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How Sales Managers can have high impact 1-2-1's

The Toolkit

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1-2-1's: Why should Sales Leaders care?

As a sales leader, it's likely you have lots to get done; sales results to review, strategies to produce, market reviews, reports to write, numbers to hit. The formal or informal 1-2-1 can seem low in importance, particularly if your team members are all ok and "don't need you right now".

"Put something in the diary and we'll grab 10 minutes for a quick chat, as long as my other tasks and meetings don't overrun" said the ineffective sales leader!!

You might have been promoted to a leadership role because you were great at sales and it is likely you're brilliant with customers. We see time and again that great sales people make average managers but when harnessed in the right way, the skills you have in sales and service, can be equally powerful when used with your team.



So why care about 1-2-1's? Leadership is a contact sport and 1-2-1's are one of the most significant moments to build trust (or destroy if done badly), capability, skills and attitude. Get it right, and you will be able to delegate more, get involved less with the time consuming detail and ultimately sell more as a team. This toolkit aims to get you on the right track when it comes to having meaningful 1-2-1's with your teams, whether you're a seasoned sales leader, or new to the game.

How to get ready



✓ Safety - but not as you know it

Creating a psychologically safe and open environment is crucial so team members can feel comfortable sharing. This is built over time, but you can start by leading from the front; be honest and transparent in your communication, build trust by maintaining their confidence and praise them for “speaking up” with their thoughts, challenges and ideas.



✓ Prepare & plan

Take the time to review each team members performance, behaviours and goals beforehand; noting specific examples of what you’ve observed to feedback. Rather than using generic sweeping statements like “you’ve done great this month”, be specific about what they have done that is “great”.

**Build
trust**

**Encourage
speaking
up**

**Prepare
real
examples**

**Review
data AND
behaviours**

“ Success depends upon previous preparation, and without such preparation, there is sure to be failure. ”
– Confucius

How you make them feel

Of course, what you say is important (and we'll come to that shortly), but how you make sales team members feel in 1-2-1's makes a big impact on the value you get out of it. A meaningful and productive conversation, is much better than you both feeling like you're wasting your time and dreading them in future!

Consider how you felt in past 1-2-1's, what's made the difference for you?



Really listen

Give your full attention; avoid interrupting, ask follow up questions to show engagement and interest in what they're saying.



Flexibility

Be open to adapting the agenda or 1-2-1 format or location based on the team members needs and preferences, this shows you value their input and them individually.



Personal connection

Show genuine interest in their personal wellbeing and professional growth, beyond just their current role in the team.



Consistency

Carry out 1-2-1's regularly depending on your teams needs to build trust. Do not cancel your 1-2-1's unless it is totally unavoidable!



Recognition

Appreciate their efforts and achievements, a simple 'thank you' about something specific can go a really long way.

“

People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel
– Maya Angelou

”



Conversation starters

These conversation starters help you plan discussion areas, open up key topics, are judgement free and demonstrate your support for their development. Leading to productive and collaborative discussions that contribute to their performance, engagement and success.

Be human and have a mindset that your team member is your customer! What is the impact you want to have with them? It is likely you want them motivated to perform at their best, so think of this as your "sale" and use your existing skills!



Goal progression

- ▶ How are you progressing toward your sales goals?
- ▶ What have been your biggest highs or lows?



Sales strategies

- ▶ What sales strategies/tactics have you found most effective recently?
- ▶ Are there any strategies you'd like to discuss or improve?



Customer feedback

- ▶ What customer feedback have you received that we should address or leverage?
- ▶ Are there any challenges you face in achieving customer satisfaction?



Pipeline review

- ▶ Can you talk me through your current sales pipeline?
- ▶ Are there any specific deals you'd like to discuss or need support with?



Obstacles or challenges

- ▶ Have you encountered any obstacles/challenges in your sales?
- ▶ What support (if any) do you need to overcome them?



Competitor insights

- ▶ What insights or observations do you have about our market competitors?
- ▶ Are there any competitor activities we should be aware of?

Conversation starters continued...



Training & development

- ▶ Do you feel you have all the necessary training/skills for your role?
- ▶ In what areas would you like additional training or support?



Managing time

- ▶ How do you manage your time and prioritise sales activities?
- ▶ Is there anything that's consuming too much of your time?



Recognition & motivation

- ▶ Is there a team member you'd like to recognise for their contributions?
- ▶ Would you like me to tell you what you have done that I am the most pleased about?



Career goals

- ▶ Where do you see your sales career heading over the next year or so?
- ▶ What are your career goals or aspirations?

Wrapping up

Document the conversation

Summarise your discussion

Outline actions/ commitments

Review goals

Get feedback on the process

End on time

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Get in touch

If you or your teams would benefit from sales leadership training or coaching, reach out to us here:



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