

Sales trends for 2018

Why 2018 will be a year of big change for sales leaders

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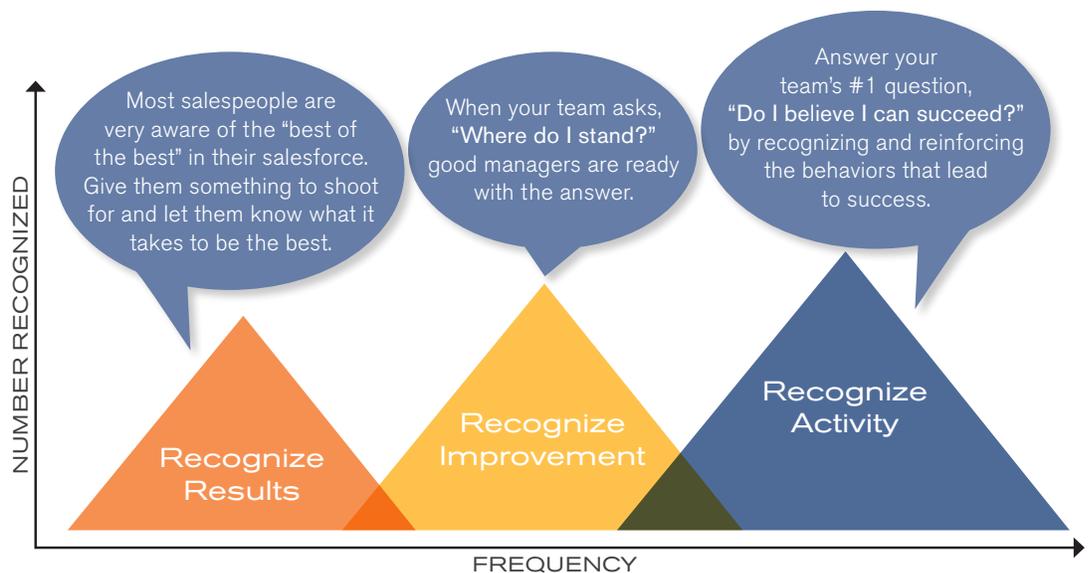
It's easy to say that 2018 will be a year of big change, because it seems like every year brings big changes when it comes to selling. Changes have centered on technology and how sales teams can use it to improve productivity and connect better with prospects and customers.

Beyond technology, there are a variety of emerging strategies that can help sales managers take their teams to the next level. We outline six trends in this article that are worth reviewing if you are looking for ways to enable and inspire your team. And if you are a sales manager, pay special attention to #5 – it's all about YOU.

trend 1

Recognize talent when you see it.

Over the past five years, companies all over the world have unleashed the power of recognition. When used strategically to support your vision and values, recognition can be one of the most powerful motivators available to you. Once you have your sales vision worked out and your values defined, use this simple visual to put it into action.



trend 2

Use intelligence, both **real** and **artificial**.

The ability to access, analyze and learn from data in real time is a secret weapon to every salesperson's arsenal. Technology leaders paint a picture of a future filled with smart computers and voice-activated assistants.



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Just like you tell your smart home to turn on the lights and raise the temperature before you arrive, some day you will be able to tell your smart phone to set up a meeting and close the deal before you even meet with your prospect.

The answer lies somewhere between the real and artificial intelligence that's being promised... somewhere between the street smarts and big data that is piling up daily. The answers are out there. The best salespeople are currently asking, "Where do I start?" and then beginning the journey today.

trend 3

Virtual Reality is the new reality.

Today's trendy technology is definitely virtual reality. And why not? Who wants to sit on the couch and play a game when you can be a part of it?

Virtual reality presents an amazing opportunity to teach, remind, reinforce and reward sales teams. In a profession that constantly grapples with making technology actionable, virtual reality lands on the scene with the power of an X-wing fighter or the finesse of a super hero.

And with an audience that is always asking, "Are the rewards worth the effort?" virtual reality makes the reward part of the effort.

trend 4

When it comes to rewards, get real.

With every sales force there is a mighty middle just waiting to be enabled and inspired to achieve breakthrough performance. Move the middle with well-designed sales contests, refreshed and reimaged for a new generation of sales reps. Taking the best of game mechanics and motivation theory, contests are more than just leaderboards for top performers and drawings to award random prizes. They answer the question "Where do I stand?" for all participants and challenge them to change things up quickly.

The science of behavioral economics has driven innovation in goal setting, decision making and closing the say/do gap. This means when reps get engaged and move the needle, they earn a tangible award or experience they can talk about on social media, justify outside of their paycheck and include your company or brand in their success story.

trend 5

Managers on the run.

If you are a good manager, it seems like you are either running into the middle of the action or the action is running in your direction. Customers want your advice. Internal operations needs your involvement. Your team needs your guidance and input. These are all

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good problems to have and any good manager can tell you that his or her calendar quickly fills with requests.

The challenge becomes one of priorities. Good managers stay out in front of the problems and lead the way rather than letting those problems derail or distract them. Top managers, like top salespeople, are always asking themselves, "What's my next challenge?"

trend 6

No more business as usual.

Today, a salesperson who doesn't understand their customer's business down to the balance sheet and income statement is going to lose more often than win. Just because you have built rock-solid relationships and delivered results for your customers in the past doesn't mean your business will continue.

Successful salespeople think big picture, high level and long term. They are game changers – bringing ideas to their customers that save more money, deliver higher profits, and contribute more to the bottom line than their competition.

As you read through this list of trends, we are hoping you ask yourself:
Am I setting the right goals for 2018?
Am I changing the things that will have the most impact?

BI WORLDWIDE created the [Level Up](#) sales model to inform and engage managers, enable and inspire reps and achieve bottom-line results.

Let us show you how it can lead to lasting change for your sales organization.

Please contact us at: biworldwide.com or email info@biworldwide.com.

