

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT UNIT BUNDLE

COMPETENCY: Prospecting

SECTION: Sales Planning

PDU VALUE: 1.5 PDUS

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Sales Call Planning: What to Know Before Every Sales Call
- Understanding Five Top Tips to Improve Your Sales Planning
- Creating A Powerful Sales Plan
- How to Plan Your Sales Week
- 30, 60 and 90 Day Sales Planning
- Sales Activity Allocation Template
- Planning for Key Accounts



Why do Professional Development Unit (PDU) Bundles exist?

Whether you're maintaining your CPSA Designation, or wishing to develop your skills in sales, our PDU Bundles are made to strengthen and reinforce the skills you need to help reach new heights in your career.

Maintaining your designation gives evidence of your commitment to the principle of lifelong learning and ensures that your professional sales skills are developed as markets, customers, and innovative technologies evolve.

As the holder of a professional sales designation, you are required to meet the annual Professional Development Units (PDU) requirement. This process ensures that you are up-to-date on the most current issues and practices in sales.

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN FROM THIS PDU BUNDLE:

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SECTION 1:

SALES CALL PREP

Material:

Sales Call Planning: What to Know Before Every Sales Call

A good part of business development success is, as some say, just showing up. But show up prepared and success is what you will get.

We acknowledge that sometimes you do just show up (or—hallelujah—a prospect calls you out of the blue) and you haven't done any preparation for the sales call. It's reasonable to suggest that on occasion sales calls are appropriately deemed 'exploratory discussions'; the kind of discussion in which we just talk and 'see where it goes'.

Take this approach in every business development situation, however, and you'll lose your share of sales that you should have won. Interestingly, whether you have a two thousand or a two million dollar price point, to increase your odds of winning new clients you still need to do the same basic planning and know the same essential information before your sales calls.

Here are six sales call planning questions you can answer for yourself before every sales call that will help prepare you for business development success:

1. What is the prospect's current situation? Ask this question to give yourself the lay of the land. Often your goals for the client, the value your services can offer the client, and your action planning for the rest of the sales call come out of your detailed knowledge of the prospect's situation.

If you find that you don't know enough about the situation yet, ask yourself what research you can do before meeting with the client so you can

- 1) move quickly through tactical situational discovery that can become tedious or bore a client, and
- 2) demonstrate to them that you are the type of professional that does his homework and goes the extra mile to make sure the client gets the most value out of each contact with you.

2. What are my business development goals for this client or prospective client? Different goals for your clients will make for very different sales conversations.

Questions you can ask yourself will include:

- Is this the 'discovery' meeting where we get to know each other and build rapport while learning how I might be able to help them?
- Is this a current client to whom I am introducing a new set of services?
- Am I reviewing the results from the previous year with a client and this is the meeting where I 'resell' my value so the client stays loyal?
- Am I looking to cross sell or upsell currently available services because I see where these services can add value?
- Am I trying to supplant a competitor?
- Is this a current client where I work in one of their divisions and I would like to get introductions into the other three divisions where I can also help?
- Is this a prospect with so much potential that I willing travel on my nickel to five cities to visit their branch outlets, their competitors, and put together a presentation and value proposition so compelling they are wowed like they've never been wowed and resolve to work with me on the spot?

I am sure you can add to this list depending upon your own situation. Whatever your business development goals for this prospect or client are, make certain you are as clear as you can be about those goals before you enter the actual meeting.

3. What is my desired next outcome? Sounds simple enough, but this question is so often overlooked by professionals before they meet with clients or prospects. Our advice: if you don't know what you want to get out of your meeting with them, don't get out of the (proverbial) car (credit to Mack Hannan and his book *If You Don't Have a Plan, Stay in the Car*).

Just make sure you start your sales call planning process early enough. Sometimes you need time to investigate just what your desired next outcome should be.

4. What are my relative strengths? In every sales situation various forces are working in your favor. Know what these forces are for this particular client or prospect situation so you can leverage them to help make the client more successful. This will give you increased odds of winning the client.

The more specific you can be for the particular situation, the better. Sure, it might be a general advantage that you are a well known expert in your field with a good reputation, but it's a better advantage to know who you are selling against (if anyone), whether or not you and the potential client went to the same graduate school, whether you've been particularly successful in this industry vs. your competitor, or any other specifics that might be working in your favor.

