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Sales Management

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- Reach your fullest potential in sales management
- Effectively inspire great performance from any sales force
- Prospect, recruit, and increase your organization's income and success

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Introduction

“I’d like you to consider taking over as Vice President of Sales.” I can still hear those words ringing in my ears more than 20 years after they were uttered by the man who is my mentor to this day.

At the time, he was president of the company and had called me into his office one afternoon in early 1995. Was I in trouble? Had I done something wrong? He and I had a great relationship, but a closed-door, spur-of-the-moment meeting was a bit strange.

“Uh, I’m not sure ... are you ...” I stuttered and stammered for a few moments trying to let what I had just heard sink in. “I’m not bucking for a promotion right now,” I can remember managing to get out through the hemming and hawing.

“I realize that. But, I want you to take over the entire sales department.”

I’d be lying if I said this wasn’t my goal, but now? I hadn’t even been with the company for a decade yet and had entered below the lowest rung on the ladder. In fact, I couldn’t even see the ladder. I got promoted twice before I found the ladder. I’d only been a division sales manager for a few years at the time.

Being a vice president was part of my goal, but not necessarily this fast.

The tone of his voice let me know this was a bit more than a request — it was a challenge. It was time to get in the game or shrink back to the bench. “I’m really not trying to take anyone else’s job, I’m just trying to do the best I can as a division sales manager.”

His next words let me know it was now or never: “If you don’t do this, I’m going to have to hire someone else who will.” And so began my career in sales management.

I inherited an entire sales department of more than 25 people, most of whom had been with the company or in the industry a lot longer than I had. I took over with no direction, no roadmap, no instruction book, and really no past experience to draw from. To say I was flying blind is an understatement.

If I was going to learn to be a leader, I was going to have to go with gut instinct and make it up as I went. I didn’t have a fall-back plan and failure wasn’t an option. I’d been hired at 21, been made division sales manager at 25, and now, at not even 30, I was being handed the job of managing a sales department generating about \$75 million a year in sales.

“Do you think I’m ready?” I asked.

“If I didn’t, we wouldn’t be having this conversation.”

I took the job. And through a lot of missteps, mistakes, and complete meltdowns, grew that company to more than a quarter-of-a-billion dollars a year in sales before acquiring controlling interest in the company with a business partner just five short years later.

I always wished I had a book in which to look things up. Now, I give you what I never had.

About This Book

You’re holding the book I always wished I had. In it you’ll find real-world experience drawn from many years (more than I care to remember) and even more mistakes while I was suffering through a lot of OJT. (For those of you new

to the world of management, OJT stands for On the Job Training.)

This book truly is my gift to you: my experiences, lessons learned, and all the broken bones and skinned knees of learning to manage a sales team laid bare. I won't tell you this book will keep you from making any mistakes — we both know it won't. But, it can help you learn from the ones I made and minimize the ones you have to experience firsthand.

Throughout the book I use real-world stories and situations I believe you can relate to. I use a lot of sports analogies because I think a sports coach is as close to a sales manager as you can get. The two share similar philosophies, goals, and ideals.

Some of the examples I use may describe the exact situation you face, and you can see how I handled it — and whether that was the right call. Spoiler alert: it wasn't close!

If you're like most managers, you've said to yourself more than once, "I'll bet this never happened to anybody else." Well, yeah, it did. It happens to everyone. All that stuff you think is exclusive to you isn't.

All sales managers go through similar if not identical situations. And all sales managers tend to think they're the only one who has to deal with their particular issues. Just wait until you go to a trade show or industry function and talk to other managers — you'll come home thinking, "Wow, I'm glad I'm not that guy!"

I attempt to paint you a picture of the world of sales management, and that picture isn't always pretty. There are ups and downs, highs and lows — but I can say without hesitation I have never wanted to do anything else. You represent the greatest profession on earth.

Unfortunately, there is a low barrier of entry into sales and it seems as if anyone thinks he can just “go be a salesman.”

