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How to Maximize Enablement's **Business Impact**

How to Maximize Enablement's Business Impact

It's a cruel twist of fate for senior sales and revenue leaders that as their year barrels toward a close with urgency to maximize the remaining time, that strategic and tactical planning for the next year must happen at the same time.

Unfortunately, it's the strategic and tactical planning that tend to suffer. This is why – as funny as it sounds – that I recommend "planning to plan," in advance, and working ahead of schedule. There's a lot that must be done to maximize the performance of a sales force.

Reengineering Sales Performance

Strategic Planning	Tactical Planning	Execution
 Mission/Vision/Values Strategic Objectives Marketplace Analysis Customer/Buyer Acumen Buyer Roles & Goals (Buyer Personas) Their COIN-OP * Buying Preferences Buying Process Product/Market Fit Business Model Strategic Pricing SWOT Analysis Digital Strategy Sales Analytics * Challenges, Opportunities, Impacts, Needs, Outcomes, and Priorities 	 GTM Plan Marketing Sales Sales Model/Org Structure/Roles Right People/Seats on the Bus Territories/Account Assignments Goals/Quotas Compensation/Incentives Metrics/KPIs/Measurement Sales Process & Methodology New Business Development Transactional Management Strategic Account Management Sales Messaging & Collateral Sales Technology & Tools Sales Management System Force Field Analysis/Action Plans Service 	 Hiring Training Enabling Coaching Developing Supporting Managing Leading Culture

Considerations:

- Top-to-bottom flow may vary
- Left-to-right flow is firm
- GEFN (Good Enough For Now)
 - can work with a continuous improvement loop
- Skipping or being GEFN for Buyer
 Acumen is not recommended

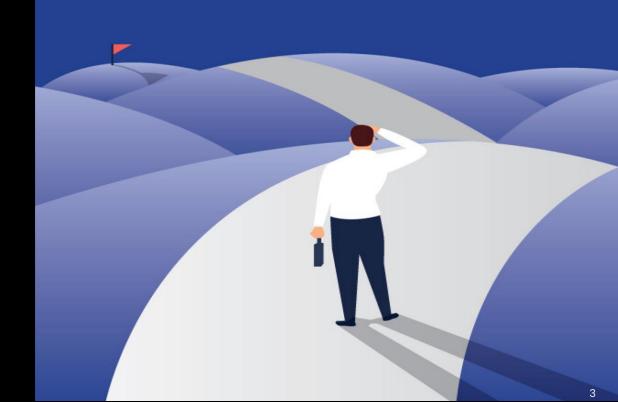
There's a lot that must be done to maximize the performance of a sales force

At a minimum, sales leaders must tackle quota setting, territory optimization, account assignments, account plans, any compensation plan updates, go-to-market strategy shifts, tactical plans, playbooks, and more.

If they're facing market disruption, they may need to navigate even more of the Strategy/Tactics/Execution chart (with their executive team colleagues) to ensure they survive and thrive through the coming year. (For maximum effectiveness, the things on the left are a dependency for the things to the right of them.)

When you layer in talent development and the critical shifts thrust upon us by other situational and market forces, such as the evolution toward a more buyer- and customer-centric approach, digital buying journeys, mastering virtual selling, and ensuring the sales team is maximizing productivity and effectiveness, it's no wonder that Sales Ops/RevOps is experiencing a resurgence and Sales and Revenue Enablement are growing exponentially.

This creates a tremendous opportunity for sales leaders who can positively impact sales force performance.





Digging In

For sales enablement leaders who are integrated into the sales force they serve, it's no different. This is a time of tremendous opportunity, if you can move the needle on the metrics that matter most. To make an impact that matters to your leadership team, you need:

- a sales enablement plan that will support your organization's strategic goals objectives.
- to enable your sales force to reach its highest potential and realize those objectives.

You need The Building Blocks of Sales Enablement

What are the Building Blocks of Sales Enablement?

And how can you:

- use them as a diagnostic tool to identify gaps to close?
- use sales analytics and strategic objectives to prioritize those gaps?
- collaborate cross-functionally with your "charter partners" to foster alignment and validate or refine your plans?
- build a business case to support your plan and get the budget you need to deliver the results your leaders want?

Let's dig in.

The Building Blocks of Sales Enablement

The Building Blocks of Sales Enablement are a framework that includes a dozen performance levers you can pull to get better sales results. They're tied together by systems thinking, cross-functional collaboration, communication, and in some cases, include sales support services.