5. What are my relative vulnerabilities? This is the corollary to number four above. Maybe you have less experience than the competition. Maybe another company is the incumbent service provider and you are the challenger. Knowing what your relative vulnerabilities are will allow you to prepare in advance to either turn them into advantages or at least diminish them as vulnerabilities.

For example, maybe the other company has more experience in the industry, their reputation is quite good, and they've been doing this forever. You can say, "Yes, they do have a lot of experience in the industry as this is their only focus. Because our focus is broader, we bring knowledge from outside the industry that has really been valuable to our other clients. Did you know that in the ABC industry they designed their divisions like this last year and got a 7 per cent cost savings on average when they tried it? The data source? It's from the objective research of the ABC Industry Association. Maybe it will apply to your company. We can look into it together, if you like."

With good preparation and call planning you can have your responses to 'objections' and tough questions at the ready when you need them.

Author: Mike Schultz and John Doerr

6. What actions do I need to take before the next call? We all have to-do lists that help us get done what

weneed to get done. By taking the time to answer questions 1 through 5, your business development and sales call planning to do list will be as good as it possibly can be because your actions will be:

Informed by the knowledge of your client's situation

Guided by your goals for the client from a business development perspective

Built to help you achieve your desired outcomes

Planned with the knowledge of your relative strengths and vulnerabilities in this particular business development situation

Maybe for Woody Allen 80% of success in life is just showing up. But the most successful business developers we've seen over the years show up...prepared.

SECTION 2:

GOAL SETTING FOR SALES PLANS

Material:

Five Top Tips to Improve Your Sales
Planning

As Benjamin Franklin once said “by failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail”. Planning is a critical part of business success. Today, businesses are rising and falling more rapidly than ever before and technology is shifting and changing the workforce; missteps could result in disaster. In this environment, planning is even more important, but it needs to be done properly. Find out how to improve your sales planning and drive success at your organization.

1. Break your Sales Target into Smaller Goals

Working toward one huge goal can be overwhelming. Instead of focusing on one massive year-end target, break it up into smaller goals. Look at your business model and sales cycle and determine smaller, achievable goals that you can work towards on a weekly or monthly basis to successfully reach your larger target.

2. Work on the Basics

Planning isn't just about setting numbers for targets, sales funnels and conversion rates. It is also about being prepared to meet these numbers, and in order to do this you need have the right skills. Training and development on activities like prospecting and objection handling will ensure that your team is up to the task of closing sales and reaching those numbers.

3. Plan Your Time

It is easy to get caught up in day-to-day tasks, leaving the important work that really drives results to get done hastily. Improve your planning by ensuring that your team is spending time on the right activities. If your sales team needs to renew contracts with existing customers, for instance, you need to ensure that they are spending their time on building relationships with their contacts at these organizations. Allocate time in their schedules and encourage them to block off dedicated time for the activities needed to deliver their results.

4. Test New Approaches

Creativity and innovation don't sound like they go hand-in-hand with planning, but, in fact, they do. If you want to improve your sales results, allocate budget for testing new approaches and projects. Some of these tests will fail, but others will succeed. You will never know which tests are going to work until you execute them, but if you plan for them you will gain invaluable knowledge which will enable you to incorporate new, effective channels into your regular sales activities.

5. Measure and Learn from Data

Most leaders are convinced that measurement is important and data should be used to guide decision making. However, not all leaders allocate enough time and resources to gather insights from their data and make changes based on these learnings. Using data to improve your sales planning requires more than implementing a CRM system or having an analyst pull reports on various sales metrics. It requires looking for deeper insights that can lead to problem solving, and it requires a willingness to change based on the findings. Don't just collect data; improve your planning by learning from it.

SECTION 3:

SALES PLAN EFFECTIVENES

Material:

Creating A Powerful Sales
Plan

Author: David Khale

You should address the CTM opportunities, regardless of where they occur. CTM stands for Closest to the Money. Analyze and prioritize your efforts related to those opportunities within your territory that are closest to the money. What are you going to do to bring each of them to fruition? Specify each, the dollar amount of the opportunity, and what your actions should be.

Identify Specific Actions

Your company may have certain key products or product lines that it wants to emphasize. If so, you'll need to analyze and prioritize your efforts regarding those product lines. What will you do this month to increase sales of those product lines? What specific actions will you take, in which specific accounts?