As you probably know, it takes a strong, disciplined, creative sales manager to make things work. Anyone can call himself a salesperson, but that doesn't make him a professional salesperson. That's where you come in. You're the reason I wrote this book — so you can help me create more professional salespeople in this world. That's what I ask of you in exchange for all these years of knowledge and experience: Help me produce more *professional* salespeople in this world.

I use the term salesperson throughout the book. Let me say upfront that I've found that great salespeople and duds come in both genders. I alternate pronouns with each chapter: even-numbered chapters use female pronouns and males get the odd-numbered chapters.

Although my experience was primarily in business-to-business sales, I worked hard to include those of you in retail sales and other business-to-consumer organizations. From automobiles to ... to ... well, something that starts with a z, I try to include everyone.

Also, this book isn't written just for those who are managing world-wide teams doing hundreds of millions of dollars in sales. You can certainly benefit, if that describes you, but my advice is also applicable to managers whose sales team consists of herself and a part-timer. Hey, you have to start somewhere.

Within this book, you may note that some web addresses break across two lines of text. If you're reading this book in print and want to visit one of these web pages, simply key in the web address exactly as it's noted in the text, pretending as though the line break doesn't exist. If

you're reading this as an e-book, you've got it easy — just click the web address to be taken directly to the web page.

Foolish Assumptions

Any time an author writes a book, they have to make certain assumptions about the reader — and I did. My first assumption is you're a sales manager (or you're about to become one) who wants to improve your performance and the performance of your sales team. I assume you understand the sales process and the role you — the sales manager play in it. But, perhaps my biggest assumption is that you know there are things you don't know. You understand there are things you still have to learn, questions you need answered and a guiding light through some tough situations.

If that sounds like you — I'm glad we met.

Icons Used in This Book

Throughout this book, I use certain icons to call your attention to specific text. These are the places where your highlighter generally comes into use. Here's what they each mean:



This is a tip from me to you. This entire book is filled with useful information, but there are times I want you to be aware of a certain passage. These little tips are your chance to learn from my experience.



Again, I hope you find the entire book memorable. Heck, I want you to highlight the whole thing. But, when you see this icon, pay close attention. Whether you need it now or not, this denotes something I believe is worth filing in your mental bank.



Pay special attention when you see this one; it's called "Warning" for a reason. These will save you time, money, embarrassment, and heartache. I know from experience.



I use this icon for situations and passages of text where you may think you know the answer, but I want to make sure. These are things my late mother would have prefaced with, "I've got news for you, young man." Well, you get the picture.

Beyond the Book

In addition to all the information regarding becoming a great sales manager included within these pages (or in the e-book) I put together a few little bonuses that you can access any time, anywhere on the web. I include some questions to ask when hiring a new salesperson, offer advice on how to handle conflict between two salespeople, and give you several more goodies at www.dummies.com. Just click over to www.dummies.com/cheatsheet/salesmanagement and see what all I have for you there.

You can also access some bonus material at my website, including a *free* digital copy of my previous book, *The 10*

Essential Habits of Sales Superstars: Plugging into the Power of Ten, by going to www.butchbellah.com/free10habits.

On top of several hundred blog posts on sales, sales management, and more at my website at butchbellah.com, you can also find out information and sample videos on my speaking at butchbellah.com/speaking and information and ways to contact me regarding sales training at butchbellah.com/coaching-and-training.

Finally, I'd love to hear from you, the sales managers making a difference in this world. Share your stories of triumph and tragedy (hopefully more of the former) by emailing me at butch@butchbellah.com.

Where to Go from Here

This book wasn't written with the idea that you'd sit down with it and read it cover-to-cover in one sitting — unable to put it down. It doesn't have any wizards, vampires, or zombies, and I didn't have the opportunity to kill off a main character during the slow parts to keep you interested. (I am the main character so that was definitely out of the question.)