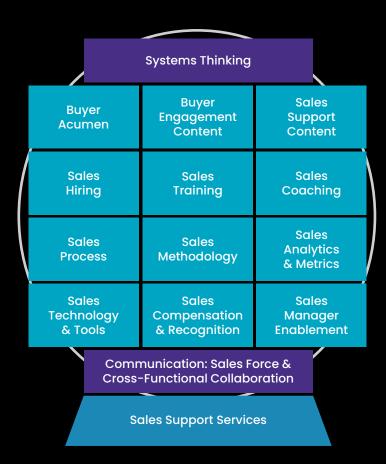
The blocks are the things you need to do well, and the systems are how you implement the blocks to get repeatable, replicable, predictable results.

For example, it all starts with **Buyer Acumen** – or a deep understanding of your buyers and customers.

This is the market you serve and your ICP (ideal customer profile). Who are they, what are their roles, goals, and their COIN-OP, or their Challenges, Opportunities, Impacts, Needs, Outcomes, and Priorities? This includes building great personas, with the metrics that matter most (how they're measured), emotional factors, people they work with internally when buying, their buying process, decision criteria, and more.

Having this information allows you to create buyer engagement content to attract the right buyers to you (based on the problems they have that you solve or the opportunities they face that you enable) and help them make good decisions at each stage of their journey (culminating in a purchase decision).

Then you can build the playbooks and sales support content to help your reps sell to these buyers effectively. Those are the first three building blocks – **Buyer Acumen**, **Buyer Engagement Content**, and **Sales Support Content**.



Systems Thinking Buyer Sales **Buyer Engagement** Support Acumen Content Content Sales Sales Sales Hiring **Training** Coaching Sales Sales Sales **Analytics Process Methodology** & Metrics Sales Sales Sales **Technology** Compensation Manager & Recognition & Tools **Enablement** Communication: Sales Force & **Cross-Functional Collaboration** Sales Support Services

The next three blocks are **Sales Hiring**, **Sales Training**, and **Sales Coaching**.

 We know these are critical and blend perfectly. All three blocks have specific systems that support them, and ways to implement best practices effectively, that will help you get the best possible results.

The third row includes Sales Process, Sales Methodology, and Sales Analytics & Metrics.

• These blocks aren't always "owned" by sales enablement, but they're important to get right and have a massive influence on sales performance. Sales process and analytics/metrics are often owned by sales or revenue operations. Methodology varies but is increasingly owned by enablement. In either case, sales enablement influences their adoption and orchestrates progress through effective cross-functional collaboration. Sales process, methodology, and analytics are important building blocks to support high performance.

And the last three core blocks are **Sales Technology & Tools**, **Sales Compensation & Recognition**, and **Sales Manager Enablement**.

 Tools should support the effective execution of the process and methodology or make the rep more efficient.
 Compensation must reward the behaviors and outcomes you want to see. Interestingly, with comp plans, avoiding dissatisfaction is equally as important as fostering satisfaction.

Sales Manager Enablement is a topic unto itself.

 It's critical, too often ignored, and far more extensive than the regular block size conveys. It also has an entire system dedicated to it – the Sales Management System (more to come).

The Building Blocks of Sales Enablement

The Building Blocks of Sales Enablement

Communication, with both the sales force and **Crossfunctional Collaboration** (with a sales enablement charter for alignment) comes next.

Many enablement teams are the communication conduit to the sales force, for consistency of timing, where to find communiques, formatting, and messaging.

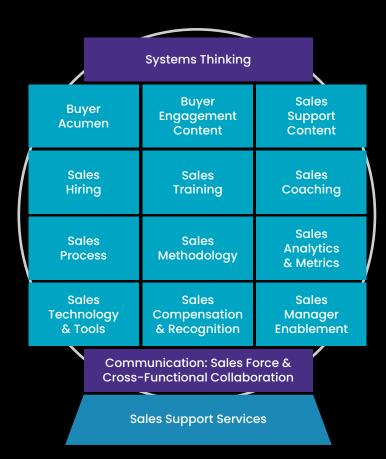
Cross-functional collaboration with alignment through a charter and with top-down support is key to:

- aligning around your buyers and customers
- and how the organization will support the sales force to get the best-possible results serving them.
- Expanding your impact, since you can't do everything.
 Cross-functional collaboration is a force multiplier.

And last, while it's not something that's done everywhere, is **Sales Support Services**.

