

# 6 Reasons Why Sales Managers Fail

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# The Six Reasons Why Sales Managers Fail

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## About Resolution Systems, Inc.

**Resolution Systems, Inc.** is a sales consulting, hiring, training, and recruiting firm dedicated to providing real solutions for sales leadership. Resolution Systems, Inc. takes a direct approach to honing in on the critical sales issues that face businesses today.

**Our four primary services are:**

1. [Sales Assessments](#) – In-depth psychological profiling of salespeople for hiring and development
2. [Sales Consulting](#) – In-depth analysis to transform your sales culture
3. [Sales Training](#) – Street-smart, ready-to-use sales development to improve performance
4. [Sales Management Training](#) – Developing leadership to help them hire, coach and lead your sales team

We are located in Greensboro, North Carolina. Our experienced staff provides sales training seminars based on specific company needs, not generalized, out-dated courses.

We've taken sales consulting into the 21st century by combining in-depth assessments and evaluation, ongoing specialized training, and a recruiting methodology designed to deliver superior sales champions.

Nowhere else will you find a sales consulting firm that measures selling skills, selling behavior, selling attitude, and selling values and feeds back the results inside its own proprietary selling system, in addition to providing excellent back-end training, consulting and evaluation.

**Resolution Systems, Inc.** works with sales leadership with captive sales staff to eliminate issues that result in low sales, low margins, high turnover, and the more "hidden" issues like whether or not a candidate is likely to handle stress or actually enjoys selling.

# The Six Reasons Why Sales Managers Fail

The Sales Manager role is one of the most difficult in any organization. You must deal with the pressures of sales goals and cash flow. Everyone looks to you and your sales team to pay the bills. If you don't sell, people lose their jobs. The challenges you face are difficult and require more than knowledge of products and service. It requires an understanding of people, motivators, psychology, sociology and small group dynamics. Combine that with the fact that there are different philosophies on how to do it right and a million books written on the subject and things can get quite confusing.

There is no question that the role of Sales Manager is tough and not for the timid approval seeker. A common practice by many organizations is to promote a top salesperson to Sales Manager. Ironically, when top salespeople get promoted to the job of Sales Manager, many fail. From this, we know that superstar sales performance does not automatically equate to exceptional performance as a Sales Manager.

Just as with any job, part of success is accumulated skills and knowledge. The other part of it is the internal components of the individual – how they are wired.

Sales managers fail for many different reasons, and if you are a Sales Manager or VP, ask yourself if any of these issues have ever caused problems for you or others you know.

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## Failure #1 - The Sales Manager is not wired for the job

As you will find in the book, "Blueprint of a Sales Champion", there is a formula for determining a salesperson's capacity to perform. The same applies to Sales Managers. Many ineffective Sales Managers come from the ranks of the sales team. Often, they were excellent salespeople who were moved up based on the presumption that if they were good at sales, they'll be good at sales management. Not so.

The skill sets and internal wiring are completely different for the two professions. When a Sales Manager doesn't have the capacity to perform in that role, he will fail (and in some cases, may bring the organization down with him.)

Identifying your specific attributes, motivators, skills sets, etc. are critical to ensuring success. In fact, we've advised numerous companies to not promote their top salesperson to Sales Manager for several reasons. First, they gain a substandard Sales Manager. Managing accounts is quite different than managing people, processes and systems. Some of the competencies required for success in Sales Management are quite different than those of professional selling.

The other reason is that the company loses out on the revenue generated by the top salesperson. When a salesperson is promoted to Sales Manager they cannot invest enough time in the sales process and maintaining their own accounts. So, either they won't pay enough attention to their own accounts or they won't provide the support, coaching and leadership that the sales team needs. Put those two together and you've lost revenue as well as gained a poor manager which will affect the other salespeople.

## **Failure #2 – Average salespeople aren't considered for the Sales Manager job**

A good candidate for a sales management position rarely gets the chance. Poor performance in a sales role becomes a stumbling block for advancement. Unfortunately, many of the best Sales Managers were, at best, mediocre salespeople. Consider some of the most successful NFL coaches. Many of them were very marginal players or never played the game at all.

They had a greater capacity to coach, communicate their vision, and lead the team than to participate on the field as a star player. Any sales organization that hires a Sales Manager largely on past performance in sales may miss out on a great sales leader. Top Sales Managers like the sales process, understand it and enjoy participating in it. They just may not be as good at it as others. Strong commitment to sales and a desire to help other become successful is a good start for a successful Sales Manager.

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## **Failure #3 - The Sales Manager lacks training**

Place anyone in any position and give them no training, and what do you have? You get an employee who stays in a constant state of frustration. Many Sales Managers don't instinctively know how to execute in their role effectively. They require the training and resources to understand and recognize what each individual salesperson needs to help them be successful.

Training helps Sales Managers understand the critical issues ranging from the strategic to the tactical. Examples are: establishing an effective hiring process for salespeople; developing solid compensation plans that drive performance; establishing expectations and goals; field coaching; performance review; implementing accountability procedures, etc. The list can be quite long. Rarely does a person possess all of the skills, knowledge and experience required to successfully run a sales team. It usually takes years of trial and error. Although it does take time, effective Sales Management Training can shed years off of a Sales Managers learning curve and put them on the fast track to Sales Management Success.