Here's the good part: You don't even have to like to read to get something out of it. It's not really designed to be used as a textbook or something you sit beside your bed like the latest novel of romance story. In fact, you're probably not going to read it cover-to-cover and that's okay. You can start anywhere — just pick a spot and jump in.

This book is assembled so you can easily find the chapter or heading on what issue you're facing right now. Read it, absorb it, highlight it, and then keep it nearby to be referred to the next time a fire is ablaze and you're searching for an extinguisher.

However, if you want a suggested place to start (especially if you ever want a suggestion), check out [Chapter 4](#), where I guide you through assessing what you have to work with in your organization right now, or [Chapter 7](#), where I dive into the fun of training your team.

Part I

Welcome to the World of Sales Management



Find additional content at
[www.dummies.com/extras/salesmanagement.](http://www.dummies.com/extras/salesmanagement)

In this part ...

- ✓ Understand the role of a sales manager. Find out what you are and what you are not.
- ✓ Define your expectations and establish your own management style. The old manager isn't there any longer; now it's your turn.
- ✓ See the importance of establishing good working relationships across departments. You're now in a position where every other department in the company is affected by you and can affect you. It's important to have good rapport.
- ✓ Find ways to communicate clearly and consistently. Your ability to communicate is one of the most important parts of your job.

Chapter 1

You're a Sales Manager — Now What?

In This Chapter

- ▶ Getting to know your new role
 - ▶ Making the leap from salesperson to sales manager
 - ▶ Inspiring, coaching, and guiding your team
 - ▶ Getting to know your inherited team
 - ▶ Establishing your own management style
-

You've probably worked for years to get to be a sales manager ; you've put in the time on the sales floor or in the field and now it's your turn to take the next step. You've been offered and accepted the job. And now, you're chewing antacids like gum, sweating bullets, and feeling nauseous. Hey! Welcome to management!

Seriously, it's perfectly normal to be nervous and question whether you can do the job. Anyone who ever gets promoted goes through similar feelings, and if they tell you they don't they're probably not being totally truthful.

Now calm yourself; you can do this. In this first chapter I explore the traits and functions of a sales manager and briefly touch on a few topics I cover in more depth later. By the time I'm done, you'll be a confident, successful, efficient manager leading a team of great salespeople.

And, if it doesn't work, just take two aspirin and call me in the morning.

Understanding Your Role as a Sales Manager

It's important to know how great sales managers operate; how they manage their team and how they remain productive themselves. The role is ever-changing but has several core duties and responsibilities which cross almost all industry lines:

- ✓ Managing the sales team
- ✓ Establishing goals and quotas
- ✓ Training and developing sales skills
- ✓ Assigning and defining geographical territories
- ✓ Counseling and leading individual salespeople
- ✓ Reporting data to upper management
- ✓ Creating incentive programs
- ✓ Establishing budgets
- ✓ Hiring and firing salespeople

Are there other tasks you do as a sales manager? Sure. You'll always add new responsibilities to your plate, but you can pretty much expect to handle the jobs on this list when you get the job. In fact, many of them may have been in your job description.

Acknowledging what you are and what you're not

As a professional sales manager you assume many roles: motivator, cheerleader, sounding board, ear to vent to, teacher, judge, shoulder to cry on, and everything in between.

As the leader of your department, the buck really does stop with you. The responsibility that comes with the job is enormous and can be a bit overwhelming.



You can only do one thing at a time, and you can only do your best. When in doubt remember these words, “Do the best you can with what you have to work with.”

At some point you will wonder whether you’re in the sales department or management. The truth is you’re in both, and you have to be able to mold and shape yourself to fit the situation you’re in.

There will be times when you must make very hard management decisions and times where you have to defend your sales department against the decisions of others. Sometimes you won’t know which role you’re playing. There’s no cut-and-dried way to tell when to be more sales or more management. There’s no right or wrong answer; there’s a lot of gray area. You have to go with your gut.



As long as you’re consistent, you’ll be fine. Don’t try to please everyone. Be consistent in your actions, decisions, and how you run your department, and you’ll be ahead of the game.