Finally, what will you do this month to improve yourself? What classes or seminars will you attend? What books will you read? To which CDs will you listen?

Note that all of this addresses not every action you will take, but rather the most effective actions. You can note these things on a page or two.

Don't think that you can keep all this in your head, and skip the discipline of writing it down. Writing each specific action and strategy down, whether it's on a yellow pad or a computer document, forces precise thinking. The written word also commits you to a degree much deeper than if you keep the idea locked in your head.

After you have completed this monthly sales plan, it's time to schedule your time. Lay out a plan for each day for the next 30 days. Where will you plan to be, and who will you plan to see? Reflect first your priorities from your monthly plan. Then fill in the nonpriority calls.

You and I both know that your days will rarely go according to plan. However, without a plan, you will have totally given up the ability to control and manage your time. By having a plan you have something to fall back on, something to refer to, some benchmark by which to measure the constant and urgent demands on your time.

So, there is an annual component to your sales plan, as well as a monthly discipline. But you are not finished yet.

Make Weekly Adjustments

You need to reorganize and recommit to your monthly time and territory plan each week. Adjust your plan based on what actually happened the previous week. For example, if you didn't get to see an A account that you had planned on seeing, can you see them this week instead? Make your adjustments each week.

Finally, you need to plan each sales call. What do you want to accomplish in each call? What do you need to prepare in order to accomplish it? Again, you'll be more focused and more committed if you write down a specific outcome that you would like to achieve in each sales call. Keep in mind that sales is a process, consisting of a series of steps that the buyer and seller take to come to a good decision. Your planned outcomes should be narrow and specific. Something like: "Acquire the information I need in order to structure a proposal," instead of "Sell this account."

Author: David Khale

The creation of a sales plan, as you can see, is not a simple, one-time event. Rather it is a discipline that involves a commitment of time and thoughtfulness at specific intervals in the year.

It is also not just an administrative requirement, but a powerful tool that enables a professional salesperson to consistently make good decisions about the most important question he/she faces: Where to go, and what to do?

SECTION 4:

WEEKLY SALES PLANNING

Material:

Five Top Tips to Improve Your Sales Planning

Author: Anthony Iarino

You have three choices when it comes to starting your week.

Begin With Your Existing Opportunities

You can start the week in your existing pipeline, either working forward or backwards. If you decide to work backwards, you start at the opportunities that are closest to the end of the sales process and gain the necessary commitment to move those opportunities forward. Maybe that's a phone call. Maybe it's an email. Or maybe you need a meeting. From there you work backwards to the opportunities at the early stages of your process. This is a good choice because it ensures you've taken action on everything that can and should be moving forward.

You might start with the opportunities at the earliest stages of your sales process, gaining the commitments to move each of those forward before you do anything else. As you move each opportunity forward, gaining commitments as you go, you work towards the opportunities that should be closing soon. There is nothing wrong with this approach, and it ensures you move the early stage opportunities forward.

Begin By Creating New Opportunities Within Your Existing Clients

Another choice you might make is to work on your existing clients to create new opportunities. If there are clients for whom you do not have 100% wallet share, and there is greater value you can create, this is a great place to start. Starting here ensures that you create easy opportunities. You already have the relationships, and you already have the contracts.

Begin By Prospecting and Nurturing Your Dream Clients

But the final choice is to begin your week focused on your dream clients. These prospective clients are cold. You don't have any existing opportunities, and you don't have deep relationships yet. By focusing on prospecting first, you ensure that it gets done.

By choosing either of the first two choices, starting with your existing pipeline or existing clients, you can easily get tied down in all of the activities around those opportunities. If you're being honest, you know it's unlikely that you'll make time for your dream clients once you start pursuing your existing opportunities and existing clients. Carving out a half a day of prospecting early in the week ensures it gets done, even though I know many salespeople who swear by Thursday's and Friday's.

SECTION 5:

LONG TERM SALES PLANNING

Material:

Five Top Tips to Improve Your Sales Planning

Author: Canadian Professional Sales Association

As a profession, the sales industry is known for its high turnover rate. Consequently, preplanning for every step of the hiring and training process is an integral component to ensuring you're investing in top performing sellers. Not only do organizations need to assimilate new hires into their team culture, but they also need to plan a process of integration that enables employees to develop a thorough understanding of how to effectively market and sell their products and services.

