metrics are simple. They are based on historical data and reps can understand them. By the way, I should note — the numbers here are hypothetical; work within your own goals and historical ratios to get to your metrics. If you do not have historical ratios, start tracking.

"But Troy," you're saying, "you just spent the first half of this article telling us that processes don't manage and now you've given us a process. What's the deal?"

The deal is that this process is simple. And it is a process to manage to — it is not a process that manages for you or attempts to. Where metrics go wrong is when they become overcomplicated. For instance, of those six discovery appointments, management says that two of them have to be with customer type A, three with type B and one with type C. That is where it gets overwrought or management attempts to insert unnecessary steps. For instance, years ago I worked for a company where the regional manager discovered that we had very high close rates when prospects came in for plant tours. So, we should encourage tours, right?

The deal is that this process is simple. And it is a process to manage to — it is not a process that manages for you or attempts to.

Nope. The regional manager mandated tours and sales went through the floor because it was so difficult to get every customer in for a tour. My team? We ignored the mandate and we were fine. (Yes, I ignored one of my bosses; ask me again why I am self-employed.)

The reason members of upper management put overwrought processes in place is that they lack confidence in their sales reps and sales managers. The problem is that overdone processes and procedures invariably result in higher turnover, lower job engagement and, ultimately, they do the opposite of what they are intended to do. Keep your processes simple, trust and manage your people and you will get the results you are seeking. ■

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