You’re the conduit between management and sales. You’re the person other department heads are going to look to for information regarding what’s happening to the company’s sales. The next minute you’re answering to salespeople and explaining something the company decided to do.

It's a juggling act, but a manageable one if you just "do the best you can with what you have to work with."



As important as it is to know what you are, it's just as important to know what you are not. You're not a psychic who can read minds and predict the future of the company's sales down to the penny. Everyone is going to ask you to, but you can't. You have to use past history and your instincts to set budgets, goals, and sales forecasts — all of which now come from your desk.

You're also not the secretary for the sales department. Don't get me wrong, I'll be the first to say you work for your sales team instead of them working for you. But, don't let yourself get caught up in doing their tasks. That's not what you're there for. I point out ways to help you avoid this huge bear trap in [Chapter 2](#).



If you set the tone early of doing things for people, they will continue to expect that behavior. Your job is to make your people better, not dependent.

It's now about how your team performs, not how you perform — a feeling that can be both invigorating and scary.

Inspiring, coaching, and leading

When it really comes down to it, your purpose is to inspire, coach, and lead your department. Sales is the only department in the company that contributes to profits — everything else is an expense. If your company is going to not just survive but thrive, it will be in large part due to how your department performs.



Inspire your sales team to want to achieve more and to believe they can and will. Note I didn't say motivate them. I believe motivation has to come from within — you can't motivate your people; they have to motivate themselves. However, you can and must inspire them.

Coach them to improve their skills. Your job is to observe, provide feedback, take corrective action, and go again. Then observe, provide feedback, take corrective action, and do it all over — over and over and over. You're in a constant state of coaching and training as new techniques, new systems, and new ways to communicate with your prospects and buyers are created.

Lead your team in a manner they want to follow. A leader doesn't say, "Go do this!" a leader says, "Let's go do this!" How you conduct yourself has as big an impact on your sales department as any words coming from your mouth.



Poet and philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "What you do speaks so loudly I cannot hear what you say." Leadership is taking action, not only speaking.

As a sales manager, you have a lot to digest, but understand you take this journey one step at a time. You're not the manager today you'll be a year from now or five years from now. If you had all these answers and knew how to do all these things already, you would've been a sales manager years ago. Be patient and learn.

Transitioning from Salesperson to Sales Manager

It may be only one step on the ladder of your career, but it's a big one when you move from being a salesperson to becoming a sales manager. Gone are the days of having to concern yourself only with your own sales and keeping up with what's happening only with your customers in your own territory. Now you're responsible for the whole ball of wax.

The nice thing is, although the skill sets of a great salesperson and a great sales manager are drastically different, the same drive, attitude, and burning desire that put you in this position is what will help you excel at this position.

Just because you have a new nameplate on the door or a new title on the business card doesn't mean you forget everything you've learned up to this point. In fact, you'll find yourself relying a lot on your past experience especially as you coach and train other salespeople to grow their business.



The transition from salesperson to sales manager can be especially tough on salespeople who are replacing a previous manager who was either ineffective or fell short in some way. You may face a situation where your immediate predecessor didn't set the best example. That's okay. You want to make the team your team and if you're stepping into a situation like this, it won't take much to look like the knight in shining armor.

Same barn, different stall

Many a new sales manager's biggest obstacle is going from sitting in the sales meeting and listening to sales training to now being the sales trainer. You need to take this role with a certain amount of humbleness because nobody wants to follow a leader who is constantly regurgitating, "Let me tell you how I used to do it."

Your first order of business is to earn your team's respect through your actions — not your words. When you approach the job focusing on how you can help them, not how they can help you, your entire mindset shifts. You use different words, and you have a sincere desire to serve.



Your job is to make your salespeople successful. As you take on the role of the leader, manager, and trainer, step back and let them know that you're viewing their process and practices from a slightly different angle. You get to see what they're doing through a new lens.



