

# *Boost* SALES PRODUCTIVITY

How to Lead Your Sales Team Back to Growth

salesforce



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## INTRODUCTION

# What Is Sales Productivity in the Next Normal?

Maximizing sales productivity is hard, even during the best of times. And with the onset of COVID-19, it's only gotten harder. The crisis accelerated a digital transformation that will continue to change the way we live and work for years to come. It's during this period of transition that sales leaders need to ask themselves:

- What decisions can I make now to ensure my business is resilient in the next normal?
- How can I set my team up for success?

Productivity plays a huge role in the answer to both questions. Your commitment to improving productivity will be key to fixing the glaring problems revealed during turbulent times.

In this guide, we share a few simple tips you can apply to your business – right now. We hope this guide can lay the groundwork for your journey toward higher productivity.



## CHAPTER 1

# *How* DO I MEASURE SALES PRODUCTIVITY?

Ensuring teams have everything they need to remain productive and successful was important before the crisis – and it's even more important today.

But how do you know if your sales reps are being productive? Easy. Set a goal and measure their progress against it.

Unfortunately, one standard method for measuring sales productivity doesn't exist. Methods can vary from simply hitting a quota, to a more complicated measure like calculating expense-to-revenue ratio. It all depends on the leader and the organization.

As you choose the metrics that make the most sense for your business, here's [one formula](#) to consider:

$$\text{SALES PRODUCTIVITY} = \text{EFFICIENCY} \times \text{EFFECTIVENESS}$$



## Efficiency

The key to efficiency is minimizing wasted effort. That means eliminating manual or repetitive work, like data entry, in favor of maximizing time spent on valuable tasks, like talking to customers.

## Effectiveness

Effectiveness is less about where you spend your resources, and more about how skilled you are at using them. Your team may be leveraging efficient processes, but may still be making ineffective selling decisions. For example, if your sales reps are pitching the wrong value proposition to the wrong customer segment, it doesn't matter how many prospects they've talked to.



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**“ *Efficiency* IS ABOUT  
KNOCKING ON AS MANY  
DOORS AS POSSIBLE;  
*Effectiveness* IS ABOUT  
WHAT YOU DO WHEN  
THE DOORS OPEN. ”**

**JASON JORDAN**  
author of *Cracking the Sales Management Code*

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## CHAPTER 2

# *How* **DO I IMPROVE SALES PRODUCTIVITY?**

It's the million-dollar question – sometimes, quite literally. As companies strive to grow or sustain their revenue, they need to explore new ways to amplify the selling power of their sales team.

In this section, we'll cover a handful of ways you can help reps boost their productivity in the face of evolving market conditions and customer needs.



## OPTIMIZE FOR VIRTUAL SELLING

The rise of virtual selling isn't new, but the arrival of the coronavirus pandemic took it to new heights. Many sales leaders have been forced to transition entire sales teams to inside sales – a shift that can reveal disconnected processes, tools, and silos. The difficulty in navigating multiple resources translates into real dollars. According to Gartner, about 20% of lost and stalled deals are caused by internal complexity within sales organizations.

Below are a few places to look for easy wins to help your sales reps navigate the virtual sales process:

1

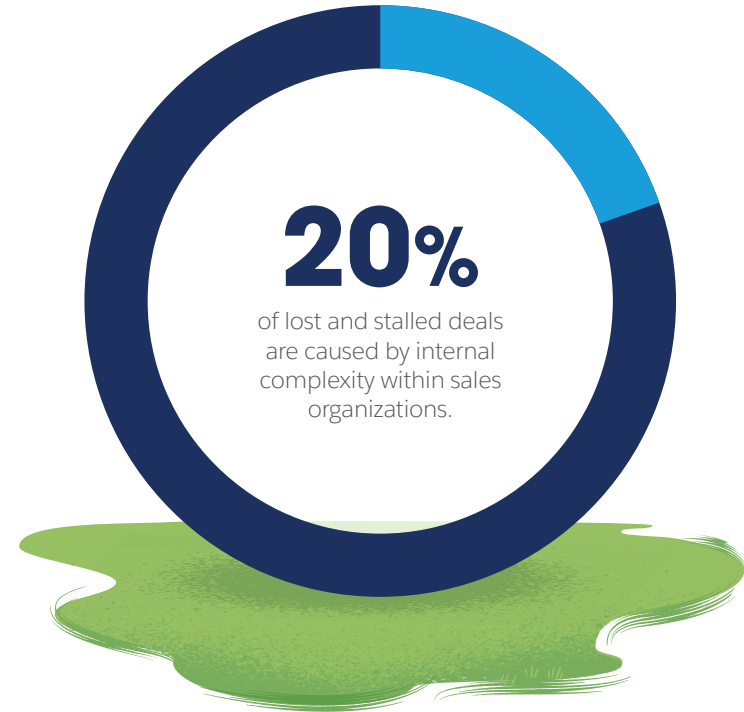
### Connect communication tools

A single customer interaction might require sales reps to pivot from their email to their phone to their calendar to their note-taking application. Such multitasking could cost up to 40% in productivity, according to research by the American Psychological Association. By syncing your communication tools to a CRM, you can ease that burden and give your reps a much-needed productivity boost.

