



## Cracking Sales Management Code Client Case Study

***“We are now making the most of our internal resources and bringing balance and alignment between our customers and our company’s goals and strategies ”***

**Garry Francis**

*VP Commercial, North America Original Equipment, Gates*

### THE SITUATION

Gates Corporation, a leading global manufacturer of industrial and automotive products, built a roadmap to drive overall sales force transformation. The process included introducing a new sales methodology and a customer relationship management (CRM) system to its sales force. However, with all of the changes taking place, it became evident that the sales management team was not fully equipped to provide the structure necessary to carry out the organizational transformation.

To ensure that the sales force transformation continued to move forward, Gates Corporation engaged Vantage Point Performance to help develop a strategic plan for the second phase of the transformation.

### THE APPROACH

Vantage Point Performance began by examining the company’s current sales processes and pipeline management to see what challenges needed to be addressed. The most pressing issues included:

- A pipeline clogged by unqualified leads
- Opportunities sitting in the pipeline for an extended period of time without being closed
- A significant portion of business won not being in alignment with the company’s strategic plan
- Inadequate sales leadership succession planning

### THE SOLUTION

To help Gates Corporation complete its sales transformation, Vantage Point Performance started at the top by developing training for the sales management team based on the *Cracking the Sales Management Code* methodology. The training was designed to equip the sales management team to become an effective force in driving sales transformation and correcting issues hindering sales.

Sales managers learned how to shift one-on-one sales meetings with sales reps from fact-finding missions to coaching sessions. Prior to the training, sales managers tended to take over meetings instead of engaging the sales reps and encouraging them to use their critical reasoning skills. Sales managers have

since learned how to ask strategic questions that allow sales reps the opportunity to develop solutions on their own.

The sales manager training also focused on helping sales managers learn the coaching skills necessary to train sales reps in better qualifying leads and more effectively targeting business that aligns with the company’s strategic plan. Now sales reps are better equipped to take a more proactive approach in leading strategic aspects of the sales process.

In addition to the training, Vantage Point Performance also helped Gates Corporation develop a new sales management rhythm that augments its weekly meetings with quarterly performance and planning meetings, as well as monthly one-on-one coaching sessions with sales managers. The additional structure has also improved sales leadership succession planning. Now, if a sales manager moves on, there is a replacement on staff that can step in and lead the sales process.

### THE RESULTS

Previously, the organization’s close rate was on average 12%. The sales force has since doubled the close rate to an average of 20% - 25%. New business being won is also more in line with the type of business the company is strategically targeting. For instance, in February of 2013, nearly 75% of the business won aligned with the company’s strategic plan.

“I will tell you, whether you can put your finger on it or not, any time a company wins nearly three times the new business from the previous year, that is substantial,” said Garry Francis, VP Commercial, NA Original Equipment, Gates.



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***“I have seen, without a doubt, the recalibration of the interactions between sales managers and sales consultants. The interactions are now more efficient, focused, robust, and more forward-thinking.”***

David Spinale  
Managing Director, Northeast Region of Field Consulting Group  
TIAA-CREF

### THE SITUATION

TIAA-CREF, a full-service financial services company, had a disciplined rhythm around the number of interactions the company’s Field Consulting Group sales managers had with frontline sales consultants, but wanted to improve the content and focus of each meeting.

Wanting an outside perspective, TIAA-CREF brought Vantage Point Performance on board to assess the company’s sales management framework and bring new ideas to the table that would improve the effectiveness and value of the interactions.

### THE APPROACH

Vantage Point Performance began with an assessment to examine the company’s sales management framework and understand the existing sales processes. The assessment revealed the following:

- There was inconsistency in adoption of the sales management framework across teams.
- There were variances in the application of the sales management framework.
- Interactions between sales managers and sales consultants were generally focused on the inspection of past events, with minimal time available to focus on forward planning.

### THE SOLUTION

Vantage Point implemented a “train the trainer” strategy to ensure that the sales managers were equipped to train the sales consultants on how to effectively operate within the sales management framework. The custom sales manager training program is rooted in Vantage Point’s *Cracking the Sales Management Code* methodology, which improves sales managers’ ability to drive the specific activities that directly affect sales performance.

