



Becoming 'Tech-Savvy'

Accept no excuses for reps not embracing technology

by: Troy Harrison, Troy Harrison & Associates

I hate excuses. Most of the time, when salespeople say, "Oh, I just can't do this," or "I don't know that," what they are really saying is, "I'm choosing not to do this or know that." As managers, we are attuned to spotting excuses, but sometimes managers have a blind spot when it comes to sales technology. "I'm just not tech-savvy." This excuse, often coming from experienced salespeople, can be a significant roadblock to your team's progress and overall company growth. I think the pace of technology development has been quick enough that many of us have forgotten that being "tech-savvy" is not an innate trait, but a choice and a skill that can be developed.

The reality is that your customers are rapidly embracing technology and information, and they expect the same of you. If your sales team members are not keeping pace, they are effectively putting an expiration date on their careers — and potentially limiting your company's growth potential.

It is your responsibility to inspire and push your team to greatness. When you accept artificial limitations, you are not only selling your salespeople short, but also undermining your company's potential for success. It is time to hold your team members accountable and challenge them to rise above self-imposed limitations.

Here are some strategies to help your sales team members, especially the veteran salespeople, break free from technophobia and embrace the digital revolution:

■ **Foster a Growth Mindset:** Encourage your team members to view technology as an opportunity rather than an obstacle. Help them understand that each new tool or platform is a chance to enhance their sales skills and reach new heights.

■ **Provide Continuous Learning Opportunities:** Invest in your team's development by offering access to webinars, workshops and conferences focused on sales technologies and strategies. Consider implementing a mentorship program where tech-savvy team members can guide others. Remember: Training is never a finished product; it is always a work in progress.

■ **Lead by Example:** As a leader, it is crucial to stay informed about the latest sales technologies. Demonstrate the value of these tools by incorporating them into your own workflow and by sharing success stories.

■ **Create a Supportive Environment:** Establish a culture where experimentation is encouraged and mistakes are viewed as learning opportunities. This will help alleviate the



fear of failure that often accompanies technological adoption.

■ **Implement Gradual Integration:** Instead of overwhelming your team with multiple new tools at once, introduce technologies gradually. Start with one tool, ensure mastery and then move on to the next.

To stay competitive in today's market, it is crucial to equip your sales team with the right

technological tools. Here are some key categories to consider:

■ **Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Systems:** Modern CRM platforms are more user-friendly than ever, offering mobile apps and automation features that streamline sales processes. Emphasize how a CRM can help your team members manage customer relationships more effectively and efficiently.

■ **Social Media Platforms:** Depending on your target market, platforms like LinkedIn, X and even Instagram can be powerful tools for prospecting and relationship-building. Encourage your team members to develop a professional online presence and engage with prospects and customers on these platforms.

■ **Video Communication Tools:** With the rise of remote work and virtual meetings, proficiency in tools like Zoom, Microsoft Teams or Google Meet is essential. Ensure your team members can confidently conduct video calls and presentations at a moment's notice.

■ **Sales Intelligence Tools:** Equip your team with tools that provide real-time insights into prospect and customer activities. LinkedIn Sales Navigator and Google Alerts can help your salespeople stay informed about industry changes and potential opportunities.

■ **Artificial Intelligence (AI) & Automation:** Introduce your team to AI-powered tools like ChatGPT for content creation or automated email sequences for follow-ups. These technologies can significantly boost productivity and allow your salespeople to focus on high-value activities.

Change can be challenging, especially for veteran salespeople who have honed their skills over decades. Here are some strategies to help overcome resistance:

■ **Highlight the Benefits:** Clearly communicate how these technologies will make their jobs easier and more productive. For instance, demonstrate how a CRM can automate follow-ups, saving time for more face-to-face customer interactions.

■ **Provide Personalized Training:** Offer one-on-one or small group training sessions tailored to different skill levels.

This personalized approach can help address specific concerns and build confidence.

■ **Celebrate Early Wins:** Recognize and reward team members who successfully adopt new technologies. Share their success stories to inspire others and create positive momentum.

■ **Set Clear Expectations:** Make technological proficiency a part of performance evaluations. This sends a clear message that adapting to new tools is not optional, but an essential part of the job.

■ **Offer Ongoing Support:** Provide continuous technical support and resources to ensure your team members feel supported throughout the adoption process.

To be successful in the modern sales environment, we have to embrace technology as part of our work. There is really no other choice. As I always say, “Would you rather do it or would you rather your competitors get ahead of you?” The excuse of not being “tech-savvy” is outdated and detrimental to our organizations’ growth. It is our responsibility to guide our team members, especially veteran salespeople, into the digital age. It is not only a matter of competitive advantage, but a matter of showing respect for those veterans. When you truly respect someone’s skills, intellect and abilities, you push him (or her) to raise his standards and boundaries. No matter their age or

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experience level, anyone can learn these tools if they choose to do so. Allowing veterans to fall behind is a sign of disrespect.

By providing the right tools, training and support, we can help our entire sales force — regardless of age or experience level — to harness the power of technology. This not only enhances their individual performance, but also drives our companies forward in an increasingly competitive and digital business landscape.

Remember, embracing technology in sales is not about replacing the human touch; it is about augmenting it. By freeing up time from routine tasks, these tools allow your salespeople to focus on what they do best: building relationships and closing deals face to face. The future of sales is here and it is digital. It is time to ensure your team is ready to thrive in it. ■

Troy Harrison is the author of “Sell Like You Mean It” and “The Pocket Sales Manager.”

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