SHAMAYM

Optimizing Sales in an
Uncertain World

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Sales Just Went from Hard to Harder. What Can You Do About It?

Keeping sales teams performing at their top is harder than ever. Rather than despairing, sales leaders can view the post-COVID world as an opportunity to cultivate new ways of doing things. They can embed new practices that empower their teams to move fast in the face of uncertainty and pivot quickly when needed. In fact, this isn't just something teams should do—if they want to stay competitive, it's something they must do.

Sales teams need to identify the aspects of their traditional workflows that stifle their agility, and replace them with innovative, growth-oriented tools and methods. Tools and methods that help sales teams constantly learn and adjust as the world changes. That's why we wrote this eBook.

After reading this eBook you'll understand:

The main obstacles preventing sales teams from remaining competitive in a new sales environment.

How a collaborative real-time learning platform helps sales teams learn and adjust to uncertain circumstances

What sales teams can do to thrive in this challenging moment.

A New Market Demands New Strategies

Even before COVID-19, the way we do business and sell was fast evolving, thanks to growing tech-enabled and remote sales methods. Now, it's changing at turbo speed. Gone are the days of regional reps and expansive trade shows. Like many other business activities, sales in the post-COVID world increasingly take place online and remotely. According to a July 2020 McKinsey analysis:
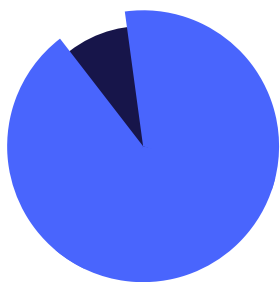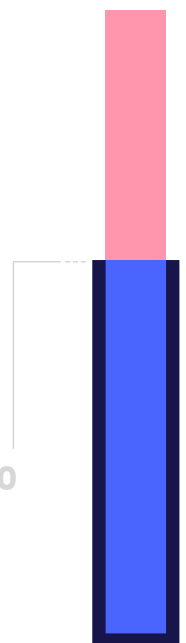
96% of B2B sales teams have fully or partially shifted to remote selling
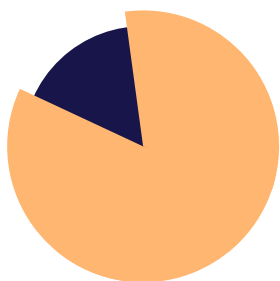
79% of B2B companies say they will likely sustain these shifts for 12 months or more beyond the pandemic.

+69%

April 2020

Revenue generated from video-related interactions has jumped 69% since April 2020.

These trends raise the stakes for sales teams that already lost the space to naturally exchange ideas and knowledge. We know how hard it is to build a meaningful connection online. Nowadays, a virtual meeting could be a salesperson's only chance to make a positive impression and pique the buyer's interest. With entire deals resting on online interaction—sometimes just one—it is more critical than ever to perform.

Then there's the market. McKinsey estimates that consumers will dial down their discretionary spending between 40-50%, which translates to a 10% reduction in GDP. In B2B sales nearly 50% of companies have dialed down their short-term spending.

To drive growth under these conditions, sales teams must tap into their agile side.

They must learn how to pivot quickly in response to constantly shifting market demands. They have no choice.

What Should Sales Teams Change to Keep Up?

Teams that want to stay competitive need to improve on critical elements of their sales process. We've identified four main obstacles that sales teams need to overcome in the post-COVID world: ineffective meetings, lack of opportunities for learning and coaching, suboptimal knowledge sharing, and data entry that comes at the expense of selling.

1 Ineffective Meetings

Virtual sales meetings leave little room for error. Given such high stakes, preparation is more important than ever. If the preparation is ineffective, it won't elicit the sense of urgency and personal rapport from the buyer that salespeople need to move a deal down the pipeline.

What should salespeople do to ensure they are making the most out of a virtual meeting? The key is to automate and simplify meeting preparation with the most relevant information in front . That way, salespeople can focus on the knowledge that will keep them sharp and responsive to objections or surprises.

2 Lack of Opportunities for Learning and Coaching

Peter Drucker famously said: "The greatest danger in times of turbulence is not the turbulence. It is to act with yesterday's logic." Teams who get ahead in the post-COVID world will know how to learn constantly and make never-ending adjustments. But many sales teams are ill equipped for that because they lack **opportunities to learn, coaching structures, and a quick and powerful onboarding process.**

Traditional learning structures used by sales teams (think QBR) do not offer a frequent enough chance to reflect on individual or team performance. Teams that make adjustments only once a quarter move too slowly for the current market. And yet, who has more free time to dedicate to proper reflection? **How can teams transform learning from a once-in-a-while to a constant without using time no one has?**

Sales teams also lack coaching. One-on-ones between an employee and manager on deal status don't provide enough insight to the employee—or visibility to the manager—to actually be effective. Managers tend to get more involved only when problems arise.