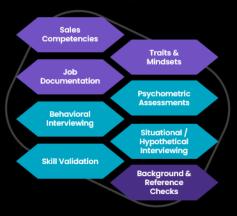
- This includes things like RFP/RFI support, presentation support, research support, or even coaching services.
- I consider the systems, collaboration/communication, and the support services to be things that support the core blocks, but if you want to consider them building blocks, too, please do.

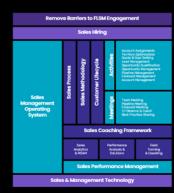
Except for the support services, which not everyone offers, all these elements must be present and working to some degree of effectiveness, to achieve maximum sales performance.



How Sales Systems Support The Building Blocks of Sales Enablement

Sales Hiring System Sales Management System





Sales Readiness System



Sales Training System



The building blocks are the framework – the "pieces of the puzzle" or performance levers.

The systems are how you execute to maximize the blocks, and drive repeatable, replicable, predictable results.

In terms of the systems, there are many possible ones you can build to support the building blocks and your sales force. The four systems I work with most frequently (because, over many years, I've seen them make the most impact), are:

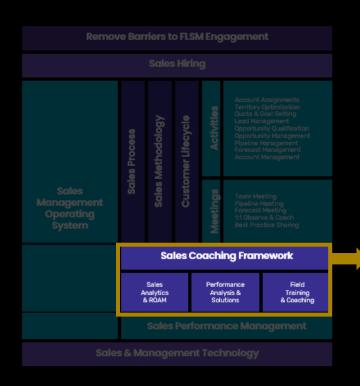
- The Sales Hiring System
- The Sales Readiness System
- The Sales Training System
- The Sales Management System, which includes an embedded Sales Coaching System.

Speaking of embedded systems, notice that The Sales Training System is a subset of the Sales Readiness System. I find that it's important enough to results to call it out specifically. In addition, you'll notice that the 5 Stages of Sales Mastery & Behavior Change are nested inside the training system.

This is how systems work. They are interrelated and interdependent, joining to make the whole greater than the sum of its parts (force multiplier).

For that reason, let's look at The Sales Coaching System, as well, which is labeled as Sales Coaching Framework in the larger management system.

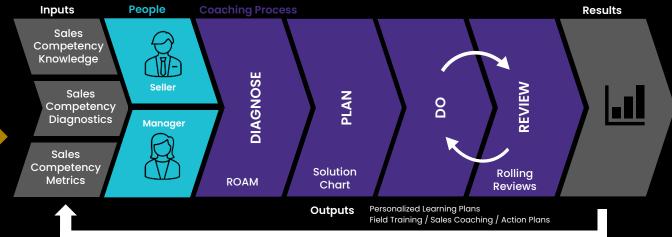
How Sales Systems Support The Building Blocks



The Sales Coaching System

The Sales Coaching System is the detail behind the Sales Coaching Framework in The Sales Management System.

The Sales Coaching Framework & Process



Coaching Sessions

Set the Stage

Lead a Performance
Analysis Discussion

Explore Solution Options &
Agree on the Best Solution

Develop & Implement an Action Plan

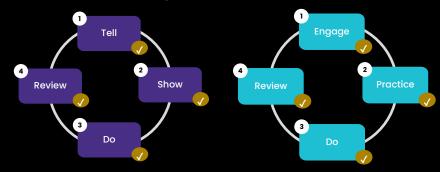
ACTION

PLAN

□With Whom □How □By When

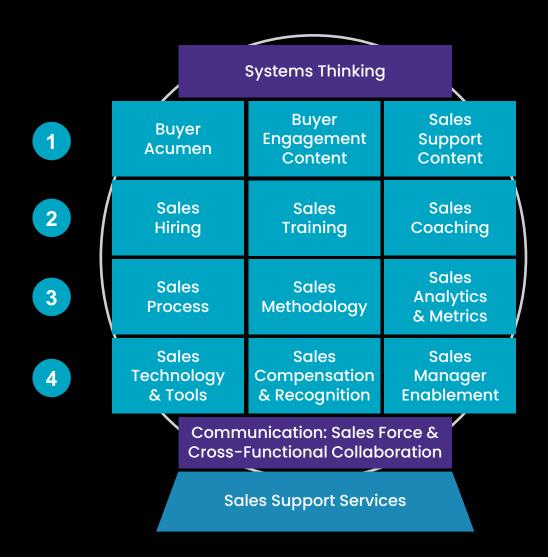
□Who □Does What

Field Training Sales Coaching



How Sales Systems Support The Building Blocks

The Building Blocks	The Supporting Systems		
The First Row of BlocksBuyer AcumenBuyer Engagement ContentSales Support Content	The System Sales Readiness System		
The Second Row of BlocksSales HiringSales TrainingSales Coaching	The Systems Sales Hiring System Sales Training System Sales Training + Sales Management System		
The Third Row of BlocksSales ProcessSales MethodologySales Analytics & Metrics	The Systems Sales Readiness + Sales Management System		
 The Fourth Row of Blocks Sales Technology & Tools Sales Compensation Sales Manager Enablement 	The Systems Sales Readiness + Sales Management		



With this foundation in place, let's continue to create the plan.

