



Your Tech Tools Should be Your Best Accountability Partner



I think we all agree that in today's highly competitive business world, it is essential to have the right tools and technology in place to streamline your sales processes, increase productivity, and improve accountability.

As a fractional sales leader and coach/consultant whose swim lane is SaaS technology I have visibility into a lot of what drives purchase decisions, management strategies, and utilization of sales tools. For the most part what I see is a focus on efficiency and productivity with accountability coming in as an afterthought.

What I also see is that the sales teams reaping the greatest rewards from tech tools are viewing their purchase decisions and strategies through exactly the opposite lens.

Accountability has interesting connotations in the sales world. We value, and often invest in, accountability coaches and partners. But we often think of sales leaders who are charged with holding teams accountable as manipulative micromanagers.

I advocate for a culture of accountability in sales, which means that accountability isn't dependent on an accountability coach, partner, or sales leader – it's valued at all levels of the organization and everyone is committed to “walking the talk” of being accountable to themselves, each other, their prospects and clients,

and the company they work for.

When you're building a culture of accountability you focus on two things, mindset and transparency. While tools alone won't change mindset, they should provide the highest level of transparency possible. Why? Because with the right tools configured in the right way I can manage a sales team of any size by depending on the tools for about 80 percent of my information gathering with the remaining 20 percent depending on skills training, call coaching, and mindset coaching.

Accountability is more than just meeting quota or working the 9-5. It's about dependability of behavior, documentation, and process. It's about keeping everyone focused on long-term results, not just checking the boxes marked "Urgent." It's about knowing the status of each opportunity in real time and doing what can be done to move the status closer to resolution (closed won or closed lost) as quickly and smoothly as possible.

A culture of accountability isn't achieved by checking up on people to see what they aren't doing, or what they're doing wrong. It's achieved when everyone chooses to set a bar, rise to their highest potential, and take action consistently to continually meet their own expectations. In order to support that commitment your individual contributors and management need visibility into information that is compiled and presented in a meaningful way.

As you know, every goal set for your sales team is based on a set of assumptions. So for every goal we're accountable for there is a set of assumptions that if we do these things we will meet that goal. I call it simple "sales math." You assume that if the SDR makes X number of calls they will talk with Y number of people, of which Z number will set an appointment. You assume that if you have a pipeline of 50 deals and your close rate is 20 percent you will close 10 deals this month.

I see a lot of sales leaders using their CRM to track lagging indicators. They pay attention if only eight of the 50 are closed. They demand answers if the number of appointments set falls off of the expectation of Z

number of appointments. But in a culture of accountability your SDR isn't looking just at their goal for outgoing calls, they're focused on the goal for appointments set and adjusting the goal for outgoing calls based on real time data. In a culture of accountability the reps aren't just paying attention to closing 20 percent of the pipeline this month, they're thinking ahead to how they will keep that pipeline at 50 or more after they close the 20 percent so that they will still be meeting or exceeding quota next quarter. Each individual on the sales team, regardless of role, is looking at both lagging indicators and leading indicators in real time and adjusting their assumptions to match.

In an accountability culture, it's as important, or even more important, for the sales rep to have their own dashboard as it is for the sales leader to have a team dashboard, because both the incentive and the ability to reach sales goals starts with the SDRs and reps. A sales rep with real time data and an accountability mindset is far more effective than a sales rep who is depending on a sales leader or outside coach for reporting, course correction, and accountability.

Moreover, visibility into these data points tell the sales leader and the individual contributors where and when they will most benefit from auditing, training, and coaching. And in a culture of accountability, targeting those areas of need isn't about correction or punishment, it's about growth, advancement, and greater success.

This is where your tech tools really pay for themselves. Used effectively, your tools should deliver real time reporting that allows reps and leaders to quickly check the status on any one prospect or aggregate the status on every prospect in the pipeline to project trends, opportunities, and pitfalls before they happen. Combined with an accountability mindset and culture, your tech tools are your secret weapon to create a sales team that outperforms projections and enjoys greater job fulfillment and satisfaction than you might have believed possible. ■

Kristie Jones is Principal, Sales Acceleration Group. Find out more [here](#)

Your sales leaders should be coaching, supporting, and nurturing the next generation of rockstars, not babysitting your bad hires.

Top 10 Percenters are
ROCKSTARS
and they crave a
Culture of Accountability.

Kristie Jones - Speaker, Coach, Consultant
to Founders, Sales Leaders, and Sales Teams

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