I can promise you I managed salespeople who were much smarter, more talented, and better salespeople than I was. Nobody ever said the best salesperson is the next sales manager. It doesn't work like that. There's no correlation between being a great salesperson and being a great sales manager. The skills that make a great salesperson have nothing to do with being a great manager. Some of the biggest mistakes I've ever seen have been when the best salesperson was put in charge of a sales team. Great salespeople can be great at sales, but terrible at managing. To be a great sales manager, you need to be a strong manager first. That's the skill you use more than any other.

Think of your new job this way: You have a racehorse capable of winning the Kentucky Derby but the current trainer just isn't able to get the best out of that horse. So, the owner turns the training over to you. Same horse. Different trainer.

If you know anything about sports or horse racing, you know a small change can have a big impact on a horse just the same as a team responds differently to a new coach or manager.



As sales manager, you're not there to upset the apple cart and start over completely; you're simply there to take what you have and make it the best it can be while adding new talent to the roster.

Your best strategy is to simply find out how you can help each person.

Past experience can lead to future success

The “this is how I did it” style of management gets old very quickly with a seasoned sales team. They aren’t interested in what you did; they want to know what you can do for them.

I’m going to hazard a guess that when you first became a salesperson you devoured training materials, read a lot of books, and really studied your craft. You put in the time to be good at what you did and the results were there.

The same holds true for sales management. You’re not expected to be a superstar from day one. Everyone in the organization understands (or should understand) that you have a nice little learning curve ahead of you as you navigate not only your own department but how it interacts with other departments.

The experience you gained as a salesperson dealing with different personalities, being committed to learning and growing, and having a burning desire deep within you to be the best you can be are the exact same traits that can make you a great sales manager.



You’ve displayed the characteristics of a sales manager already or you wouldn’t have the job. The single biggest thing you can do is to give yourself time to learn — you’re starting over again, and Rome wasn’t built in a day.

Assessing Your Current Team

One of the first orders of business after a new sales manager gets settled in is to take an accurate, honest look at the current sales team to see who you're working with.

I refer to the salespeople like a professor would a classroom full of college students. You want to know who are your A students. You need to figure out how to continue to keep their fires lit and challenge them to grow and progress from where they are now. Nobody on your team is as good as they can be, trust me.

You need to identify your B students and find out how you can move them into the group with the A's. You need to identify your C students because you'll spend some time with them to determine if they have a future with you or not.



Most importantly, you need to get to know the D and F students. They're the ones who run you ragged. These are the people who constantly complain and fret over every little thing and blame their lack of sales on the government, global warming, and anything else they can come up with. These are the ones who can drag you down and take your focus away from the salespeople who really need your attention. Don't let them.

Grading on a curve

One of the interesting parts of your first few months as a new sales manager is assessing your team. Although looking at their sales numbers is good, as the sales manager you now have access to data you never had before — namely, the gross profit each salesperson generates and their accounts receivable.



A great salesperson doesn't just do a lot of volume, he generates profit and collects his receivables.

So that explains it

Not long after I started my first position as Vice President of Sales, I had a division sales manager who had let a customer build up tens of thousands of dollars in accounts receivable. This was a customer I was a bit leery of in the first place, so I didn't have a real warm fuzzy feeling when he got behind on his payments.

I called the salesperson one day and read him the riot act, "You've got to get out there and get the money. No excuses. I don't care what you have to do, GET THE MONEY!"

I was steaming hot because this was about to blow up in his face and mine, too. I was not only trying to protect the two of us but keep the company from losing a ton of money in the process.

He said, "Butch, calm down. This is why I'm selling them so cheap. That way when they beat us out of the money we aren't losing as much!"

Yes, he was kidding, it broke the tension, and we both laughed. And, yes we eventually got the money — but it just goes to show how some salespeople rationalize away anything.

Now that you have the ability to see all the numbers, you can determine who is actually producing for your company. Just because someone is on the top of the board every week with the most sales dollars doesn't make him your top salesperson. If his gross profit is low and receivables are high, he could very likely be costing you money.