2

### Invest in productivity tools

Centralized productivity tools allow your sales teams to efficiently work a deal and sell as a team. When collaborative documents – like standardized account plans, templated close plans, and mutual success plans – are connected to the right records in your CRM, they can streamline deal coordination, seamlessly hand off data, and help reps align around business plans.



3

### Break down data silos

Siloed data and communication keep critical information from reaching the right eyes. A CRM can bring all that information together in one place and connect disparate departments. For example, 3M is able to leverage the data in its CRM to gain actionable insights into how to effectively manage its sales teams and supply chains. “Because data is standardized across teams, regions, and business units, it acts as a north star, guiding us toward the most critical areas of focus,” said Drew Moldenhauer, inside sales technology leader at 3M.

## AUTOMATE BUSYWORK

Let's call it what it is: Data entry is busywork. These manual and repetitive tasks are small but add up quickly – a few minutes here and there can result in several hours of lost productivity. The number of people involved can also lead to erroneous, outdated, or incomplete data.

Clean and updated data can be difficult to maintain, but it doesn't have to be painful. A good CRM can automate much of this work, so you can focus on making new deals, instead of tracking old ones.

Below is a list of tedious tasks you might want to consider automating:

1

### Logging sales activities

Sales reps spend 8% of their day manually entering sales data. That includes contact information, deal stages, calls, and meeting notes, according to the [“State of Sales”](#) research report from Salesforce. Using a CRM that automatically syncs with emails, calls, and other communication tools saves your reps the headache of data entry and leaves them more time to connect with customers and close more deals.

2

### Sales playbooks and to-do lists

With the world in flux and sales guidance constantly shifting, many reps struggle to figure out what to do next, flipping back and forth between their company's latest playbooks and their ongoing task lists. Take the guesswork out of the process by building your playbook straight into your CRM. Not only will it scale your best practices, but it also empowers your reps to start each day off at a sprint.

3

### Updating documents

To be the most useful, account plans, mutual close plans, and opportunity notes are a few essential pieces of information that need to be updated across all shared documents. Unfortunately, just because you've updated that data in one location, this doesn't mean it translates everywhere else. That's where CRMs hooked up to real-time productivity tools can help. The integration makes it possible for any data updated in one document to be automatically reflected in all places.





## EMBRACE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Artificial intelligence (AI) is the not-so-secret weapon for productive sales teams. High performers are 4.9 times more likely to use AI than underperformers, according to the [“State of Sales”](#) research report. That advantage becomes key during times of economic uncertainty. It helps sales leaders not only maintain their business, but also grow it.

AI can help sales teams:

1

### Monitor sales performance

Sales managers have limited opportunity to observe their remote sales reps in real time. With configurable prebuilt reports and dashboards powered by AI, sales managers can better understand team performance against key metrics – like quota attainment, pipe generation, and bookings – and see how the team ranks. These insights can help leaders identify the habits of top performers, accelerate deals, and better coach every team member toward success.



2

### Adjust sales forecasts

As purchasing behavior shifts, sales projections become a moving target. You need real-time visibility into your business and easy access to comprehensive forecasts. AI makes it possible to keep forecasts accurate, despite potentially extended sales cycles or changing deal sizes.

3

### Prioritize prospects

The right AI tool will analyze your data, predict which leads and opportunities are more likely to convert, and surface that information to your sales reps so they know exactly which deals they should focus on first. It arms your reps with insight into the right deals, at the right time, that will increase their win rates.



## ALWAYS BE TRAINING

Yes, we still always want to be closing, but if things are slowing down, take it as an opportunity to prepare your most important assets (in other words, your sales team) for when things pick back up again. Here's how to do it, while keeping productivity top of mind:

1

### Create a hub for learning

More than [27% of organizations](#) have a disparate system for storing learning content, which can make navigating through enablement materials and finding information difficult. That problem is aggravated when your sales team works remotely. A [centralized learning platform](#) eliminates the hunt for materials and ensures that your reps have access to all the learning materials they need, when they're needed.

