

Is this the perfect sales team?

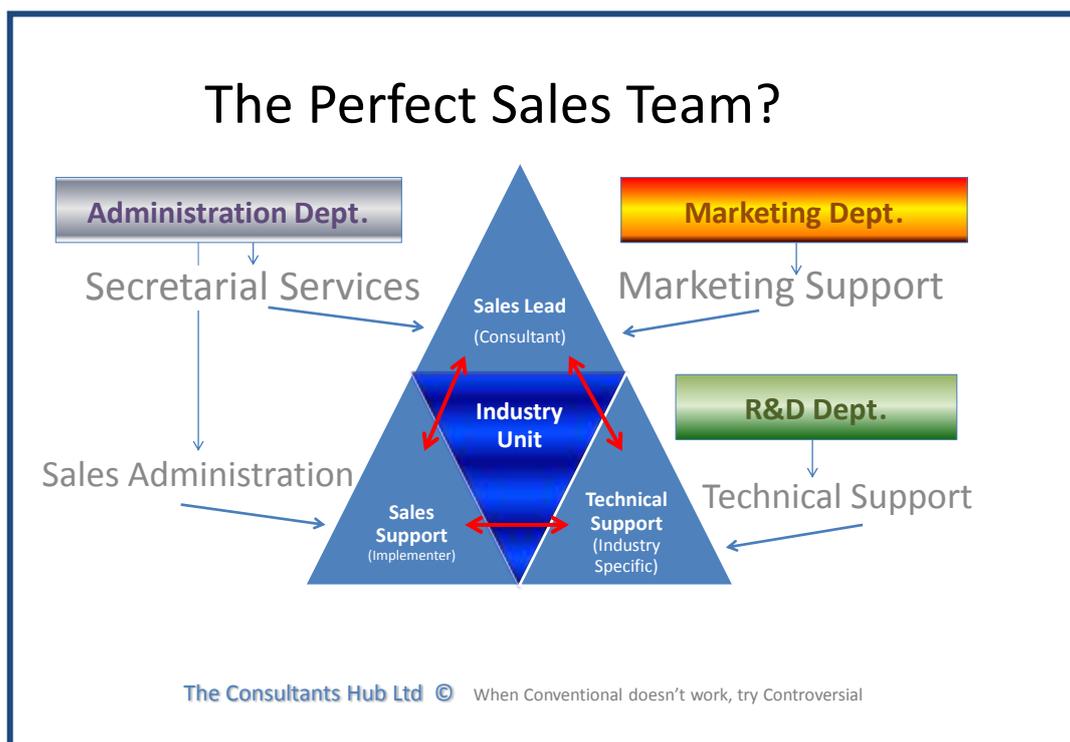
In a company that sells to different market sectors, it's important to understand those markets in depth before you try to sell anything to them. If you don't know your market, it will not accept you as a supplier.

That means that your sales teams need to be split into specialist market sector groups. The groups are made up of a Lead or Consultant who has spent time within that market sector, either as a specialist supplier or as a strategic figure within the sector itself. The second sales person is the Implementer, who follows up the Lead and performs some pre-sales activity to adjust the proposition to the client. He then project manages the implementation alongside the Technical specialist. All three understand the market sector and the solution, its benefits and how it compares with the existing solution and competitors' propositions.

These three individuals work closely together to satisfy the need, show how the solution is solving the now problem together with the sustainable effects down the line; thus locking in the client to the solution and preparing the client for cross- and up-selling in the future.

The Lead Consultant has then got the opportunity to reference first hand case studies and introduce clients to each other to reinforce the story. Freeing up the Lead for key account management activities is seen as the most important aspect of this configuration.

Many major accounts are lost because the Key Account Manager doesn't have the immediate backup of his own team, to help him concentrate on winning new business at a strategic level. The consequence of this is a dip in sales while the KAM implements the last sale, or prospects for the next. With this configuration – what I call the Tri-Sales Team – not only does it provide that important 'free space' for the Lead to secure new contacts, but it ensures that the implementation is solid (from Sales Support) and that the on-going support is personal (from Technical Support).



As an example take CAD sales:

There are many uses for CAD: the built environment, draughting, and engineering are just three. Take an insider from the architects and teach him the product, business strategy and negotiation skills – he is already using the language of architects. Take a CAD specialist salesman and teach him about what architects say in their common language. Take an R&D technical support person and teach them what architects use in their work and how the CAD package can help them reduce tedious repetitive tasks; how it integrates with their document management system and so on.

The teacher is the Lead Consultant so this activity is kept in-house. Each one of the team is not only an asset to the sales process but also to the buying process. The result is that the client is buying not just a product but also a consultancy group that can help to expand his business.

Repeat the above for draughting, engineering and any other markets that you want to enter and you have a perfect foil for expanding your CAD sales into any industry.

This platform or framework can work with any product or service as long as you don't stint on the functions of Sales Support and Technical Support. Start sharing these resources amongst other specialist teams and you dilute the impact of the specialisation.

Information and other resources such as secretarial administration, technical assistance or database administration – to help set up demonstrations and events like seminars and exhibitions – can be provided from other departments such as Admin., Marketing and R&D.

This model works in all industries whether you are selling services or products to the private sector, public sector or NGOs.

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