Those are things you don't see as just another salesperson. But, in your new position you need to take in all the facts and make your own judgment about how your team is assembled and who your top producers really are.

Finding out where you need help

In analyzing and grading your current team, you will be called upon to make some decisions about individual salespeople and where their strengths and weaknesses lie.

Even though you've probably worked with these people before, I doubt you've really stood back to see what part of the sales process they excel at and where they struggle. But, now, it's time you do.



The only way to discover your sales team's strengths and weaknesses is to watch them in action. Salespeople are seldom accurate judges of their own talent levels in any area of the process. Even though everyone wants to be a great closer or be able to answer every objection, if they aren't spending an appropriate amount of time prospecting, they're going to be staring at their desk all day. No prospecting equals no prospects and no prospects equals no sales.

Two things you can do immediately to give you better insight into individual team members are

- ✓ **Work with them:** Jump in right alongside as they wait on customers, make their calls, or run their sales route. Note this is called working *with* them and not *for* them. You won't learn anything about them or how they operate if you take over and do everything yourself. That's not what this is for. Just be an observer at this point. There's plenty of time to cover your findings later.
- ✓ **Role play:** Whether it's one-on-one, just you and the salesperson or in a group setting during a sales

meeting, you can learn a lot about how your people respond to certain situations by role playing. Don't go easy on them and throw them softballs. Making it easy for them is not a learning experience. Treat them like they're out in the field and bring up as many real-world objections as you can.



As you go through these exercises, take good notes. I mean really good notes so that you can go back over what happened when you and the salesperson are back within the safety of your own office.

By identifying strengths and weaknesses in each and every salesperson you get a much better idea where to spend your time when you work with them.

If someone is the best prospecting salesperson you've ever seen but doesn't have any new customers, the breakdown for them is obviously somewhere between that initial contact and the close. On the other hand, if you have a master closer who's not afraid to ask for the sale who's struggling, it's likely he isn't making enough new calls.



Don't assume you know how your salespeople work just by past experience and what you've heard from the previous manager or the salespeople. See it and hear it for yourself.

I can't stress enough how much of your job is simply to make each member of your sales team better, and until you know where each person needs to improve, you really can't do that, can you?

Establishing Your Management Style

As crass as this may sound, your job isn't to have your people like you. Being the sales manager is not a popularity contest. Now, don't get me wrong — given the choice of being liked or not, you always want the former. But, it's not about making your sales team like you.



People will respect you when you earn it, and they will like you when they find out your motives are in line with theirs. Respect is earned every day and it can be lost in a millisecond.

If you go into each day asking yourself how you can help your sales team improve, be more profitable, and more professional, you'll be ahead of 90 percent of the sales managers in the world today.

My management style was somewhat laid back. It's just who I am. It's what came naturally to me. Could I throw a fit and scream and chew someone out? Sure, if I had to, but I didn't manage that way. I didn't like to be managed like that and never liked to be perceived as that type manager.



Running your department by fear isn't managing. It's a very short-sighted view of how to handle your people. I always said I would treat people as adults until they proved to me they shouldn't be. And sadly, you'll have some of those.

Deciding what legacy you want to leave

The bottom line in sales and in life is how do you want to be remembered? What legacy do you want to leave? What is it you'd like your salespeople, other department heads, and senior management to say about you and how you do your job. "He sure screams a lot" isn't a compliment to your management style.

As you wind your way through your management career, your management style will come to you. Your personality will show through and your own moral compass will take over.



If you're wired one way, you're not going to be able to fake that and manage another way. It's why I couldn't be the drill sergeant screaming in people's faces. It's just not who I am. There's nothing wrong with any one style (well, I'm not real fond of the screamers), but the issue is to be authentic — to be yourself. If you try to come off as something or someone you're not, your salespeople and customers are going to smell it a mile away. And nothing looks worse than being phony.