How can sales managers help with coaching and learning from day-to-day experiences and not only during crises?
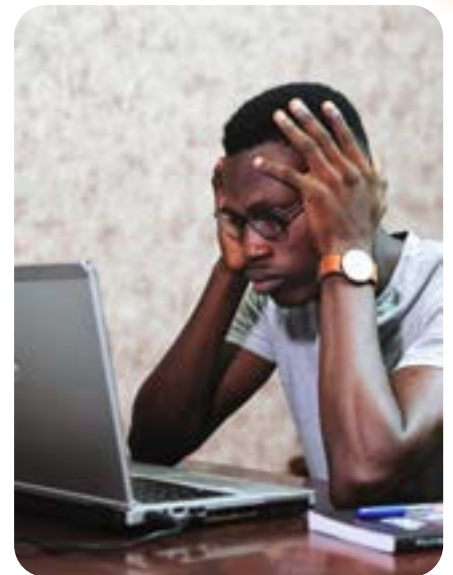
Finally, despite the overall decline in hiring, many sales teams are expanding to capitalize on new market opportunities. In such a fast moving market, **it is more important than ever to get new hires up to speed quickly.**

3 Suboptimal Knowledge Sharing

Salespeople are always in competition with their teammates. But competition doesn't have to cancel collaboration. According to Gong Labs, selling teams are 258% more likely to close deal.
Sales increase when salespeople involve other content experts on their team, leading to a better buying experience for the customer.

What if instead of competing with their teammates, salespeople could all benefit from each others' knowledge? What if one salesperson could see what their co-workers learned on the job, right as they learned it, and could immediately use those lessons to improve their own work (and vise versa)?

"The shift to virtual sales can help sales organizations lower their cost per visit, extend their reach, and significantly improve sales effectiveness—and customers are likely to reward suppliers that do it well. But while the opportunity is significant, so is the pressure to capitalize on it."
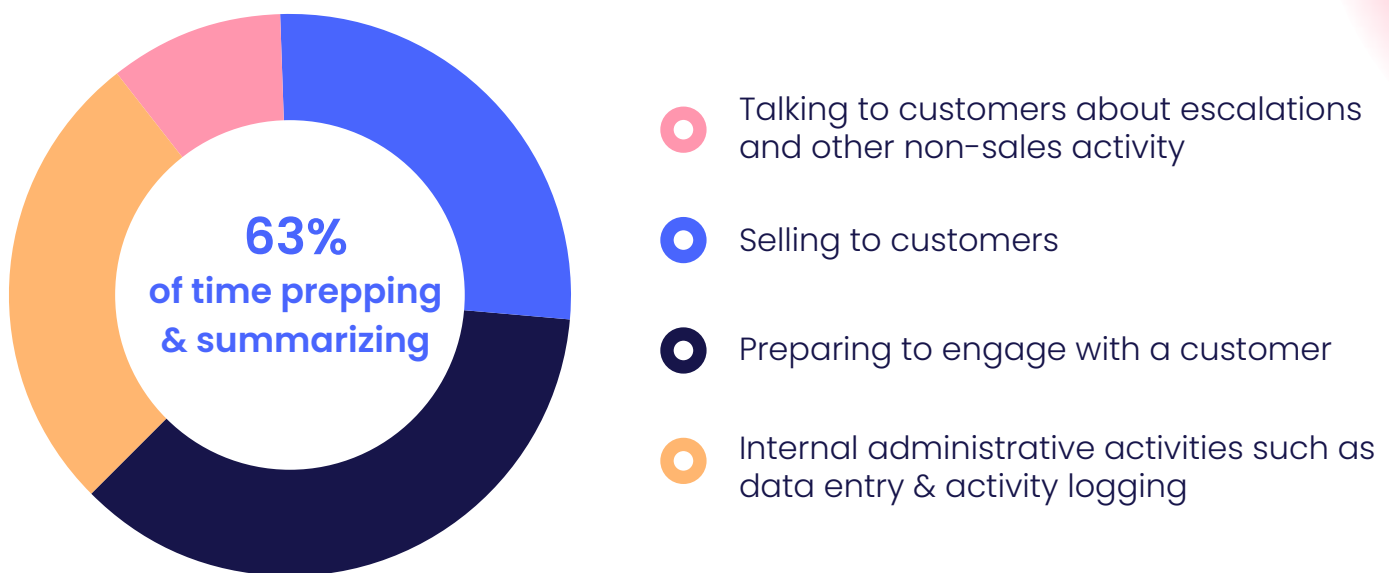
–McKinsey & Company, 2020

4 Data Entry at Sales' Expense

Technology is supposed to make our lives easier, and in many cases it certainly does. But with software comes data entry. In the case of salespeople—lots of it. Research by SiriusDecisions estimates that salespeople spend 63% of their time preparing to engage with a customer, with 27% dedicated to data entry and administrative tasks.

Rather than spending time entering data and getting nothing in return, salespeople need a system that will make their data work for them. A way for data to become more actionable, so the time they are entering is actually serves their quotas.

