



Top 12 Ideas for Driving Consistent Growth

1. **Sales Process** - Develop a documented sales process. It is the foundation for continuous improvement, measurement and focus. It is the roadmap and framework for coaching and for creating LIFT with the sales force.

2. **Growth Strategies Portfolio** - Define your top strategies for growth each year. Research suggests that Customer Penetration, Retention and Expanding Market Share are the most important strategies, yet they are considered table stakes. You must do these three. Pick 2-3 more and then execute them flawlessly. Pursuing too many strategies dilutes your focus.

3. **Repositioning** - Reposition yourself as a “problem definer” so you have something for your “solution” to fix. Broaden your perspective and therefore your impact. Focus your sales force on strategies that help improve your customer’s business results. Be aggressive in quantifying the cost of the customer’s problems.

4. **Metrics** - Create deliberate measures that reflect both historical and leading indicators of effectiveness. How many measures you select will depend on your business and the level of rigor you need to apply for your sales force.

5. **Customer Business Reviews** - Make quarterly or annual Business Reviews a must for your top customers. Planning for and delivering formal Customer Business Reviews is a proven strategy to build penetration and deepen customer loyalty.

Delivering Business Reviews is the single best strategy to change the customer’s perception of your sales force from “vendors” to “advisors.”

6. **Growth Planning** - Establish accountability and discipline for achieving financial goals through Territory Growth Plans and Key Account Strategy practices. Organizations that are rigorous around territory execution win more often than those that don’t.

7. **Forecasting** - Establish a monthly forecasting system that looks at the pipeline formally, and is a key element of the formal coaching conversation. Ensure your forecasting method communicates where each opportunity is in the sales process. Pipeline management reminds the salesperson of the need to think like a business person, making deliberate choices on where to invest time to move opportunities forward.

8. **Sales Management Practices** – Explicitly define the practices you expect of your sales managers. Define standards for their roles as leaders, recruiters, strategists and coaches rather than glorified salespeople. Choose sales managers not on their selling skills but on their desire to lead, teach and coach.

9. **Segmentation** – Build intimacy and depth of experience through customer segmentation. Identify the critical segments for your business and consider organizing your field sales team by market segments. Then, create in-depth profiles of each segment and deliver aggressively to the requirements of each segment.



10. **Skills Mastery** - Be aggressive in developing and training your sales force. The quality of your front-line professionals drives your business. Asking an outside speaker to come in every year to do a seminar

doesn’t cut it, and “letting them figure it out on their own” leaves too much to chance. The cost of turnover is prohibitive. Explicitly define the skills and capabilities required to win. Assess your team and all future hires against those skills and invest seriously in sales force development.

11. **Build a Bench** - Actively recruit. Being reactive about finding talent hinders your growth. Seasoned executives affirm they are more constrained by the caliber and action-orientation of their people than they are by capital. Reducing the effect of turnover is essential to sustain double-digit growth.

12. **Customer Experience** – Finally, ensure that the voice of the customer permeates everything you do. Conduct Customer Feedback year round to determine what customers most value about you. Make listening to the customer, really listening, a core practice. Everyone in the is responsible for Customer Experience.



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