Use the Building Blocks as a Diagnostic Tool

Since the goal is to develop a sales enablement plan that will drive results, you should start with a gap analysis. I suggest moving through the blocks, assessing each one, to determine what's in place, what's a strength, what's "good enough for now" (GEFN), and where the biggest gaps are. Then, prioritize to close the gaps, based on what you believe will best support your company's current strategic objectives and tactical plans.

In general, this is a sound performance consulting method, to get started. For clarity, while it seems like I've just grossly oversimplified gap analysis, I'm not saying to identify the specific solution within in any given block without doing a deeper root cause analysis, but for higher-level planning purposes, you certainly should be able to determine which blocks to prioritize for further analysis and solution design, with a thumbnail gap analysis.



There is one important disclaimer:

The one exception to the gap analysis rule, is this:

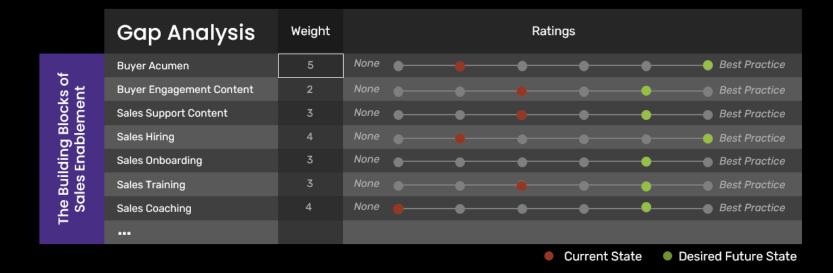
If you don't already have a rock-solid foundation of **Buyer Acumen**, you should address that first.

You must start with your buyers, customers, and your market, or all the downstream work that you do could be misaligned and much less effective. If that's a gap, start with deepening your buyer acumen, and then prioritize the rest of the blocks based on your gap analysis.

Use the Building Blocks as a Diagnostic Tool

THE GAP ANALYSIS

- Pick a rating system. A Likert scale of 1-10 works fine as does a sliding scale or verbal scale, such as "None, Poor, Fair, Good/Acceptable, Very Good/Above Average, Best Practice/Exceptional" or something similar.
- Rate your current state in each building block.
- Consider a facilitated session with your crossfunctional charter partners, where you can capture or record their qualitative feedback as well as the quantitative ratings. The discussion will be as valuable as the final rating, because you'll have deeper context.
- Compare to where you should be (ideal state/best practice) and note the gaps, for now. Later you will conduct a larger Situation Assessment of your sales force and their sales effectiveness, with gap and impact analyses. Along with that, this rating of your building blocks will help you prioritize initiatives.



Prioritize with Sales Analytics & Strategic Objectives



Next, use analytics like a medical triage. To keep your patient alive, you must address life-threatening conditions first. If there's an airway blockage or severe bleeding, you need to address those issues first, and then address the broken arm. It's the same in business.

If your discounting practices are endangering profitability, win rates are steadily plummeting, or customer churn is at an all-time high, and these are related to or will prevent the achievement of your leadership team's strategic objectives for the [month, quarter, half-year, year], this will help you further prioritize the building blocks and your initiatives.

Collaborate Cross-Functionally

In organizations, working in a vacuum rarely produces the best results.

"If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together."

Cross-Functional Collaboration

Effective sales enablement practitioners know this. It's why you...

Start with a Sales Enablement Charter!

... to get aligned with your cross-functional collaborators on how you are going to support your sales force in supporting your buyers and customers.