2

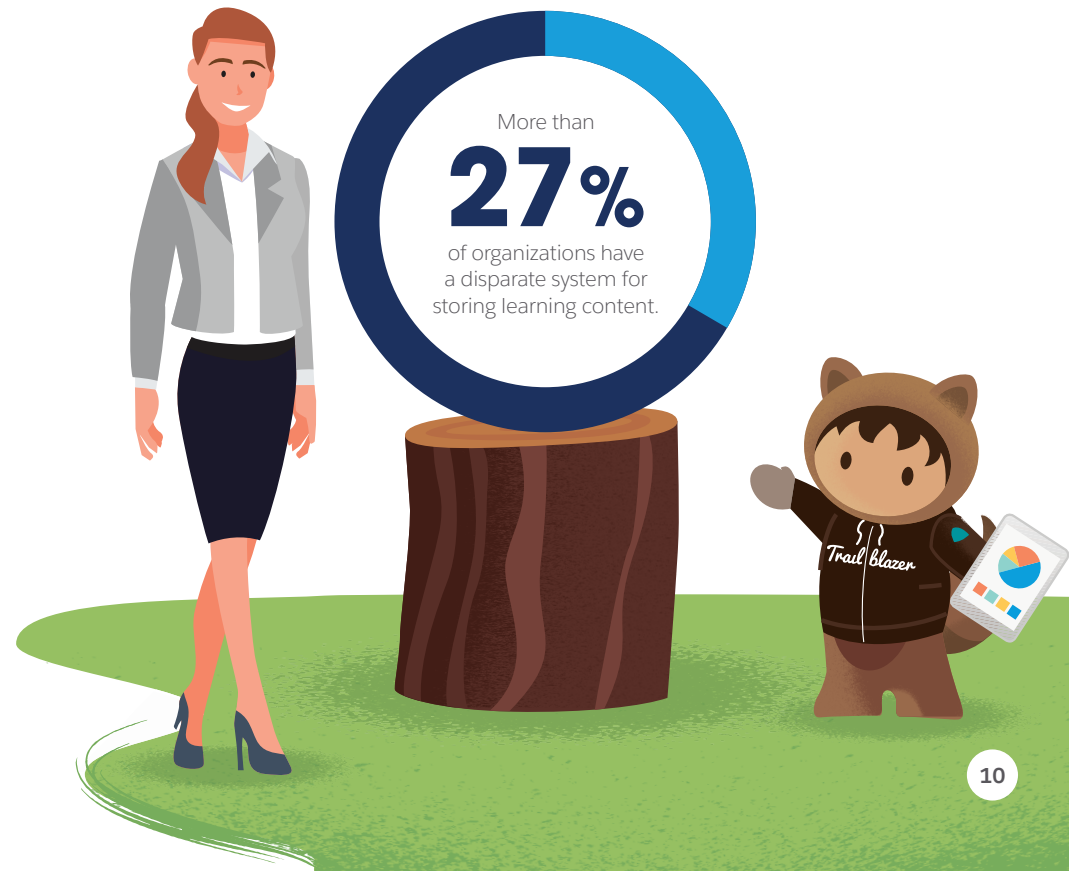
### Take it online

It's time to ditch pen and paper. A digital learning hub allows you to create and share internal training materials in a consistent way across your entire remote sales organization. Some [sales enablement tools](#) even allow for gamification, making the learning process fun and engaging. Ultimately, the right tool makes managing content easy and provides sales managers visibility into progress.

3

### Offer individualized, data-driven coaching

Keeping motivation and productivity high is a challenge even for the most experienced of managers. Make sure your approach is backed by data. How many calls did your sales reps make? How many of those calls converted into scheduled meetings? Are reps on track to meet their quota? As a sales leader, you should be leveraging performance-tracking tools to identify individuals' own areas of improvement and help each team member reach their full potential – whether they're selling from home or the field.



## CONCLUSION

# *Your* **NEXT STEPS**

Boosting sales productivity is hard, and it only gets harder during a global pandemic. Sales teams are under more pressure than ever to perform, while also dealing with the challenges of selling from home. This guide will not cure all your problems, but we hope it helps lay the foundation for success on your journey toward a faster and stronger sales team.



### Looking for more ways to stay productive?

Keep reading with another e-book – this one's about the eight sales pitfalls to avoid.

**GET THE E-BOOK**

Or learn more about how Salesforce can help your sales team maximize productivity using our tools, including:

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- High Velocity Sales
- Sales Cloud Einstein
- Social Intelligence
- Quip for Sales
- Salesforce Maps
- myTrailhead

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