

'Homework': Executive Edition

Selling Services & Solutions Remotely

Brief #2

The rise of the Covid-19 pandemic came as an unforecastable event resulting in profound change implications across the social, political and economic spectrums for the world's population and businesses. This is the second in a series of briefs that will give you our perspective on how things will change for companies in the Services and Solutions business and what you may need to consider implementing that differs from current practices and approaches.



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Overview

The following is the second of a series of briefs offered by the Executive Leadership Team at The Insight Group over the next several weeks. Our objective is to engage in the development of best practices within the new remote work environment. The first brief, [*Rapidly Adapting to the 'New Normal' in Services & Solutions*](#), provided a general

overview of the new reality and the primary topics we look to cover. The focus of this brief is considerations for selling services and solutions remotely.

Cultivating Best Practices for Remote Selling

Customers and services providers can expect that the major component of the sales cycle for services and solution selling will reduce in-person selling and move to remote selling. This will drive sales and sales support coverage models to rely less on geographic deployment considerations and more on expertise deployment. Selling support materials and tools will need to be completely re-engineered to support a remote sales call. Sales employees who relied on in-person selling techniques will need to be retrained in how to successfully run a sales call remotely.

Some general considerations for remote selling include:

- Sales management will have to evolve and develop techniques to manage, motivate, and communicate with employees working remotely where less-frequent personal contact occurs.
- Sales processes built around in-person, direct selling will need to adapt to reflect the changing dynamics of a remote sales call. This includes changes to sales compensation models for sales and sales support personnel. Techniques from tele-selling *can* be utilized/adapted but will not be sufficient to sell solutions.

- Reaching out to customers with a Point of View (POV) or Thought Leadership piece is important to create demand. Creating interest for customers is a fundamental first step in the sales process. It is critical to utilize customer testimonials and case studies which highlight the benefits of your offerings while demonstrating quantifiable results focused on business value.
- Developing objectives for the remote sales call and planning for questions and dialog to get the customer engaged is the next step. Understanding their pain points and what they value within your capabilities will further build on your sales strategy.
- Utilizing interactive digital technologies like Zoom, MS Teams and GoToMeeting will enhance the remote sales call. Sticking to a clear and simplified structure with well-prepared sales support materials will make the remote sales call more productive. Remember to test the technology and practice the sales call prior to engaging with the customer.
- Finally, be prepared to follow-up with customized sales collateral. Jointly create a set of next steps and action items that further develop the customer relationship and qualify the opportunity.

This remote sales approach is a must due to the current pandemic. But it is also a trend that we believe will become even more important in the future. Saving on travel costs, reducing office overhead, lessening commute time are just a few of the benefits. Providing the flexibility that employees desire—especially 'millennials'—can also provide for a more rewarding work environment.

Charting New Waters

We hope that these practices can help you and your organization accelerate this transformation to a remote sales model and drive future success. Our next brief, *Managing Remotely: Key Elements in Developing a Remote Worker Policy*, will help identify important considerations and challenges that accompany the remote work environment.

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The INSIGHT Group is a 'Best Practices' services consulting firm focused on helping product and service companies implement high-growth services strategies. Our partners represent a group of experienced executives that have held senior executive services business positions across multiple industries. INSIGHT has operated for more than 20 years utilizing a predominantly "virtual office" business model. For further information check our web site at www.insight-group.com.