



SALES COACHING

Integrity Solutions Research Brief

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Coaching is one of the hottest topics in business today, and for good reason. Many organizations have come to learn that it's critical for building skills and capacity. In fact, coaching is often cited as one of the top levers at hand for improving performance and driving growth. What's more, coaching is an important tool for developing excellence with sales teams.

So, why is coaching so often ignored, practiced unevenly, misunderstood or poorly executed?

Here's what we know: Despite high levels of awareness that they should be doing it, the vast majority of sales managers don't coach—or don't

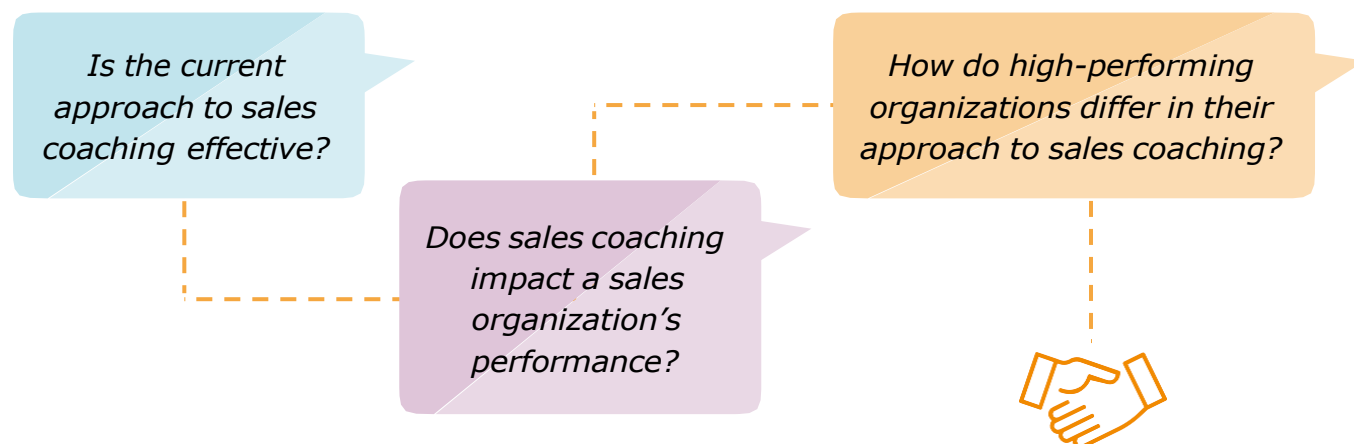
do it well. Managers today spend most of their time managing processes, not developing their people. Forecasts, spreadsheets, CRM reports and territory reviews can find a way to dominate their calendars. By contrast, those who do coach, and especially managers who are effective at it and coach consistently, see measurable performance increases with their teams.

However, there's a critical paradox around coaching: It boosts performance, many sales leaders know that it's important—and yet, despite this awareness, many still don't place a priority on coaching.

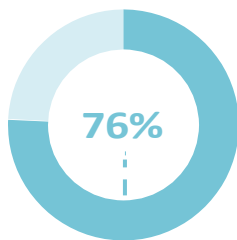
Why is that?

Integrity Solutions partnered with the Sales Management Association in a survey of over 200 sales leaders at 193 organizations to learn what lies at the heart of this dilemma.

Our research looks to answer these important questions:



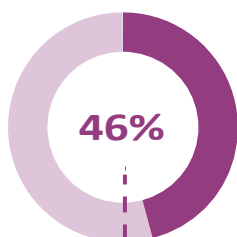
DATA FAST FACTS



agree that coaching is important, but the same number (76%) also believe too little (and in some cases no) coaching is being provided.



The amount of time spent on coaching matters to sales performance, more so than the effectiveness of coaching. Firms coaching 9 or more hours per manager per week—regardless of coaching effectiveness or quality—realize 12.6% better sales performance compared to firms coaching less than 2.5 hours per manager per week.

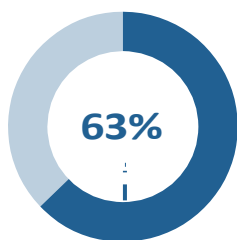


believe their sales organization is effective at coaching and developing salespeople.

However, there is a 15% gap in sales revenue achievement between firms that are effective at coaching their salespeople vs. those that are ineffective.



