



# **THE BTA SALES**

## **GUIDE TO MANAGING YOUR SALES TEAM REMOTELY**





Let's keep the statement of the obvious as brief as possible.

The COVID-19 pandemic has transformed the way we work for the foreseeable future, and this is inevitably having an impact on sales leaders and their teams.

### **Remotely-managed sales teams are not a new concept.**

Remote sales teams have existed for as long as the term 'travelling salesman' has been around, so there are tried and true methods for managing them.

The main challenge, now that we need to remove that word 'travelling' and substitute it with 'work-from-home', is how to refine these methods to meet the current unprecedented situation.

### **Here are seven expert tips for leading your sales team to deal-closing success when you can't be with them face-to-face.**

#### **1. Realise your sales processes will dramatically change**

What advice you are going to provide your team, from your wealth of sales experience, so that they can meet the challenges of the current sales environment?

Your guidance should be centred around:

*How to keep connected with and retain current clients, by engaging with them on a personal level* - Find out what online communication platforms they use and request access, e.g. on Facebook, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, WeChat.

*How to sell when you can't physically visit, by trying to adapt to clients' changed needs, requesting feedback, and getting your face out there by using video* - Also try LinkedIn feed posts, one-to-one InMails and one-to-one emails – or simply pick up the phone, since many people have more time to have a conversation now.

*How to generate new prospects by creating pieces of content* - Such as eBooks, social media push notifications and incentivised referrals from existing customers.

*How to adapt the sales cycle to digital communication* - With online lead qualification research, video product presentations, preparing prototype emails to overcome possible objections.

*How to be productive, motivated, and function as a team* - Even when you can't go out and see people through some of the techniques we mention below.



## **2. Set clear priorities - it's vital**

Your remote sales team's number one requirement is to knowing what's expected of them individually, and how to go about achieving these set goals.

This will help to make them feel more engaged, and therefore more likely to go the extra mile to improve their performance and meet sales targets.

Aim to provide each employee with a detailed account of their specific tasks and goals, using cloud-based digital methods (we go into this in more detail below).

Also, make sure they know how and when they can get in contact with you quickly if they encounter problems.

## **3. Digital resources really earn their keep**

If you've already installed a VPN and mobile CRM, you'll now be reaping the rewards from your investment.

But, if you didn't already have these in place, the cloud will be your new best friend.

There are plenty of cloud-based storage and software systems to keep everyone working on the same page, accessing identical data and staying up-to-date with collaborative projects.

Sales leaders and their remote employees don't need to rely on relatively clunky email communication.

For example, they can communicate with Slack, create and share documents, spreadsheets and presentations in Google Drive, manage projects with Trello and hold video meetings with Zoom.

Unless all your employees already have a company-issued digital device they've taken home, you'll need to set a Bring Your own Device (BYOD) policy if you don't already have one.

Be aware that different devices will not display information uniformly, so you may need to create some document templates that everyone can use without creating confusion.

It's also important to supply salespeople with cybersecurity training. Information around how to ensure your wifi network is secure, how to manage passwords safely and verify work from home devices.



#### **4. Trust and communication become even more important**

If ever there was a time when we need to build relationships with people we can trust, it's now.

Sales leaders need to reinforce lines of communication with their sales team, and between team members, to create mutual respect, trust and assistance so that the team pulls together as one. This may run counter to the model of setting and rewarding individual sales achievements, but challenging times require innovative approaches.

So, err on the side of over-communication rather than risk under-communication. Video conferences won't remove the need for one-on-one conversations, so don't neglect individual video or text communication.

At the same time, you need to get your people to work on increasing their level of trust and communication with customers. They will need to imagine themselves in their clients' situation, with their specific challenges, so that they can empathise with what they are going through right now and respond in an appropriate way.

Customers will appreciate a chance to voice their concerns, so salespeople need to be prepared to listen and then offer solutions.

#### **5. Flexible schedules can increase productivity**

Giving your team members some autonomy over their daily schedule, especially now that many schools have closed or asked parents to keep children at home, may have positive results.

Your team may need to work unconventional hours on administrative or collaborative tasks, while maintaining agreed core attendance hours online, devoted to client contact. This may have unexpected benefits since studies have shown that employees who have autonomy over their schedules are more productive.

#### **6. Digital togetherness can alleviate physical social distancing**

Let's remember that we're all in this together, even though we may be far apart in terms of distance.

The video business meetings already mentioned will help to give your team some valuable social interaction, but it's worth recognising that many salespeople will be missing out on shared coffee breaks, watercooler conversations and other group-downtime.

For the sake of their mental wellbeing, not every digital meeting should focus solely on work. Consider holding an optional lunch break meeting where employees can chat about their day and discuss everyday topics.

Happy, outward-looking salespeople will inspire confidence among customers and close more deals.



## **7. Look after yourself and your team**

As the sales leader, don't neglect your own welfare.

Set up a comfortable, preferably ergonomic home workspace, dress as if you were going to the office to put yourself in a work-oriented frame of mind, and take scheduled breaks to stretch, exercise and eat.

Encourage your team members to do the same, or even, send them something in the mail to assist with this - like a stationery set, or new headset.

## **8. Sales keep the economy functioning**

Although you may not be working in an essential industry or service from a national emergency standpoint, the Australian economy is effectively based on sales turnover in all business sectors. And sales-based organisations are still hiring.

*If you would like to discuss and refine your strategy for managing your sales team remotely, building customer relationships and goodwill, and keeping the economy ticking over, get in touch with [bta Sales](#). We're ready to help.*

A close-up photograph of two hands shaking, symbolizing agreement or partnership. The hands are positioned in the center of the frame, with one hand slightly above the other. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be an outdoor setting with greenery and a building.

# ABOUT bta Sales

bta Sales is a specialised recruitment agency with national reach and a strong network of candidates and clients. We work with businesses and individuals as a consultant to find the perfect match for both parties.

Our sales specialisation is largely unrivalled within the industry and takes in many disciplines and levels ranging from junior sales level to senior management appointments across all market sectors.

bta is sales recruitment. It's our passion. It's what we live and breathe. In fact, it's all we do. So our interest and focus equal yours.

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