



Achieving radical and sustainable improvement in top line performance

## *How to Cut the Cost of Sales Calls*



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### **The Situation:**

The cost of managing a successful field sales team continues to be an expensive proposition. In fact, research suggests that the average cost of a B2B in person sales call is almost \$400, and if you are selling complex solutions that involve multiple decision makers, the number of sales calls can easily increase to 4 or 5 face to face calls. This means that the total cost for sales calls to close an average B2B deal is about \$2,000. Of course the number begins to escalate rapidly when a sales team "horde" shows up on the customer's doorstep.

Our experience shows that most sales calls are not well thought out beyond the "purpose" step. For example, "The reason I am going out to meet with Mr. X is to say hello and see what is going on." The real question is what will be accomplished on the call other than "saying hello" to Mr. X.

Sales calls that stop at the "purpose" level of thinking typically translate into "howdy calls." "Hi, I'm John from XYZ." and "I am just stopping by to see if everything is OK." Calls like this are typically a waste of time and money because they do not accomplish anything.



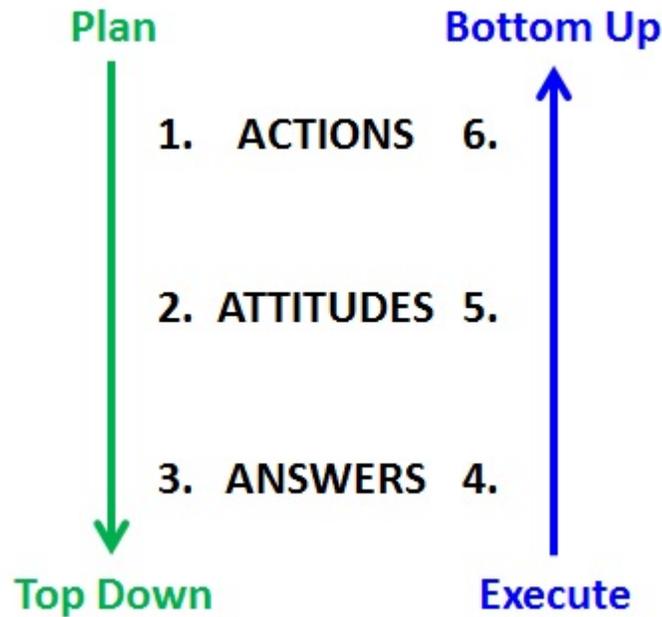
### **What to do next:**

The application of some rigor coupled with critical thinking skills is the best way to minimize "howdy calls" and create a meaningful dialogue with well defined outcomes. The simplest way to reduce the cost of a sales call is to max out every face to face dialogue with the customer or prospect. We have been proponents of the 3A's Model: Actions, Attitudes and Answers. Going into every call, the sales professional must prepare in advance:

**Answers** - the questions that you will ask to help you understand the current situation based upon where the sales opportunity is in the Funnel. Once we have confirmed or reconfirmed the answers to our questions the next element of the call focuses on attitudes.

**Attitudes** - what we want the customer to believe at the end of the call. The attitudes part of the call is where we do our selling and telling which requires that we always ask to confirm a customer/prospects attitude or belief. For example, "Do you agree that our solution is unique among the alternatives you are considering?"

**Actions** - Once you have confirmed all attitudes, this is where you get to close on a commitment to take action whether it be an action to set up a follow on meeting, provide you with information, attend a demo or even agree to sign a contract.



As shown in the diagram above, we recommend that you plan the call top down first, followed by attitudes then the answers. Execute bottom up, namely start by asking questions, confirm the attitudes and then close on action(s).

Applying this simple discipline will enable you to max out every call and avoid the "howdy call" syndrome which is a waste of your time and the customer's time. Having a well thought out call plan is the simplest way to get to the close faster with fewer sales calls. Arguably, this is the most effective way to cut the cost of sales calls in the sales cycle.

**Next Steps:**

If you have any questions on cutting the cost of your sales, please send us an e-mail at [kappainfo@kappaeast.com](mailto:kappainfo@kappaeast.com).

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