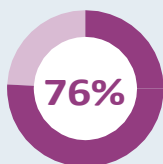
Several other interesting differences emerged between high-performing (“leaders”) and low-performing organizations (“laggards”) in attaining their sales objectives. For example, simply providing coaching for sales managers (i.e., “coaching the coaches”) accounted for a 23% gap in variance in terms of firm sales objective achievement.



of companies have no agreed-upon definition of coaching. They let their managers determine what coaching is. In no other role or function would this level of inconsistency be permitted. The lack of understanding of what good coaching means undermines performance.

KEY RESEARCH FINDINGS

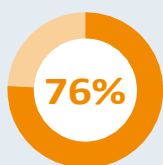
Coaching Drives Stronger Results



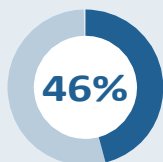
Most firms—76%—say coaching is a critical driver of success.



But Most Sales Leaders Fall Short



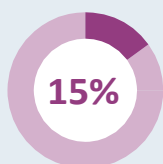
Don't coach enough: 76% of those surveyed say they do too little or none at all.



Don't do it well: Only 46% believe their coaching is effective.



The Result



The revenue performance achievement gap between leading firms effective at coaching and lagging firms seen as ineffective at coaching.

Why the Gap?

Reasons people don't coach:

- **No consistent view of coaching:** If you ask managers, "Are you coaching?" they may say *yes* or *no*—but *yes* or *no* to what? What's their definition of coaching? Only a quarter of those surveyed have a common definition of coaching. Three quarters of the organizations leave it up to managers to figure out what coaching means. That's a huge risk. As a manager, I might think that I am coaching by managing how people are handling calls or managing specific deals when those are only small pieces of a more robust approach to coaching.
- **No time:** Time is the biggest reason managers say they don't coach: "I'd love to coach, but I'm way too busy." In some cases, a manager's workload is definitely an obstacle. In other cases, managers may quietly hint that they lack the confidence, self-belief and skills to effectively coach, especially their most senior, successful salespeople. Spending time doing reporting and other management activities is much less risky and more in a manager's comfort zone. "No time" becomes the *respectable* reason why coaching doesn't happen. Ironically, coaching ultimately frees up managers' time by providing sales teams with the motivation and confidence to handle new and varied situations. Smart managers invest time up front to yield massive dividends on the back-end.
- **No confidence:** 55% of managers report that they've never had any training in coaching.

FINAL THOUGHTS

In closing, let's definitively answer our research questions:

Is the current approach to sales coaching effective?

Overall, most organizations report that they provide too little, if any, coaching.



Absolutely! No matter the measure—whether it's the effectiveness of sales coaching or simply the sheer amount of time spent coaching—there are clear correlations between sales coaching and achievement of sales objectives.

Does sales coaching impact a sales organization's performance?

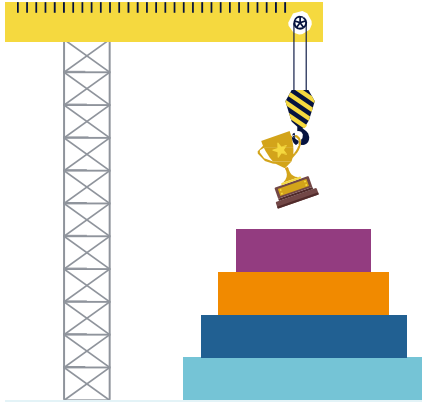


How do high-performing organizations differ in their approach to sales coaching?

The data tells us: Coach your salespeople. Coach them early and often. Coach your top performers. Focus on your team's will (motivation) as much if not more than their skill. Don't forget to coach your coaches (your managers)!

But it's not enough just to ask sales managers to coach more. For truly optimal results, consider how coaching fits in a structured, defined approach to talent management. For example, we saw a 9% performance gap between high and low performers when management is judged and rewarded based on success in developing salespeople.





ABOUT INTEGRITY SOLUTIONS

Integrity Solutions, the performance experts, equips sales teams to rise up and lead by building trusted customer relationships with integrity at their core. As the partner of choice for values-driven organizations, the firm specializes in innovative sales, service and coaching training solutions that fuel performance, grow talent, lift up customers and elevate leaders. Our experience spans over 50 years, 130 countries and industries including healthcare, financial services, manufacturing, energy and utilities, agriculture and more. Integrity was most recently recognized with multiple Stevie Awards for sales training excellence in 2020 and 2019 and as a 2019 Top 20 Sales Training Company by Selling Power and Training Industry.

Visit us online to learn more about our unique approach: [IntegritySolutions.com](https://www.integritysolutions.com)



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