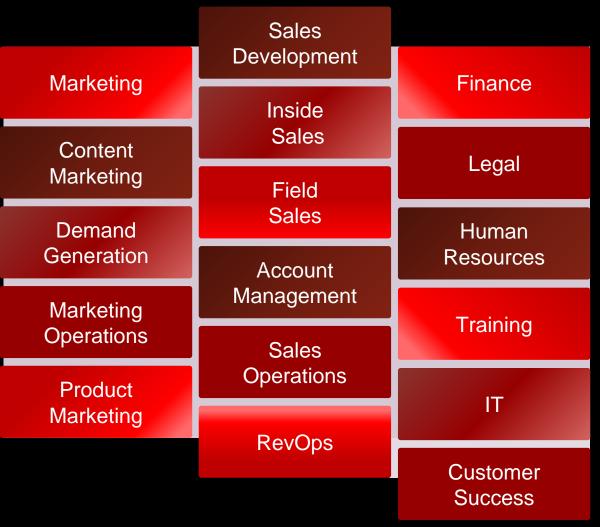
How can you collaborate cross-functionally with your "charter partners" to foster alignment and validate or refine your plans?

- To start, you can engage them in the gap analysis above, especially for any blocks where you collaborate or don't own the work or the output, yourself.
- Or, if you do it authentically (versus manipulatively with a fait accompli), you can start the gap analysis, document your sense of things, and take it to them for their feedback and fuller perspective.

You know the people in your organization, so proceed accordingly.

- In some cases, with some people, it might help to give them "something to throw darts at" rather than a blank slate or empty whiteboard.
- With others, they'd possibly feel defensive that you started work "in their area" without them. Use your best judgment.

The "Bricks in the Wall"



Note: Just an example. May not be accurate for your company



Cross-Functional Collaboration

Regardless of how you start, allow your partners to provide feedback.

- · Facilitate a discussion to get perspectives you may not have considered.
- Learn what others are planning for the coming year already and avoid duplication of effort.
- Share your thoughts and work so far, authentically and transparently, and seek alignment on the plan, especially the focus, priorities, and accountabilities (who will do what by when).

When others own the work, try to leave the "how" up to them, unless you have considerable expertise in the area, or you believe their approach will risk the outcomes you all need.

As an example, if a product marketing manager plans to close a gap in Buyer Acumen by doing persona work, and they only intend to include internal perspectives (rather than speaking with or hiring someone to speak with your buyers and customers or those like them), I would consider that to be a serious flaw that could have downstream negative impacts and hamper your effectiveness.

Once again, use your best judgment. Done well, with good intentions, and the teamwork that is behind the old saying...

None of us is as smart as all of us!

...you'll have a vetted, more effective plan in the end. And, you'll have alignment on initiatives with accountability measures in place.

Create Your Sales Enablement Business Case

Now that you have done this work, how can you build a business case to support your plan and get the budget you need to deliver the results your leaders want? Not surprisingly, a sales discovery methodology works exceptionally well here. In my Modern Sales Foundations course, available through SPARXIQ, we call it a Situation Assessment, and it can be applied equally as well to sales enablement planning with excellent results.

Rather than using this as a buyer-facing discovery approach, you are now using it internally, aimed at your sales force. Using a Current State/Desired Future State framework, you will document **COIN-OP** and its impacts.

> **COIN-OP** = Challenges, Opportunities, Impacts, Needs, Outcomes, and Priorities.

The general idea is this:

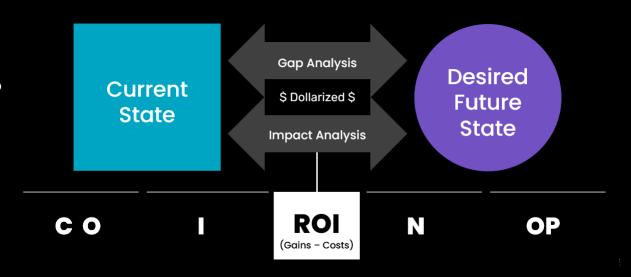
- Start from the context of how your sales force is structured and how they go to market (who sells what to whom and how).
- Understand the current state, including the challenges faced, opportunities available, and the impacts of not resolving the challenges or not capitalizing on the opportunities.
- Document the desired future state, including the desired outcomes and the priority of those outcomes. These outcomes should reflect your executive team's strategic objectives and your sales leader's goals and objectives for the planning cycle.

Then you can:

- Conduct a needs/gap analysis to determine what it will take to close the gap and reach the desired future state.
- Conduct an impact analysis, to assess the impact of the gap. What is the dollarized gain if the outcomes are achieved? What risks can be lessened or averted? What cost savings can be documented?

Lastly, you can then work to dollarize these answers and compare to the costs incurred (and perhaps the "pain of change") to forecast ROI.

