

5 Steps to Improve Your Sales in 2024

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IDEAL is an acronym for the most natural course for achieving ambitious goals. I'm thrilled to introduce IDEAL in the context of sales success. Apply this process: Intend, Direct, Engage, Assess, and Learn, and experience for yourself a genuine game-changing blueprint for greater success in 2024! Make this year a standout one for your company. IDEAL is a comprehensive and cyclical process, guiding you step-by-step toward your ambitious sales goal, promoting continuous learning for improvement, and leveraging achieved successes to further drive you toward even greater results!

A quick word about the first crucial step – Intend. Are your goals for 2024 crystal clear, or could you use some focus? Get support from my website. In fact, consider taking my Power Course about sales, available here: <https://www.stevenrobertyoung.com/high-impact-sales-improvement>.

While formal substantiation lends weight to the IDEAL process, it's essential to recognize that IDEAL is not just a set of steps—it's a natural process; its aspects are at work in your daily life. They are not options; they're characteristics that we express every day. However, here's the bottom line: to unlock the power of IDEAL and advance toward your potential, you must apply IDEAL deliberately, as a process, not as a mere concept. Every step matters and neglecting even one can create a devastating ripple effect across your results. Now, let's shift gears. Take action and apply IDEAL for the success that matters to you—your sales. Let's go!

1. Intend

Get crystal clear about what you'll achieve

If you're not precisely focused on what you want to achieve,
you're likely wasting time and losing sales.

Success doesn't happen by accident; it results from **deliberate effort**—an intention. To make intentional progress, set a clear goal.

The starting point for any pursuit of success is understanding what "success" requires of you. Therefore, you must first **define "success."**

When you are clear about your intentions, you'll have a useful framework for assessing options and making wise decisions to improve sales.

The Science

Precise and well-defined intentions play a critically important role in achieving goals, a notion substantiated by goal-setting theory, positive psychology, and neuroscience. Goal-setting theory emphasizes the impact of setting specific and challenging goals on individual performance. Positive psychology underscores the significance of positive intentions in promoting overall well-being and driving purposeful action. In neuroscience, there is a clear neurobiological basis highlighting the connection between the clarity of goals and motivation. Understanding and articulating clear intentions, informed by these scientific perspectives, not only enhances performance but also contributes to well-being and activates motivational neural pathways, creating an essential foundation for success.

Take Action

Your goal must be more than specific; it must be **actionable**. Actionable goals involve activities that you can track and execute successfully. Results from those activities must be **measurable** or **verifiable**.

Next, identify how the achievement of your goal is possible. Do you need to win more key clients, reengage lost accounts, or compete more effectively? Do you need a more effective sales strategy, clearer processes, or more useful insights from sales data?

1. Identify the specific result you want to achieve.
This step directs focus, defines purpose, and organizes mindset.
2. Understand how the achievement of your goal is possible—by what means.
This step emphasizes the importance of thinking thoroughly, having an actionable goal, and being able to plan and strategize the success of a goal.
3. Establish a timeline for progress toward and attainment of your goal.
Setting a timeline gives context for various assessments and sustains performance.
4. Understand your starting point. Know where you stand today—your strengths and weaknesses—to appropriately plan your success.

Assessing your current situation—advantages and disadvantages—helps you recognize what success requires and have a realistic perspective when planning.

If you misjudge your starting point or the requirements for your goal, you're likely to fail to succeed.

2. Direct

Decide on an approach to your goal

You have no course to sales improvement, if you're unclear about the steps to greater success.

Without a clear understanding of the steps toward greater success, your efforts to improve sales lack direction, which can be costly. As William Edward Deming famously stated, "If you can't describe what you are doing as a process, you don't know what you are doing."

Success is the outcome of deliberate effort, and improving sales requires a systematic approach—a defined process. "Direct" is all about planning the course to your success. What are the steps that will advance you from where you are to your goal?

The Science

Scientific insights, particularly from behavioral economics and neuroscience, strongly validate the pivotal role of planning in achieving success. In behavioral economics, planning serves as a powerful tool to mitigate procrastination and impulsiveness, which can provide a structured framework that promotes discipline. From a neuroscience perspective, planning is shown to activate specific brain regions dedicated to goal pursuit, potentially triggering the release of neurotransmitters associated with heightened motivation. Together, these scientific findings underscore the diverse and substantial advantages that intentional planning brings to the pursuit and achievement of ambitious goals.

Take Action

Consider your goal and your expectations for how you'll succeed. Identify any weaknesses or unknowns that could hinder your progress. Recognize the primary steps and their objectives

involved in achieving your success. For example, prospecting is a primary step in many sales processes, with the objective of building a leads list.

Next, evaluate the support that each step requires for successful execution.

Once you have an actionable goal (from the "Intend" step), complete these action items:

1. Identify the primary steps and their objectives to achieve your aim.
This step clearly defines the key actions for your success.
2. Recognize the requirements of each step for your success.
Knowing the specific needs and challenges associated with each step will help ensure having a complete approach to your goal.
3. Evaluate potential weaknesses or unknowns that could hinder your progress.
This step introduces an essential element for success: the potential obstacles and uncertainties you could face. This knowledge allows you to plan more completely.
4. Support your efforts with structure—schedules, tools, resources, training, etc.
Support and structure ensures your plan is actionable and that you're well-equipped for taking action.

3. Engage

Be actually productive

Your efforts to improve sales will falter if you can't meet or accurately assess the requirements for improvement.