Consider breaking up your sales coaching and training schedule with a 30, 60 and 90 day planning approach, which provides a vantage point of how new hires engage with your team and as well as grow with the feedback and training you provide.

30 Days

Once a new salesperson joins the team, it is essential to set them on a track towards quick learning. The best way to accomplish this is by having an ongoing knowledge base where questions can be asked and answers recorded. This prevents redundancy and centralizes common questions. They will also get a feel for the company culture and challenges. Ensuring your new hire is integrated into the sales team culture will aid in building internal relationships, thus and confident.making it easier for them to feel comfortable

Additionally, it is important to provide thorough training on your CRM system, as well as how to manage leads and deals. How you capture information and follow up with customers' must be thoroughly explained, so they can build off the selling techniques that work for your particular goods and services.

Ultimately, the first 30 days is a key opportunity for new hires to learn the systems you have in place. Planning for the first month allows employees to get familiar with how to access key resources as well how to integrate into the pre-existing sales team culture.

60 Days

After the first 30 days, new hires will ideally have an increased level of comfort and confidence in handling your organizations systems, as well as a heightened understanding of how to work with customers and close deals. The next 30 days is a great time to push the training boundaries further.

Use this time to encourage and monitor calls and emails with prospects and clients. Hold individual and team training sessions where you highlight what members of your team are doing well, as well as how they can improve. Holding team training sessions allows for new hires to feel as though they are part of a unified team and will enable them to learn from the mistakes and triumphs of their co-workers.

To help build confidence, look at the sales pipeline and provide several opportunities for engagement by assigning tasks for follow up. Additionally, your new salesperson can work on upselling opportunities with current clients by spending time following up on their satisfaction with current services. As well, this creates an opportunity for new hires to seek referrals from existing clients, which acts as a leverage for additional training as well as increasing revenue opportunities.

90 Days

Now that your new employee has been given the tools, resources and selling opportunities they require, you can challenge them towards initiative. They should prospect and find their own accounts after 90 days. You can monitor their activities and see how they approach relationship building, whether that is through cold calling or inbound prospect inquiries. Work closely with your employee on creative ways to build trust and gain attention from prospects.

The 90 day mark is also a good time to start applying sales goals and quotas. Starting your new hires at a lower quota than veteran salespeople, will not only add momentum and build confidence, but will act as a great base for setting goals. You can use the following months to gradually increase sales quotas.

Lastly, the 90 day mark opens up new opportunities for you to grow as a sales manager and learn how your training techniques have impacted their ability to grow within the team. Ensure you get an understanding of what they have learned as a newcomer, so you can not only get a fresh perspective on your industry, but have a better grasp on how your sales management techniques impact the overall effectiveness of your team.

SECTION 6:

SALES ACTIVITY PLANNING

Material:

SALES ACTIVITY ALLOCATION TEMPLATE

PURPOSE: Planning is key to success in sales. Use this template to plan your weekly schedule and ensure your activities are proactive, and your time is productively allocated.

There are approximately 2000 working hours, and 1200 selling hours in a year. How will you allocate your sale activities to maximize your working and selling hours?

INSTRUCTIONS: Complete the following table with your each sales activity, and time spent to to plan your time best.

[Watch this video](#) for "6 Steps to Planning Your Sales Week".

ACTIVITY	CURRENT # OF HOURS & TIME %		IDEAL # OF HOURS & TIME %	
Account Management/Meet with existing clients	hrs.	%	hrs.	%
New Business Development/Prospecting	hrs.	%	hrs.	%
Planning and Analysis	hrs.	%	hrs.	%
Administration and Paperwork	hrs.	%	hrs.	%
Travel Time	hrs.	%	hrs.	%
What else?	hrs.	%	hrs.	%
What else?	hrs.	%	hrs.	%

Need Tips to Improve your Sales Planning? **Read this article.**

SECTION 7:

KEY ACCOUNT PLANNING

Material:

KEY ACCOUNT PLAN TEMPLATE

INSTRUCTIONS: Document a pro-active strategic account plan for each of your key accounts by applying the 4-step account management process. This plan will enable you to strategize, plan and execute by identifying all Fundamentals of Selling concepts to effectively grow this key account with the key decision makers.