Context: Who Sells What to Whom and How



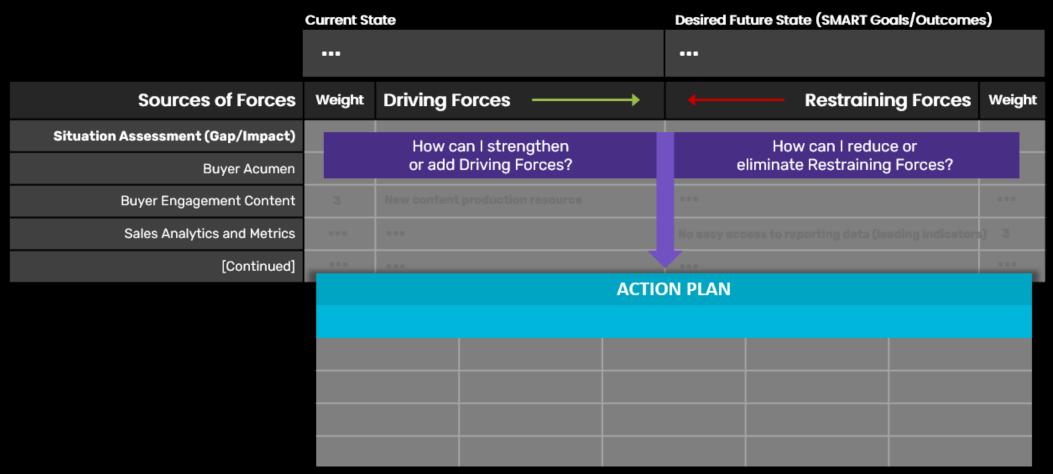
COIN-OP = Challenges, Opportunities, Impacts, Needs, Outcomes, and Priorities

Create Your Sales Enablement Business Case

The above work enables you to determine how compelling the outcomes are, compared to the cost of the solution(s) and the pain of change. This is the foundation for your sales enablement business case.

Now, the goal is to create a plan to achieve your objectives and outcomes in your case, delivering the projected ROI. At this point, I will close with a final piece of advice that has served me very well over the years...

Conduct a Force Field Analysis to develop your plan!



Force Field Analysis

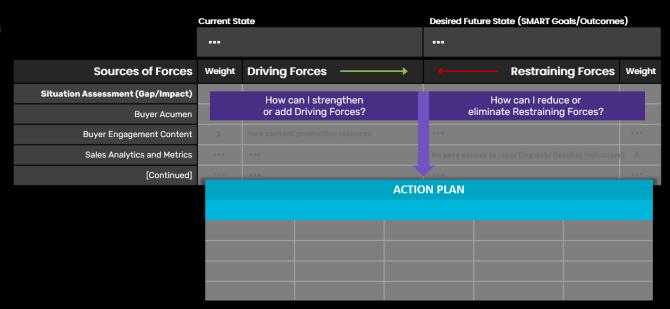
This approach was adapted from Kurt Lewin's work in the 1940s, which remains an excellent, logical method for developing plans for change (such as moving from a current state to a desired future state). The force field analysis complements the Situation Assessment very well.

Here's how it works.

- Document the current state (COI from COIN-OP)
- Document the desired future state with prioritized outcomes, now expressed as SMART goals (OP from COIN-OP, but especially the outcomes).
- Consider the forces at play (Sources of Forces), that are present in your current situation, holding you in statis. In this case, I used the Situation Assessment, The Building Blocks, and two other models.

Note: Documenting the various "Sources of Forces" categories is optional and not part of Lewin's original method. The categories can, however, help you consider all the various possible forces and ensure an analysis that's as complete possible. It's easier than holding it all in your head. The effectiveness of the force field analysis is directly proportional to the accuracy of the forces and relevance of the actions identified in the next three steps.

- Document and weight the Driving Forces, or anything that is in your favor, nudging you forward toward your desired future state.
- Document and weight the Restraining Forces, or anything that is holding you back, hampering your progress toward your desired future state. Any gaps in information – things you should know but don't yet – should be considered a Restraining Force.



• To make this work actionable, ask yourself how you can reduce or eliminate the Restraining Forces (first) and then how you can strengthen or add Driving Forces. Your answers become your Action Plan. Think of yourself as sitting in a race car, pushing equally on the brake pedal and the accelerator at the same time. The car sits in place, perhaps rocking on its chassis – but not moving forward. That is the concept of the force field. To achieve the fastest forward motion, take your foot off the brake first, then press on the accelerator.