In the end, a Sales Manager who has minimal training will significantly hamper the ability of the salespeople to do their jobs. Eventually, this can reduce the organization's competitive edge.

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## **Failure #4 – The Sales Manager lacks an effective selling system**

Football teams don't go out on the field without a clearly designed strategy – a set of plays to execute against a defense in order to gain yards, score touchdowns, drive momentum and win. Without a selling system to follow, your salespeople will make it up as they attempt to move through the sales process. In fact, they'll most likely attempt to reinvent the wheel each time they're on the phone or face-to-face with a prospect or customer. In this scenario, there is no repeatable formula for success. Sometimes they get the sale, sometimes they don't.

Unfortunately, without the guidance of a solid sales process, there is also no way to determine why they did or didn't get the sale. Even worse, coaching becomes a difficult task. You can't determine what they did right or wrong. Only through an effective selling system can you help your salespeople confidently drive the sales process. This includes everything from prospecting and qualifying; develop trust; asking questions and performing a needs analysis; giving an effective presentation; validating claims; and finally, closing the sale.

When the Sales Manager doesn't provide the sales team with a clearly defined selling system, the players will squander opportunities that your competitors will get.

## **Failure #5 – The Sales Manager lacks an effective hiring process**

This is one of the most challenging aspects of the Sales Managers job – finding and attracting good salespeople. I wrote about this extensively in my book, *Blueprint of a Sales Champion*. In it, we define the psychological profile of a top salesperson – a Sales Champion.

I've found that many Sales Managers make hiring decisions based on two criteria – experience and personality. How good is the sales candidate's résumé and how relatable were they in the interview? Regardless of how long or short the hiring process may be, it still comes down to those two things.

But relying on gut feelings and superficial interviews alone in the selection process limit your ability to make the right choice. Just like having a good selling system for your sales team, so is utilizing an effective hiring system.

Using our Sales Champion Battery™ assessment tool, combined with our years of experienced analysis can help you acquire the best possible sales talent. Remember, it's your job as the Sales Manager to make the right decision when hiring new salespeople. Without a defined hiring process utilizing objective measurements like our Sales Champion battery assessment, hiring decisions can be a toss-up.

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## **Failure #6 – The Sales Manager lacks the concept of coaching**

If a Sales Manager sees himself as a “manager” only, then s/he can easily be driven by the administrative functions of the job: administration, spreadsheets, forecasting reports, operational issues, etc.

A “coach,” on the other hand, works with the salespeople to develop them into better performers. They strategize with them on more complex deals and hold them accountable for their results. They also provide feedback on performance issues, as well as course correct before the month or quarter is over to help them achieve their goals and maximize opportunities.

Again, Sales Management is a tough job. Invest the time and energy in sales management training and reap the rewards of a successful sales team.

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### **About the Author**

Barrett Riddleberger is an internationally recognized leader in the practice of sales assessment, sales training, sales recruitment and sales consulting. His book, “*Blueprint of a Sales Champion*,” details how organizations can find, train and retain top performing salespeople... even in a highly competitive market. An accomplished author and sales consultant, Riddleberger is also highly in demand as a business development and motivational speaker for organizations seeking to drive their sales force to greater levels of performance. For more info go to [www.ResolutionSystemsInc.com](http://www.ResolutionSystemsInc.com) or [www.BlueprintOfASalesChampion.com](http://www.BlueprintOfASalesChampion.com) or call 336.665.0506.

# The Sales Management Summit

Our Sales Management Summit is a customized 3-day training program designed exclusively for improving Sales Leadership performance. This is one of the most critical investments you can make in your organization. The burden of sales success does not fall on the shoulders of your salespeople. It falls on the shoulders of your Sales Managers. Their ability to hire premium sales talent, coach them to peak performance, lead them through economic challenges and build and sustain momentum is the core of their Sales Management role. They not only learn how to do that more effectively in our training program, but also give them the tools to do it. They walk away inspired, educated, equipped and ready to achieve greater levels of sales success.

## Sales Manager Testimonial

*"After the first day, which was the self-assessment, I thought it was awesome. Then, the second day, when we went over the "meat," I was equally impressed. It is hard for me to delineate which part was most valuable, because I think they were equally valuable to me."*

Our Sales Management Summit training program is not steeped in pie-in-the-sky theories. It's an intense, in-depth, no-fluff, interactive program that puts useable Sales Management tools in the hands of your Sales Managers to aid them in developing a top performing sales team.

## Our Sales Management Philosophy

The responsibility of sales success ultimately falls on the sales leadership—not the salesperson. Resolution Systems, Inc. believes that every salesperson needs a good coach. Our philosophy for Sales Management is simple. An effective Sales Manager cannot lead a sales team from behind a desk.