Your first priority is to be true to yourself. Be who you are. Secondly, you must represent your company with the utmost respect, dignity, and honor. Finally, you have to continue to professionalize your sales team and the profession of sales.

You have a responsibility to all those who have gone before you and those who will come after you to conduct yourself in the most professional manner possible.

If you do those things, your style and legacy will be fine.

Valuing the story of the three envelopes

As I close this first chapter, and you get ready to take on what is going to be the most enjoyable ride of your career — the job of sales manager — I want to leave you with a story. A story told to me many years ago and one you can share with the person who replaces you (check out [Chapter 16](#)).

The story is about three envelopes.

A new sales manager had just been hired by large multi-national company. The previous sales manager, who was retiring, asked to meet with him privately at an off-site location.

When they met, the retiring manager handed the new manager a large manila folder containing three sealed envelopes numbered one through three.

“What’s this?” the new guy asked.

“Any time you have a problem you can’t seem to solve, open one of these in order starting with number one. It’ll get you out of some tight situations,” the experienced manager stated.

Things went great for the new sales manager for the first six or eight months, then all of a sudden the company lost a contract from its largest customer. Sales were about to be hit and hit hard. The new manager remembered the envelopes, went to his desk, and opened number one. Inside was an index card and printed on it was, “Blame everything on me.”

So, the sales manager went before the board and blamed the loss of the client on the old sales manager. It was his fault for not securing a longer term deal and the new manager was doing all he could to bring on a new customer to replace the former client.

The board was satisfied with that and seemed a bit perturbed at the old manager. Crisis averted.

Close to a year went by before sales hit another snag and went into a slight decline. Wanting to head off any issue, the manager went to his desk and opened up envelope number two. The message inside read, “Reorganize.”

So, that’s what he did. He shuffled people around and told the board he was making the needed moves. Once again they seemed satisfied and even a bit impressed with his being proactive. With his reorganization, sales began to inch back up.

Then almost three years later, problems befell the company again. The top salesman left, taking three of the top four accounts. At his wit’s end, the manager went to his office, opened the drawer, and slowly opened the final envelope.

The message read, "Make out three envelopes."

Chapter 2

So You Got the Job, Now What Do You Do?

In This Chapter

- ▶ Defining the position of a sales manager
 - ▶ Establishing your management style
 - ▶ Presenting yourself effectively as a manager
-

Congratulations! You got the job. Now the work begins. And, more than likely, you're experiencing equal parts pride and terror. You've worked many years to get this opportunity and now you feel a bit unsure where to begin.

Or maybe you've been a sales manager for a while, but you're finding yourself running into the same issues and aren't sure what to do. Well, lucky for you, there's an instruction manual: this book.

Relax and take a breath. You've been given the opportunity of a career that will reward you financially, emotionally, personally, and professionally. You're about to enter the world of sales management — where the lines can sometimes blur between what is sales and what is management — and you're expected to respond in the correct manner every time. Note: You won't.



Let me get this out of the way before I go any further: You're going to experience days and perhaps weeks when you sit in your chair and quietly say to yourself, "I know I'm supposed to be doing something, but I have no idea what it is!" Guess what? That's normal. If you knew all the answers, you would've had the job years ago. You're going to go through a learning curve, and although I do my best to make it as short as possible, there's no way to eliminate it.

This chapter will define what your job is and what it is not, show you how to balance work and home, and give you the foundation to be a successful sales manager. I give you advice on setting expectations for your team and maintaining standards for those working for you. Finally, I look at ways to earn your team's respect.

Understanding Your Role as Sales Manager

As the sales manager for your organization, it's your responsibility to lead and manage the sales team. If you're like many first time sales managers, that one statement leaves you glassy-eyed with a bead of sweat forming on your forehead.

Again, relax (I say that a lot, but it's usually the first thing you need to remember to do). That broad definition can be overwhelming and being overwhelmed kills the very traits you've exemplified in your career: creativity, a positive attitude, a desire for growth and leadership.