This is not the only planning method we can use in sales enablement. It is, however, an effective one, and has been proven effective over many years of use, long before the phrase "sales enablement" came into vogue.

PREREQUISITES	Understanding The Building Blocks of Sales Enablement Framework, Models, and Concepts.	The development of a Sales Enablement Charter with cross-functional collaborators.	A Situation Assessment with COIN-OP, especially outcomes, strategic objectives, and metrics.	The completed Building Block Gap Analysis and all other steps to the left.
WHAT	Sales Enablement Charter	Situation Assessment (Sales Force)	Building Blocks Gap Analysis	Force Field Analysis & Enablement Plan
INPUTS	 Advice from leadership on stakeholders Knowledge of functions in your company and who does what 	 Current strategic plan Current tactical plan Possible SWOT analysis Sales force goals, objectives, revenue plans, quotas Current performance on relevant KPIs 	 Data or knowledge about current state of each BB, from SE and cross- functional partners The Inputs and Outputs of the Situation Assessment to be able to gauge/rate effectiveness of each BB 	 The Inputs and Outputs of the Situation Assessment with Gap & Impact Analyses The Inputs, Outputs, and Gap Analysis for the BB
WHO	All stakeholders and the "Bricks in the Wall" (cross-functional collaborators)	Work Team: Sales Enablement Cross-functional collaborators Sign-off: Sales Leader(s) Stakeholders	Work Team: ➤ Sales Enablement ➤ Cross-functional collaborators Sign-off: ➤ Sales Leader(s)	Work Team: Sales Enablement Cross-functional collaborators Sign-off: Sales Leader(s) Executives
WHY	 Reduce organizational friction Align on how all support sales effectiveness 	 Determine/understand executive and sales force priorities Build your SE business case Obtain budget and resources needed 	Determine what is in place and what needs to change to support the desired outcomes.	Build your Sales Enablement plan that supports the strategic objectives, tactical GTM plan, desired outcomes (metrics that matter most) and the attainment of the overall revenue plan.
HOW	 Stakeholder analysis (including executives and cross-functional collaborators) Alignment meetings Build a charter together 	 Document the current state vs. desired future state of your sales force and sales performance, with COIN-OP Gap Analysis Impact Analysis 	 Document current and desired future state with the BB Conduct BB Gap Analysis Tie to Situation Assessment Outcomes & Priorities Determine what is GEFN, missing, or needs improvement 	Using inputs from the Situation Assessment and BB Gap Analysis, assess Driving & Restraining Forces relative to moving toward the Future State, to build a plan to get there.
OUTPUTS	An aligned, signed-off Sales Enablement Charter (who owns what and who supports the work)	 Clear goals and objectives for the sales force Gap & Impact Analyses for your Sales Force Sales Enablement Business Case 	 Gap Analysis for each BB How the org is currently supporting Sales How they should be supporting Sales Priorities for the BB to support the Situation Assessment, strategic and tactical plans, and goals and objectives 	Sales Enablement Plan (and likely a multi-phase plan to continuously improve the BB over time, in support of achieving sales objectives and plans).

How to Develop a Sales Enablement Plan That Delivers Results!

NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

I hope this eBook has been helpful.

As a profession, we need to find ways to raise the bar to make an impact on performance.

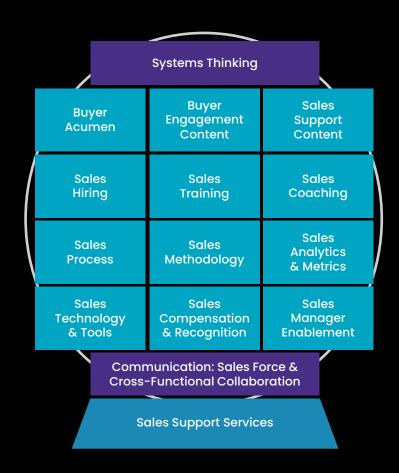
The frameworks, systems, models, and methods in this eBook were designed and shared with this sole intention.

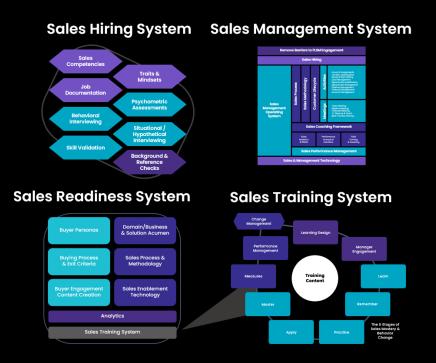
Using The Building Blocks of Sales Enablement to evolve to a formal maturity model and beyond, will serve you well.

