



SALES TRANSFORMATION

WHY COMPANIES FUNDAMENTALLY MUST CHANGE THEIR SALES APPROACH

A Mercuri International White Paper

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Sales transformation is a six-step process developed by Mercuri International. The need for a significant shift in sales practices are based upon the changes in buying behavior, primarily brought by market conditions and new technology. Here are some of the key drivers behind the need for sales transformation.

Fundamental changes in buying behavior

Internet and new technology has fundamentally changed the way people buy, as it has created knowledgeable and autonomous customers. In the past, customers were much more dependent upon sales people to conduct their purchases. Today, businesses and end-consumers alike both move forward in the buying process alone. This is possible due to extensive information and increasingly user-friendly and transparent ways of comparing price and quality of a product or service. A request for a proposal today often means the potential customer already has a very clear idea of what he or she wants and needs.

For service providers, the rise of the recommendation economy is not limited to travels and dentists – all industries are affected by social media and the way our

brand is perceived among customers and their peers. Selling is something that is constantly happening on all platforms, and traditional sales practices become more and more outdated.

Increased competition and price pressure

Most companies are well aware of the ever-increasing market competition. Promoting uniqueness is difficult, yet more crucial than ever. There are more offers available, while buyers typically have tighter budgets and less spending authority. This calls for a new approach for sales organizations, who will need to make use of assertive and persuasive selling techniques while simultaneously building strong, long-term relationships.

Most importantly, the sales person needs to address the customer with exactly the right solutions at exactly the right time.

The most capable salesperson in the world is no longer useful if he or she doesn't meet the customers on their buying journey.

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Procurement policies

Many large corporations, government-owned companies and municipalities have increasingly strict procurement policies.

For example, environment and sustainability issues have fast become important factors of the buying process, which puts pressure on any seller to analyze the buyer's needs and restrictions. Salespeople must be much more educated and well-researched.

In Mercuri International's global Procurement study 2013, the numbers clearly indicated that the buying processes are becoming more complex, involving more people and putting higher demands on sales people.

Do you add value for your customers?

In demanding market conditions lie plenty of opportunities for those who manage to perform a sales transformation successfully. As a seller, selling is not enough – the objective is to make the customer perform better and thus increase ROI by using our product or service. Knowledgeable salespeople with industry insight and a focus on creating value for their customers can succeed in making their competitors irrelevant.

In a world where time and money is precious, it becomes more crucial than ever to build strong relationships, offering fast feedback, accessible customer service, education and professional follow-up routines. Remember: the most capable salesperson in the world is no longer useful if he or she doesn't meet the customers on their buying journey.

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