



Sales Enablement 2.0

The Solution for Solving Revenue Growth Challenges

Go To Market Insight for Private Equity



Contents

Introduction	3
The Hidden Potential of Sales Enablement	
About the Cortado Group	
Executive Summary	4
Why Sales Enablement?	
The State of Sales Training	5
Insights from Sales Enablement Research	6
Insights from Industry Leaders	7
The Sales Enablement Lever for Growth	
Our Secret Sauce	8
Our Sales Enablement 2.0 Process Flow	9
Insights from Cortado Group Leaders	
1. Strategy: The Revenue Growth Impact of Sales Enablement 2.0	10
By Dan Bernoske, Founder and CEO	
2. Skills: To Achieve World-Class Sales, Reps Must Get in Sync with the Buyers' Journey	12
By George de los Reyes, Partner and COO	
3. Journey: The Power of Stage-Appropriate Marketing Materials in the Buyer's Journey	14
By John Auer, Partner and CRO	
4. Playbook: Empower Your Salespeople with a Best Practices Sales Playbook	16
By Bill Piacitelli, Principal and ICRO	
5. Training: The Secret to Successful Sales Training is Reinforce, Reinforce, Reinforce	18
By Sarah Bedwell, Consulting Principal, GTM Enablement	
6. Technology: Data Analytics Takes Sales Enablement to the Next Level of Success	20
By Robert Gammon, Practice Leader, Revenue Operations	
Case Study	22
The Power of Sales Enablement 2.0 in Action	
Next Steps to Profitable Revenue Growth.	25
How Will You Begin Your Sales Enablement 2.0 Journey?	
How the Cortado Group Way Accelerates Your Sales Growth	
Ready for a Sales Growth Consultation?	



The Hidden Potential of Sales Enablement

How well positioned is your company's sales team to respond to today's changing buyer needs, sales processes, and revenue growth demands?

Are your salespeople executing your levers for growth optimally?

What is your strategy for driving sales improvement across your team?

How can you elevate the performance of a diverse mix of salespeople?

Innovative new developments in sales enablement are helping private equity owned companies overcome their sales challenges. They are turning their sales organizations into revenue-generation machines — and helping the portfolio companies achieve more profitable growth faster.

In this report, the Cortado Group provides insight on an innovative, new approach to sales enablement that replaces short-term sales training programs that don't deliver long-term results with a comprehensive revenue-focused sales enablement approach that changes the entire DNA of a sales organization. We call it Sales Enablement 2.0.

About Cortado Group

The Cortado Group delivers rapid, measurable top-line improvements for smaller, investor-backed growth companies across multiple industries by implementing a different approach to identify, prioritize, and improve the right things, the right way, at the right time and place. We work directly with you to scope, staff, and deliver solutions that deliver the impact and value you need based on your size, maturity level, and existing team. With tailored go-to-market products and services that are right-sized for each client and unique situation, we get in and get out, so you can get moving. Our clients gain profitable growth — and investors get better exits.

Executive Summary

It's an all-too-common scenario for today's portfolio companies. Revenue is lagging, and sales leaders are facing questions about growth they can't answer. Their private equity owners want to know why sales, value creation, and profitable revenue are lower than expected. If you're the CEO or CSO, what will you tell them?

Simply stated, private equity owners want results — fast. But if there are weak links in your sales team, processes, or technologies, you'll face challenges in consistently reaching your revenue goals.

At the same time, portfolio companies are facing brutal financial headwinds from several directions — including remote workplaces, intensifying supply chain pressures, and increasing scrutiny on growth and spending.

In this demanding environment, portfolio companies are mandated to grow. But to achieve growth, most companies need a more effective way to improve their sales teams. Unlike traditional sales enablement programs, which only provide a limited solution, Sales Enablement 2.0 transforms sales organizations from top-to-bottom. It shapes sales reps into sales powerhouses, so they are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and support they need to consistently reach their sales goals.

Sales Enablement 2.0 gives portfolio companies a comprehensive and customized improvement methodology and deeply embeds it into their sales organization. It provides sales teams with everything they need to sell more — including an understanding of your ideal buyers and how they buy, your buyers' journey, and your best-practice sales process.

This report provides insight on deploying Sales Enablement 2.0 so you can more consistently and dependably gain the sales outcomes you need. Also, our sales enablement experts share insight from their own experience on the sales frontline at many companies. Further, our portfolio company success story illustrates the powerful impact that a revenue-focused Sales Enablement 2.0 program can have on a portfolio company.

We hope this report provides you with the insight and guidance you need to launch your own robust sales enablement program. Doing so will help your sales organization overcome its challenges and meet — or exceed — its revenue growth goals.