## A Sales Manager must:

- observe salespeople in the field to understand each rep's strengths and developmental areas
- conduct curbside coaching to help reps improve their performance
- help salespeople make their careers personally rewarding, in order to fuel motivation
- provide leadership and guidance to achieve specific company goals and quotas
- exercise self-awareness to engage each salesperson uniquely for maximum results
- execute a solid plan of action to grow the sales and customer-base

Typically, a poor Sales Manager has one of two problems. Either they don't understand the role of a Sales Manager, or, they don't have the resources available to do the job effectively. In many cases, it is both.

## Sales Manager Testimonial

*"I thought the course was tremendous. The personalization of score results and audio CDs provided to address specific development areas was terrific. I highly recommend this to others. Great job pulling it all together!"*

In addition, top salespeople poorly managed by their Sales Managers will yield the same results as poor performers who are well managed. Therefore, understand the Sales Management role and its effects on the sales team are critical. With today's ever increasing competitive landscape, more effort must be invested into the effectiveness of your front-line Sales managers. The benefits of our Sales Management training are numerous.

### **A strong Sales Manager can:**

- Reduce turnover significantly
- Implement a repeatable system for success
- Increase sales and margins
- Clarify and drive the sales process
- Reduce personal and departmental frustration
- Provide more accurate forecasting
- Develop a more solid sales strategy for effectively approaching the marketplace with a competitive value proposition

The Sales Management Summit offers a complete process for effective Sales Management. No more doubt, worries or fears about how to run an effective sales team. No more concerns over who to hire. No more sleepless nights about meeting sales quotas. This sales management training program is for you – the sales leader. Proven tools and systems are at your disposal to improve the performance of your team – starting as soon as you complete the program. Implement the tools and systems immediately - No waiting!

#### **Sales Manager Testimonial**

*"The sales management assessment allowed me to learn a great deal about myself as well as confirm a lot about myself. The role play scenarios are excellent, and I find the feedback timeframe very useful for "hot to" evaluations. Instructor's knowledge and teaching style was very constructive and influential."*

### **Sales Managers will learn to:**

- Hire and retain Sales Champions
- Elevate performance through an effective Sales Management process
- Continually develop their sales teams selling skills
- Become a more effective Sales Coach
- Stop unproductive activities by becoming a Sales Partner with their salespeople
- Understand their salespeople better for more personalized Sales Management
- Develop a legitimate sales culture
- Establish a climate of accountability
- Understand their Sales Management role better
- Use our Sales Management Tools that generate real-world sales results

### **Sales Management Tools**

- Sales Management Assessment
- Qualified Prospect Forms
- Sales Champion Coaching Audits
- Sales Expectations System

#### **Sales Director Testimonial**

*"I found the whole course valuable, especially Day 2, covering sales meetings, coaching and sales productivity. I can't wait for my Sales Managers to take the class!"*

### **Sales Management Topics**

- The Unique Role of Sales Management & The Dynamics of Sales Leadership
- The Sales Champion Battery™ Assessment System
- Hiring Sales Champions: How To Do It Right Every Time
- The Six Types of Sales Managers: Which One are You?
- How to Troubleshoot and Fix Performance Problems
- The Secrets to Joint Calls and Curbside Coaching That Pay Off
- Why Sales Managers Experience Turnover and How to Prevent It
- Establishing Iron-Clad Expectations and a Sales Accountability Culture
- The 7-Step Filter – Ensuring Your Salespeople are Only Selling to Qualified Buyers
- How To Develop and Deliver Powerful Sales Meetings That Impact Your Sales Team
- In-Depth Discussions Related to Areas of Personal Interest

#### **Sales Manager Testimonial**

*"The material was outstanding!"*

During our Sales Management training, Sales Managers will also learn the principles and use of the [Sales Champion Battery™](#) assessment system for:

1. Hiring better salespeople
2. Troubleshooting performance issues with existing Sales Managers and salespeople
3. Developing their team of Sales Managers into better coaches for their salespeople

**CONTACT US to learn more about the Sales Management Summit**

- **CALL: 336.665.0506**

# Sales Management Summit - Training Agenda

## Day 1: (full day; 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM)

8:30 am – 9:45 am

\* Module 1 – Role of Sales Management

10 am – 12 pm

\* Module 2 - Hiring Sales Champions

12 pm – 1 pm

\* Lunch

1 pm – 4:30 pm

\* Module 3 - The Sales Management Battery™

## Day 2: (full day; 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM)

8 am – 9:45 am

\* Module 4 - Sales Productivity

10 am – 12 pm

\* Module 5 - Sales Meetings

12 pm – 1 pm

\* Lunch

1 pm – 2:45 pm

\* Module 6 – Sales Coaching

3 pm – 4:00 pm

\* Module 7 – Performance Appraisal (Managing Sales Performance)

## Day 3: (full day; 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM)

8 am – 12noon

Role Play & Feedback sessions

12 pm – 1 pm

\* Lunch

1 pm – 4:00 pm

Role Play & Feedback sessions

**Note:** All times are approximate as each class is different. The facilitator reserves the right to focus on the immediate needs of the attendees to ensure that they receive the information they require.