How Reps Spend Thier Time

63%
of time prepping & summarizing

○ Talking to customers about escalations and other non-sales activity

○ Selling to customers

○ Preparing to engage with a customer

○ Internal administrative activities such as data entry & activity logging

Collaborative Real-Time Learning: Constant Improvement to Optimize Sales

It is clear that to meet this challenging moment, sales teams will need to reinvent the way they operate and invest in new tools and capabilities that can drive superior performance.

What is Collaborative Real-Time Learning?

Collaborative real-time learning makes it easy for salespeople to capture lessons learned from each customer interaction, share what works and what doesn't with team members, and tap into successful sales tips and strategies when engaging in a new sales activity. Together, these capabilities form the basis of the improvement-inducing learning structures that sales teams need to succeed in today's business climate.

Collaborative real-time learning can be integrated into sales teams' existing processes. So instead of having to create a whole new way of getting work done, teams can maintain their workflows—and get more out of them.

How Sales Teams **Overcome** their Biggest Obstacles

Let's review the significant obstacles sales teams today face, and understand how a collaborative real-time learning platform can help those teams not only overcome, but thrive.

1 Make every sales meeting more effective

Andrew arrives at his sales meeting prepared with all the information he needs in one place. That's because before the meeting he received a brief to his inbox containing actionable insights and lessons learned from previous sales interactions.

Andrew got a refresher on exactly what his prospect's pain points are, so he knows where to direct the conversation. The brief linked to the meeting participant's LinkedIn page, so Andrew could see she serves on his town's school committee—a great conversation starter, since Andrew has school aged children.

2 Create ongoing learning and coaching opportunities

Jill needs more insight into her remote team of 15 salespeople. She needs to get Mollie, her newest hire, up to speed. She wants Mollie to learn from the region's leading rep. After every meeting that rep has, Mollie gets notified with useful takeaways, so she is learning from the team's top performer without Jill needing to set up or supervise training sessions. Jill can see Mollie's questions and comments so she knows what to discuss in their one-on-ones. But it turns out that some of the team's more experienced reps have been struggling with similar issues, so Jill understands she should plan a team-wide dedicated session.

3 Share knowledge across the entire team, instantly

Xavier joined his company in June and has never met his team face-to-face. But he has access to all of his coworkers' knowledge on a daily basis. Although he attended virtual training sessions as part of his onboarding, he is learning much more from the daily real-time lessons shared by his team. Those lessons are solidifying his knowledge of the company and his new job. And now that Xavier is handling his own accounts, he

searches for prior learning about those accounts before each meeting. Even though he is thousands of miles apart from his team and manager, he feels as though they are sitting right there in the room, cheering him on.

4 Spend less time entering data, more time selling

Since her team implemented their collaborative real-time learning platform, Nadia feels that she gets so much more out of Salesforce, while spending much less time and energy on data entry and note taking. When Nadia wants to record notes after a meeting, she can do that directly from her email, either on her phone or laptop, knowing those notes will be saved under the relevant prospect in Salesforce, too.

What Sales Teams Gain

When they implement collaborative real-time learning, and overcome the biggest challenges to optimal selling in an uncertain world, what do sales teams stand to gain?

Salespeople will...

Learn on the go
Turn every activity into a learning opportunity

Always be ready
Automated meeting preparation. Reduce time spent on stuff that doesn't matter, and dedicate those newfound hours to successful sales efforts.

Sharpen thier edge
Maintain a sharp edge with access to relevant insights at the moment of need.

Managers will...

Stay informed
with real-time visibility and insight into employees' daily challenges—so they can push the team closer to closed deals.

Grow sales team's skills with real-time coaching
By seeing what each employee struggles with, managers provide targeted advice employees will actually use.

Unite the team
around a common purpose of growing personally and collectively.

Teams that have implemented

Shamaym's collaborative real-time improvement platform

see measurable improvement in their business outcomes:

15%
improvement in conversion from a discovery call to a demo

25%
improvement in employee learning efficiency

50%
reduction in customer call complaints

What could your team gain? Higher close rates, higher conversion rates, lower attrition, or improvement on whatever your sales team's current goals are.

Why Optimize Sales **Now**?

With the world seemingly more in flux every day, the one thing we know for certain is that uncertainty lies ahead. Without implementing a framework and tool for fast and effective learning and improvement, will your team be ready for the next unknown?

Keith McCambridge summarizes the implications of this moment well in the World Economic Forum : "organizations that recognize and embrace ambiguity as a constant seize the day and become entities that continuously. learn and stay connected to new trends and dynamics." To become one of those organizations, equip your team now with the tools you need to not fall behind.

To learn more about

How your team can optimize your sales process with Shamaym's collaborative real-time learning platform, contact us.

Shamaym helps teams improve their performance and adapt quickly to changing needs by turning day-to-day actions into learning opportunities. Powered by AI, our Collaborative Real-Time Learning Platform makes it easy for employees to capture lessons learned from each activity, share insights with team members, and tap into relevant takeaways at the moment of need. Based on a methodology developed by the Israeli Air Force to drive rapid learning and continuous improvement cycles, we help sales, support, product, and other mission-critical teams drive higher KPIs and accelerated growth.

Shamaym works with leading multinational organizations: