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Improve Retail Sales Performance With These Sales Coaching Tips

By Steven Lipschitz

Your POS system generates key statistics that tell you about your Retail sales performance. These key statistics are: Average sale, Transactions per hour, Items per sale, Conversion rate, Sales per hour.

But did you know that tracking these statistics on an individual Salesperson basis can lead you to focused clues about improving individual performance. Most POS systems don't enable you to track individual sales performance or generate individual KPIs (key performance indicators). If they do, they do not allow you to set a Store Sales Goal for comparative purposes.

If your POS system does track these KPIs they can lead you to some very important coaching strategies:

Coaching on Low Average Sale

Salespeople need to create value in the sale by demonstrating more expensive merchandise. This usually requires more skill and more product knowledge.

Customers need to be probed to identify their needs so the Salesperson can match them with the right product. There is no point in launching into a demo unless the needs of the customer are known. This leads to unsuccessful attempts at adding on. Perhaps the sale itself is lost due to inaccurate probing.

If the Salesperson is in a hurry they may not maximise their opportunity to sell. This will usually be characterised by low items per sale and/or high transactions per hour, as well.

Salespeople need to be aware of natural product add-ons such as extended warranties, product customisation and delivery options. Lack of product knowledge again is a cause for low average sale.

Coaching on Low Transactions Per Hour

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Salespeople may be guilty of spending too much time with customer and not closing sales quickly enough. This is usually due to a lack of skill or motivation.

You need to identify a specific behavior that is cause the poor performance which may be thing like too much time spent merchandising, taking breaks, smoking, or talking to customers without trying to close the sale.

Converting customer is paramount to increasing transaction per hour.

Approach more customers and try to spend less time with them

Coaching on Low Items Per Sale

Salespeople need to at least attempt to sell more than one item to a customer. Product knowledge and sales confidence are the keys to a successful add on. Lack of sales skill will inevitably result on giving

up too quickly or ignoring an opportunity to add on.

Probe customers with broad questions relating to the product they are buying. You may find out something about the customers that leads naturally to the ad on.

Since the customer's mind is most open to buying prior to making a buying decision on the primary item, a Salesperson who always waits for that commitment prior to adding on may be minimising his/her chances of successfully adding on.

Salespeople are sometimes much to careful about saving a customer's money instead of trying to sell them more items. If the store is quiet Salespeople need to try harder to ad on. Even if the store is busy, a customer who has already decided to make a purchase is more easy to sell something to than a customer walking into the store.

Coaching on Low Conversion Rate

Lack of probing, skill in selling, product knowledge, and approaching customers is usually the cause of low conversation rate.

In most cases increasing the conversion rate of the store is the quickest and easiest way to increase the sales average. Converting one more customer per period can create a dramatic effect on the sales for the day so Salespeople need to close faster and attend to more shoppers.

Lack of clear and targeted demonstrations and a lack of product knowledge can cause wasted time with Salespeople performing the sale but not closing the deal.

Coaching on Low Sales Per Hour

Usually this statistic is low because one of the other's is low.

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Make sure you are tracking this statistic accurately. If you are measuring sales performance for an individual who is selling for less hours than being tracked this will inevitable show us a low sales per hour.

Summary

Targeting individual deficient sales statistics provides vital clues to Store Managers about the specific area of performance that should be targeted for coaching purposes.

Coaching on the most deficient statistic yields the greatest and quickest results and the potential the biggest improvement in sales performance.

The author of this article has developed a software program used by retail stores to quickly and easily calculate individual salespeople's statistics.

Steven Lipschitz has a 12 year track record in Internet enabled applications and today specializes in Retail Performance Management Solutions. His company developed the world renowned Retail Performer software program for the Retail industry. You can find out about Retail Performer at

<http://www.retailperformer.com>

. FREE Trial Download available.

