCED THE ART AND SCIENCE OF SALES EXECUTION THROUGH AN INTEGRATED AND DYNAMIC INFRASTRUCTURE AS WELL AS OPERATIONALIZING CONTENT AND PROCESS.

Traits of Predictive Maturity Level:

— Best in class —
— Business intelligence —
— Predictable results with early problem recognition —
— External benchmarks —

The ability to continuously improve along with the integrated systems to provide real business intelligence is what makes organizations in this level stand apart. Best-in-class practices are measured and monitored, and risks are identified early and mitigated. Sales teams see high average deal sizes, and sales rep attrition is extremely low.

Customers benefit from truly finding partners in their sales reps and the vendors they represent, where needs are understood and business results are demonstrated. They are often repeat customers, wanting to work with reps that understand their business and needs.

At this level, sales operations leaders are strategic advisors to leadership, and have real-time access to dashboards and predictive monitoring systems to manage key performance indicators as well as mitigate risk.
Business Impact Example at Predictive Level

**Improving Deal Sizes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CURRENT STATE</th>
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<th>FUTURE STATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual Sales Revenue</td>
<td>$100,000,000</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$100,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Discount Applied to Deals</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Revenue Lost</td>
<td>$25,000,000</td>
<td>$11,360,000</td>
<td>$13,640,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Indicators an organization is Predictive:**

- The sales process is optimized and provides predictable outcomes of an opportunity based on deal characteristics.
- Deal sizes are maximized with integrated up-sell and cross-sell strategies into the sales process.
- Sales content is proactively delivered to a sales rep within the context of a selling opportunity.
- Content is automatically personalized and tailored to the buyer.
- Sales analytics provide early warning signals of risk, and sales reps can adapt sales strategies quickly to react.
- CRM data is up-to-date with real-time information so no gaps in reporting or visibility exist.
- Sales rep retention is high — reps are successful.
- New hire sales reps contribute to revenue almost immediately with effective ramp up processes.
- Push notifications are sent to mobile devices so sales reps and managers can react to information in real-time.
- Sales teams spend more time with buyers delivering greater value, and less time on administrative activities.

**Recommendation for Improvement**

Continue leveraging and advancing sales analytics, as well as content analytics, to identify predictive indicators that drive further sales growth.
SUMMARY

THE ART AND SCIENCE OF SALES EXECUTION IS EVOLVING RAPIDLY IN TODAY’S CHANGED ECONOMY. TACTICS, TOOLS, AND STRUCTURES THAT HAVE WORKED IN THE PAST DO NOT ALLOW FOR ORGANIZATIONS TO BE COMPETITIVE TODAY.

To achieve aggressive goals, sales leaders need to adapt practices to reduce turnover, improve efficiencies, reduce wasteful spend, and improve win rates. The Sales Execution Maturity Model provides organizations a structure and path for optimizing sales execution activities and strategies in a consumable way. In order to succeed, organizations need to stop the random acts of sales enablement and provide a clear path for success from strategy to execution.

To determine your organization’s level, be sure you and other team members take the Sales Execution Index™ Assessment.
The mandate for improvement to sales execution is placing demand for new methods to gain breakthrough levels of performance. Qvidian is meeting this mandate by advancing the alignment of coaching and content to increase the probability and time frame to close deals, and also provides the accessibility through native mobile technology.

— Ventana Research

SUCCEED FASTER WITH QVIDIAN

Qvidian provides cloud-based sales execution solutions that enable companies to exceed quota targets, accelerate sales cycles, and win more business by closing the gap between strategy and execution. The company’s innovative software and advisory services offer real-time insight to ensure sales teams do what’s needed to win, by driving repeatable methodologies and making the sales organization more agile.

With over 1,200 global customers including Dell, Citi, ADP, CA, and Splunk, Qvidian is helping organizations significantly increase their profitable revenues while eliminating waste and reducing costs.

For more information, visit www.qvidian.com or call 1-800-272-0047 or +44 (0) 870-734-7778