

# Sales enablement: the secret weapon that will help you smash sales targets and your competition

4-min read



It may be an understatement to say that there's currently more pressure on sales teams than ever before. Every call, every pitch, every proposal has to count in a highly challenging and competitive environment.

As a sales leader, you must be able to get the best out of your team by providing them with the resources they need to maximise their potential.

This is where you can leverage a sales enablement programme, i.e., content and training set up to deliver practical tools and skills. An effective enablement programme ensures your sales team have every resource they require, at every stage of the sales cycle, to get more deals over the line.

In addition to a measurable increase in sales, there are other benefits to be gained too. A well-structured programme has been shown to help team members develop a more positive mindset, eliminate unproductive habits, and inspire calmness under pressure.

Despite all these points in favour, however, a recent webinar poll revealed that just 42% of organisations have a formalised sales enablement process in place.

Here, let's take a look at:

- Why sales enablement is so critical to meeting and exceeding sales targets regardless of the economic environment.
- Mistakes to avoid to ensure you create a system that will genuinely improve your sales team's performance.
- The sales uplift that can be achieved with a well-executed sales enablement programme.

## What is sales enablement and why is it integral to improving sales performance?

The entire purpose of sales enablement is to make salespeople's lives easier, giving your team access to the right support at the right time in the business development process.

This may look like, for example, video content on advanced negotiation techniques that your team can access if they're up against a particularly bullish procurement department.

For the best results, a sales enablement programme should involve a mix of content that can be accessed on demand, as well as regular group and individual training. It should be approached as a continuous process as opposed to one-off training “events”.

Of course, the size of your organisation and the resources available will dictate how extensive your programme is.

However, even the most established and well-funded organisations don't always get the process right. Those who do benefit from significant improvements in their sales figures.

## Why do so many sales enablement programmes deliver poor ROI?

The success of a sales enablement programme depends on how accessible it is. This covers everything from the platform used to host the content and the language and tone of the material, to its relevance to your specific industry and how it is delivered.

Even within a single organisation, content and delivery may need to be tailored for different regions. The language and delivery used for a US sales team may not be entirely appropriate for those operating in MENA territories, for example. Overall, enablement programmes need to be highly relevant, easily accessible and delivered in language that will engage **your** sales team.

In the words of Steve Pegler, Senior Manager Sales Enablement for cybersecurity provider Sophos, with whom we've partnered on a number of projects:

“If it's not simple and easy to use and doesn't add value, then it's not going to be used.”

A vital part of the process is defining the competencies that people should be measured against, mapping across the different stages of the sales cycle. It's necessary to have input from all the stakeholders – those who have oversight and sign-off and, crucially, those for whom the programme is designed.

Often, financial and other resources are wasted because a sales enablement programme is created by individuals who think they know what the issues are but haven't actually been at the coalface for some time. Both accessibility and adoption are improved when those who are in the field, who know where support is most required, are invited to co-own the content.

That content then needs to be complex enough to provide support for the myriad of situations that arise in a sales cycle, but not so complex that team members are unable to find the relevant resources when they need them.

## What return can you expect on a well-executed sales enablement programme?

An effective sales enablement programme can help improve your sales team's overall confidence and wellbeing. This is great for morale but, at the end of the day, it's the impact on sales figures and the bottom line that really counts.

Working with SBR on their sales enablement process, Sophos realised that the renewals team weren't maximising cross-selling opportunities. With the right support, Sophos' renewals team increased sales by 11%.

As well as generating income by improving technical skills, the right programme can also deliver huge savings by speeding up the sales cycle. Often, deals can be held up because the sales team need to get input from the legal or technical teams. These may be very minor points that take days if not weeks to answer.

Answers that could have been found within minutes through accessible sales enablement content.

Reducing these bottlenecks can have a substantial cumulative effect, improving deal flow in some cases in excess of £1m.

To discover more about enabling your sales team, [let's talk growth](#).