ARTICLE: 5 Steps to Great Account Management

Strategic Plan for: _____



1. ACCOUNT SNAPSHOT:

Key Account HQ and location:

What is their mission statement?

This year's Revenue Goal for this account is: \$

What are you selling to this account?

What else can you cross-sell or up-sell to this account?

2. CONDUCT A LOCAL ANALYSIS: Decision Makers & Influencers

Role	Contact Name & Position	Decision Making Criteria - What's important to them?	Your Strategy/Purpose to Meet with them
The Final Authority			
Users			
Advisor			
Coach(s)			

3. DEVISE A STRATEGIC ACCOUNT PLAN: S-Specific M-Measurable A-Achievable R-Relevant T-Time Bound

Opportunity – Apply SMART Criteria	Last Year Revenue – Actual	This Year Goal – Increase	Probability Factor

Activity to Achieve Goal & Strategy – Apply SMART Criteria	Timeline

Account ROTI

$$\text{Return On Time Invested (R. O. T. I.)} = \frac{\text{Expected Gross Profit (EGP)}}{\text{Time (T) required to capture EGP}}$$

How much time do you spend on this account weekly, monthly and throughout the year?

How could you better yield your time & revenue on this account?

Challenges / Considerations to Grow this Account

-
-
-
-

Key Questions for this Account

When you meet with this account, what are the good and great questions you will ask to better understand this account's business direction and goals to explore new opportunities?

-
-
-
-

4. ACT: Implement the plan. What will you do in the next 90 days with this account?

Prospecting - Sales Planning

Prospecting Challenge: Become a Sales Planning Expert

Instructions: Now that you have completed reading the articles, apply your knowledge and expertise by answering the following questions.

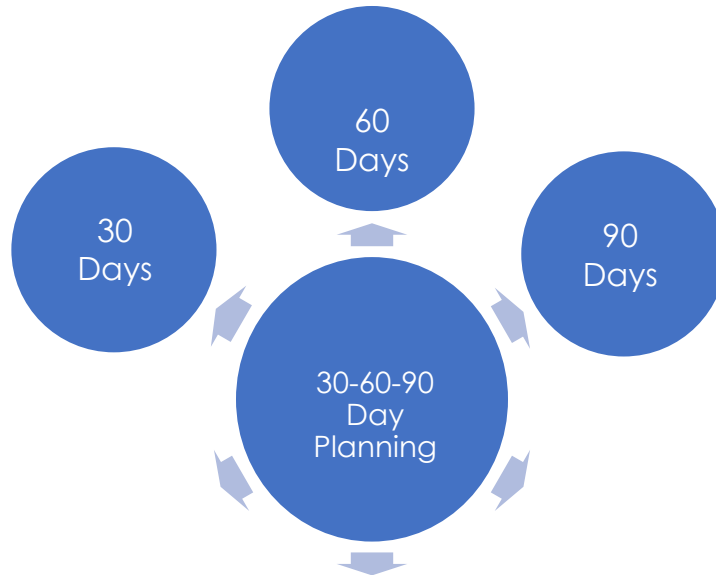
1. Which is not one of the sales calling questions you should ask yourself before every sales call to help you prep for business development success?
 - a. What is the prospect's current situation?
 - b. What are my BD goals for this client?
 - c. How much time should I spend on this call?
 - d. What actions do I need to take before the next call?
2. Which is not a choice you have when you are planning to start your week?
 - a. Begin by using you colleagues opportunities
 - b. Begin with using your existing opportunities
 - c. Begin by creating new opportunities within your exisiting clients
 - d. Begin by prospecting and nurturing dream clients
3. Name four of the five top tips to improve your sales planning as suggested by Jim Domanski and explain how you could put each tip into action.

Sales Planning Tips	Example of How I Could Use it
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

Which of the five are you likely to NOT use? What steps can you take to improve your skills in this area?

Answer Key: 1. c, 2. a, 3. a) break sales targets into smaller goals, b) work on the basics c) Plan your time d) Test New Approaches e) Measure and learn from data

4. Outline the key actions for 30-60-90 day Sales Planning.



5. Analyze and prioritize your efforts related to those opportunities within your territory that are closest to the money. What are you going to do to bring each of them to fruition? Specify each, the dollar amount of the opportunity, and what your actions should be.

Congratulations,
You've just earned
1.5 PDUs!
Track your PDUs [here](#).