Another objective of the training was to unify sales managers so sales consultants would receive consistent training. The training was also designed to help sales managers shift the focus of interactions with sales consultants from inspection-based conversations to strategic forward-planning conversations. In addition, Vantage Point Performance also helped

TIAA-CREF refine its sales management rhythm.

“We wanted a proprietary framework that was adjustable and adoptable to our current sales process and to our future strategic growth. The Vantage Point Performance program is compatible with our existing sales management framework, and this alignment is very important to us,” said David Spinale, Managing Director, Northeast Region of Field Consulting Group for TIAA-CREF.

### THE RESULTS

TIAA-CREF has experienced adoption of the training program across all levels, including sales consultants, sales managers, and executive level directors. Unifying the sales managers has increased the consistency, adoption, and sustainability of the sales management framework across all teams.

The refined sales management rhythm has made the interactions between sales managers and sales consultants more efficient, focused, and robust. The training has also helped sales managers shift the focus of interactions to forward planning meetings. Consultants have reported that the collaborative approach is better preparing them for meetings with clients. Sales consultants are now better equipped to identify high-value target clients, develop a strategy to engage target clients, and more effectively prepare for client meetings to provide relevant solutions that address clients’ needs.

“The program has provided us with the capability to clearly define which high-value activities best provide the results that match our strategic plan. This clarity has led to the biggest change, which is refocusing our efforts to define who we are engaging, how we are engaging them, and how to most effectively improve the value of each engagement,” said Spinale.

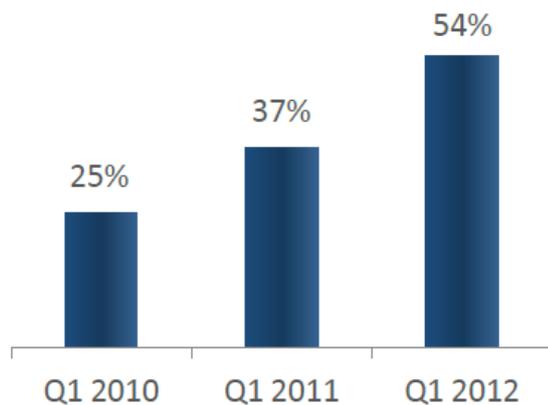


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***“This is the best sales management training we’ve ever had. It has fundamentally changed the way we manage our business”***

VP of Sales

### Percent of Forecasted Revenue Won



#### THE SITUATION

The financial services arm of a multi-billion dollar global corporation was experiencing bloated sales pipelines, inaccurate forecasting, and declining win rates. Rather than continue to train its front-line sellers, the development team turned its attention to the role of the sales manager. Sales managers had received lots of training on how to coach their reps, but it had failed to improve sales performance. In fact, a survey of the salespeople revealed that their managers’ coaching effort was both minimal and low-impact. A new approach was needed to provide a sustainable sales improvement. Vantage Point Performance was asked to assess the situation and provide a solution to the problem.

#### THE APPROACH

Upon examination, it became apparent that the management team was suffering from a few common problems. Foremost, a lack of formal management process was leading to highly reactive management activities. Second, sales leadership’s desire to manage its heterogeneous sales force in a homogenous way was muting the impact of their coaching interactions. And finally, sales managers were struggling to apply generic coaching frameworks to the day-to-day activities of their sellers.

In response, the sales force adopted and implemented the sales management methodology from *Cracking the Sales Management Code*. Vantage Point developed a customized training agenda based on the needs uncovered during the assessment. During subsequent workshops, sales managers defined a new management process, created coaching tools to structure their conversations, identified the few sales metrics that were important for themselves, and learned new skills to execute their new management tasks.

#### THE RESULTS

Ongoing surveys of the salespeople showed that the quantity and quality of coaching was increasing dramatically, and the impact of improved coaching was evident. The sales force had been winning 25% of its forecasted revenue six months before the training, but that win rate had improved to 37% within six months post-training. And eighteen months after the training, that win rate had increased to 54%. Better training. Better coaching. Better performance. Sustainable change.