While productivity is essential for success, it is often misunderstood. True productivity is specific to the demands of your sales goal and process. The "Engage" step focuses on your ability to be productive—to achieve targeted results from activities necessary to advance toward improved sales. If you can't meet targeted objectives, recognize it as a serious productivity issue to be addressed.

The Science

At the core of goal attainment is the indisputable significance of productivity, as recognized by both goal-setting theory and organizational psychology. The seminal work in goal-setting theory, underscore the pivotal role of productivity in realizing specific and challenging goals. Organizational psychology research accentuates the symbiotic relationship between heightened productivity and successful outcomes in individual and collective goal pursuits. Together, these perspectives affirm that productivity is an unequivocal driver of progress and accomplishment, accounting for a successful trajectory from a start point toward the achievement of a goal.

Take Action

The challenge of growing sales often revolves around two key areas: your sales process (the steps you take to sell) and your performance of those steps. If your process is problematic, your performance is not your primary problem. If your process is effective and your performance is deficient, you'll face ongoing challenges. Aim for synergy between your process and performance.

By this step, you have a defined goal and a strategic path. Activity must drive your process while sustaining a necessary performance level (quality of work).

1. Set performance standards for the results your activities must achieve to prevent your goal from being in jeopardy of failure.

This step establishes clear expectations for the outcomes of your efforts.

2. Review the requirements from the "Direct" steps and create a checklist of everything needed to support your success.

This step ensures that you have all the necessary elements in place to execute your plan effectively.

3. Assess and adjust your sales process and performance for synergy.

Evaluating the alignment between your sales process and performance helps identify areas for improvement and ensures optimization.

4. Complete all activities on your Prep checklist.

This step emphasizes the importance of following through with the necessary preparations to enhance productivity.

4. Assess

Know where you stand

Continuing to lose sales is inevitable if you lack awareness of what is and isn't working in your efforts to grow.

Productivity isn't merely about activity; it's about achieving the necessary results to advance toward your goal. Therefore, awareness of your productivity is crucial. What information is essential for assessing your effectiveness in improving sales?

The Science

Regularly assessment of progress is pivotal for optimizing goal success. Insights from education and psychology stress the importance of feedback in enhancing performance. Psychological research on goal-setting emphasizes the role of progress assessments in adapting strategies and maintaining motivation. Principles from project management highlight the iterative nature of success achieved through continuous assessment and feedback. The point: consistent evaluation not only aids identifying issues to address but also serves as a strategic tool to inform decision-making. These increase the likelihood of successful goal attainment.

Take Action

In the quest for greater sales success, data is essential. Don't rely on guesswork when you can have concrete insights into what is and isn't working in your sales efforts. Establishing standards and recording results from activities are essential.

1. Review your process to identify essential information for assessing progress and effectiveness.

This step ensures that you understand what aspects of your sales process are critical for evaluation.

2. Determine the information to be recorded and establish a method for managing that data.

This step focuses on the practical aspect of recording and organizing the information necessary for assessment.

3. Evaluate productivity to pinpoint areas that require improvement.
The evaluation step helps identify deficiencies that could impact overall productivity.
4. Implement improvements based on the assessment.
This step ensures that the insights gained from the assessment lead to enhanced productivity.

5. Learn

Be able to improve

Sales improvement is impossible if you cannot learn from your efforts and make necessary changes.

Rarely is a plan for sales enhancement perfect; expect revisions as you assess your productivity. Evaluating progress reports and conducting research will reveal options for refining your approaches and supporting sales improvement. Through testing these options, you'll discover superior solutions for greater results.

The Science

Research consistently shows that continuous learning significantly boosts the chances of achieving goals. In organizational settings, promoting a culture of ongoing learning improves adaptability and overall performance. Neuroscientific findings support cognitive enhancement through learning, crucial for navigating challenges and achieving goals. In entrepreneurship, staying informed and actively seeking knowledge is linked to innovation and business success. The evidence points to a clear connection between continuous learning and increased likelihood of reaching goals in various domains.

Take Action

To make informed decisions about where to focus sales improvement efforts, continual learning is essential. Many sales operations stumble at this point. Avoid that pitfall. Identify the resources needed to stay up-to-date on everything relevant to your success.

Merely assessing progress reports isn't enough; you must be mindful of everything related to your productivity. Gain knowledge about sales, relevant skills, and technological developments.

1. Dedicate time to learning and building knowledge about sales, relevant skills, or technological developments.
This step supports the importance of continuous learning.
2. Actively seek feedback from colleagues, mentors, or experts. Engage with professionals in sales or related fields through events, forums, or industry groups to exchange insights, challenges, and best practices.
This step emphasizes there being several ways in which learning can occur.
3. Maintain a document of your learning, including your thought process, goals, lessons learned, and reflections.
This step reinforces concepts and promotes your ongoing growth.
4. Regularly review and adjust your sales approaches based on what you've learned.
This step ensures that the insights gained from continuous learning translate into actionable improvements in your plan, preparation, and efforts to be productive.

In wrapping up, remember this: while formal substantiation—from science and relevant statistics—adds weight to the IDEAL process, IDEAL is not a mere set of steps; it's a set of human characteristics that we naturally apply in our everyday lives. Put differently, you don't choose to express the aspects of IDEAL; you can only choose how you express them. And, to the point, be clear about this: in order to harness the dynamic effect of IDEAL for your potential, you must apply the process deliberately, not as an abstract concept, but as a force. Each step bears significance and works together with the others. Neglecting even one step can cause failure of your goal. Now, as we conclude, it's time to get excited! You have the steps for greater sales success! Apply IDEAL!

Get support with achieving your 2024 potential!



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