Retail Sales Training Essential To Increase Retail Sales Performance

By Steven Lipschitz

Retail Sales Coaching should be designed to work on behalf of each individual Salesperson who wants to succeed for them, while being part of an environment that nurtures and speeds their growth.

Retail Sales Training is for each person who cared to show up today to express themselves in a retail sales environment and who demands more of themselves. Retail Sales Training is for people who want to feel they have done their best with what they knew, today.

Retail Sales Coaching's purpose is to clarify, in a realistic, truthful and meaningful way, precisely how each person can perform better. It must do this by connecting people with the objectives of the company within the framework of their own need to succeed and be recognized. Retail Sales Training Software must work by identifying the absolute area of selling skill, the one out of five key performance indicators (KPIs), which if the Salesperson were to focus on exclusively, would become their best performance enhancer - their best chance at optimum improvement.

Retail Sales Coaching Software should be about helping your company and its people become richer by revealing the truth about their performance, on an individual basis, so your Salespeople can focus on making their most significant improvements in the shortest period of time.

Improve Retail Sales Performance With These Sales Coaching Tips

The result of implementing the right solution is that each Salesperson's performance is increasing at optimum speed, so you can expect your retail store as a whole to increase sales by anywhere from ten to thirty percent.

Any Retail Sales Training system of appraisal and reporting should make sales people accountable for their time by measuring their performance according to key KPI's, against each other, and against the store average. Unless measurements are taken on a regular basis and compared with the rest of the people on the shift it would be impossible to know the area in which to train.

Today, most POS software programs generate KPIs such as average sale, items per sale, sales per hour. However, they do not allow store managers to set sales goals and divide them up proportionally between salespeople so effectively POS sales reports are useless.

While door counters are useful unless they integrate with an effective Retail Training software program they cannot generate Conversion Rate KPIs - one of the fundamental KPI's used in Sales Training.

There are software programs available to compliment your POS that will do the job including breaking down slow and fast periods of the day by weightings.

Here are some things to look for in a Retail Sales Training Software Program:

- Store Information Register to record specific information about the store.
- Staff Information Register and Coaching Log to record specific information and availability and coaching history of each sales person.
- Weekly Sales Goals Planner that automatically divides the store sales goal fairly between the salespeople on duty, including taking into account slow and fast periods of the day.
- Weekly Staff Roster to allocate staff to a time and attendance schedule within the framework of the store's wage budgets, warning when over rostering and helping to improve wage to sales ratio efficiency.
- Actual Performance Score Card that tracks individual actual sales performance against individual sales goals to identify areas of weakness and strength so that managers can coach behaviors.
- Optimally, coaching tips should be integrated so managers can quickly get information about coaching on specific deficient selling skills.

The objectives of Retail Sales Training Software Programs are to:

- Increase profits, decrease costs, motivate staff
- Bring Retailers in line with industry Best Practice

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- Filter company sales objectives down to Individual Salespeople on the shop floor
- Focus Store Managers on the two operational expenses within their control: Wages and Individual Sales Performance
- Make Salespeople accountable for their time
- Reduce payroll by Rostering within set wage parameters
- Identify each individual Salesperson's deficient selling skills each week
- Show sales trends for each individual salesperson and store
- Integrate self-based coaching to give front line store managers' tips on demand
- Motivate employees by instilling a performance based team culture
- Identify best performers allowing Store Managers to roster those staff more often – yielding a higher wage to sales ratio or ROI
- Reduce attrition rates, retain good staff
- Introduce a system of setting standards, tracking, measuring and reporting results, identifying under performance and coaching for success
- Integrate with POS to produce instant information at Salespeople's fingertips.

Retail competition is fierce and times are tough. If you want to increase retail sales performance then coaching sales people is vital to success. Successful retailers put into place best practice retail training software programs to help them immediately identify skill areas requiring coaching attention.

Without the help of retail performance metrics you may be wasting valuable training time and missing the point for each individual salesperson.

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