If you have questions or need support, my contact information is on the following page.

Even if you don't need support, I would enjoy hearing how this eBook has been helpful, or how you'd like to see it improved.









Mike Kunkle

Author

The Building Blocks of Sales Enablement

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Mike Kunkle is a respected sales transformation architect and an internationallyrecognized expert on sales training, sales effectiveness, and sales enablement.

Mike has spent 39 years in the sales profession and 29 years as a corporate leader or consultant, helping companies drive dramatic revenue growth through best-in-class training strategies and proven-effective sales transformation systems.

Mike is the founder of Transforming Sales Results, LLC, and today works as the Vice President of Sales Effectiveness Services for SPARXiQ, where he advises clients, publishes thought leadership, speaks at conferences, leads webinars, develops sales training courses, delivers workshops, and designs and implements sales enablement systems that get results.

He collaborated with Doug Wyatt to develop SPARXiQ's <u>Modern Sales Foundations™</u>, authored SPARXiQ's <u>Sales Coaching Excellence™</u> course, published a book on <u>The Building Blocks of Sales Enablement</u> and collaborated with Felix Krueger to develop <u>The Building Blocks of Sales Enablement Learning Experience</u>.

Connect with Mike & Follow His Content			
Personal Blog	https://www.mikekunkle.com/blog		
SPARXiQ Blog	https://sparxiq.com/author/mikekunkle		
Sales Effectiveness Straight Talk Webinars	https://bit.ly/MikeKunkle-OnDemand (60 Recorded Webinars)		
The Building Blocks of Sales Enablement Book	https://bit.ly/BBofSE (Paperback and Kindle)		
The Building Blocks Learning Experience	https://GoFFWD.com/Blocks		
Building Blocks, Close Up! LinkedIn Newsletter	https://bit.ly/BBCU-Newsletter		
7 Steps to Maximizing Enablement's Impact	https://www.goffwd.com/impact-recording-registered/		
Mike's LinkedIn Profile	https://www.linkedin.com/in/mikekunkle		

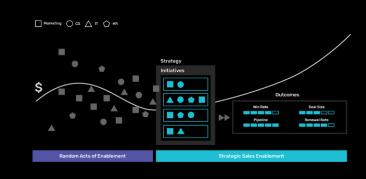
Learning Experience

The Building Blocks of Sales Enablement

A learning experience designed to fast-track your journey to Sales Enablement mastery and business impact.







Learn

Gain the knowledge required for Sales Enablement mastery

with +4 hours of video content, curated resources, quizzes Collaborate

Receive expert guidance and learn with other Enablers

with group coaching calls and access to a growing community

Implement

Implement a high-impact Enablement approach

with dedicated video lessons, templates, and expert guidance



"Imagine being able to pick the brains of both Felix Krueger AND Mike Kunkle! Seriously, if you want to make an investment in you and your career, consider joining us! After one group coaching call, my mind is swimming, yet have a starting point and can continue to get coaching each week to discuss progress!"

STEVE SHOREY

GLOBAL SALES ENABLEMENT LEADER AT THALES DIGITAL IDENTITY & SECURITY



I am absolutely in love with all the supportive content, fun quizzes, and on-demand videos! My amazing mentors, massive thank you for the opportunity to learn from the best professionals in the field and for these high-quality, handy materials which helped me to understand where I am at right now and what my action plan is!

TETIANA VEREITINA SALES DEMO ENGINEER AT RALLYWARE





Individual Membership



+4h Video Content

Learn proven best practices with bite-sized video lessons at your own pace



Weekly Group Coaching

Understand where to focus, navigate stakeholder management, translate learnings into the context of your organization



Cheat Sheets

Internalize what you've learned and reference it easily



Templates

Translate the concepts taught into the context of your organization



BONUS: 1-on-1 Coaching Kick-off

Clarify your goals and receive direction on how to leverage the tools at your disposal

Total Value: +\$9,000/year

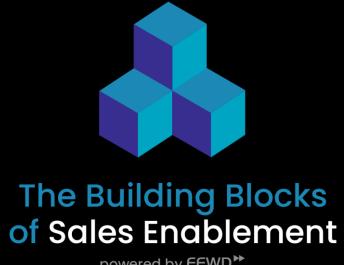
Price: \$1,695/year

25% off with discount code BB25 (\$1,272/year)

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If you don't believe this membership will support you in taking your enablement impact to the next level, we'll refund the full membership fee, no questions asked.



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