— The Cortado Group Sales Enablement Team



Sales Enablement 2.0 holds the promise of helping sales leaders transform their sales organization in ways that help them consistently reach — or exceed — their revenue growth goals.





Why Sales Enablement?

The State of Sales Training

In 2019, the [Harvard Business Review](#) reported that organizations spent **\$359 billion** globally on sales training in 2016. They were asked, “Was it worth it?” In most cases, businesses did not achieve a high ROI from their sales training investments. Today, many companies face the same question: Did you achieve success from your sales training investment? Few companies can say yes.

The two leading reasons for this lack of success with traditional sales training programs are faulty strategy and faulty execution.

If you don’t start with the right sales strategy, you may spend months training your salespeople on the wrong sales plays. A faulty strategy occurs when you don’t fully understand who your ideal customers are and how they buy. To create a truly effective sales strategy, you need to align your sales process with your ideal customers’ buying process. You also must identify the critical sales skills your salespeople need to optimize your sales process. Having these skills gives them the power to guide buyers through every stage of the buyers’ journey. Without a robust strategy guiding your process, no amount of sales training will uplevel your sales team.

When it comes to sales execution, too often companies think that a one-time or short-term training event will fix their sales shortcomings. But studies have found that this never works. If you’re lucky, one in ten salespeople will improve their sales skills somewhat. The reason these programs don’t work is that learners retain almost nothing from a short-term training event.

So what does work? What works is deploying a strategic process designed to improve salespeople’s sales skills on multiple levels. This requires each company to deploy its own customized, robust, and long-term sales enablement program. The goal of the program should be to embed best practices into your salespeople’s muscle memory. They must be able to execute the right sales skills at every stage of the buyer’s journey.

A best-in-class sales enablement program begins with training your frontline sales leaders, who are the ultimate owners of sales enablement. Then they train, coach, and reinforce your salespeople — not just one time, but consistently over time. The entire program needs to be supported by stage-appropriate marketing content and the right technologies.

This defines sales enablement done right. Yet, too often, it’s the critical missing piece of a company’s sales strategy. Isn’t it time to uplevel your sales organization the right way?



Insights from Sales Enablement Research

The following industry studies provide insights on the current state of sales enablement.

[LinkedIn study](#)

Nearly 74% of companies now have a sales enablement function in their organization. This represents 19% year-over-year adoption growth. Having a dedicated sales enablement function correlates with achieving a significant business impact, including:

+9-point

Improvement in customer retention

+8-point

Improvement in quota attainment

+4-point

Improvement in win rates

[Aberdeen Study](#)

Companies with successful sales enablement programs achieve:

52%

more proposal quotes or RFP responses delivered to prospects

32%

higher overall team attainment of sales quota

24%

more salespeople achieved individual quotas

23%

higher lead conversion rates

[Highpoint Study](#)

Companies gain these improvements when they execute robust sales enablement programs:

+12-point

increase in win rates

10%

more likely to have high sales rep engagement

2x

more likely to exceed executive expectations



Insights from Industry Leaders

Most sales leaders realize that when salespeople are given the right knowledge and skills, they perform better and help companies reach their revenue goals sooner. However, many of today's sales training programs are simply not effective. Several of today's industry leaders point out some of the factors critical to sales enablement success.

- 1 **Ideal customer profiles (ICP) — Identify your buyers unique characteristics.** According to [Gartner](#), the ICP is a foundational, organization-wide function of sales success. It supports a strong focus on creating scalable and repeatable strategies and tactics to engage and convert top accounts. It drives targeted account list creation, segmentation, organizational structure, and other key activities.
- 1 **Buyer personas — Clarify your buyers' wants and needs.** According to [Demand Science](#), understanding your ideal customers' buyer persona is crucial for maximizing your sales organization's ROI.
- 1 **Buyer's journey — Map the process in detail.** According to [Forrester](#), today's buying process is more complex than ever. More stakeholders influence the buying decision, more digital interactions occur across the buying journey, and cycle times are longer. A buyer's journey map is critical to achieving more effective sales.
- 1 **Sales playbook — Gives salespeople a comprehensive guide.** A playbook is a roadmap that helps your sales team achieve optimal sales, says [Bold CEO](#). It guides them with best practices through both typical sales processes and large challenges. It also enhances team productivity and reduces new hire onboarding time.
- 1 **Data analytics — Incorporate sophisticated analyses.** According to [McKinsey](#), data and analytics, combined with a personalized approach to sales performance management, are helping sales executives coach their reps on best practices — and significantly improve growth.
- 1 **Tech stack — Deploy the right tools to optimize your sales process.** According to [Gartner](#), progressive CSOs and CROs are aggressively fortifying their sales tech stacks to compete in today's hypercompetitive sales environment by deploying technologies that cover the entire end-to-end revenue growth process.

Our Secret Sauce

The State of Sales Training

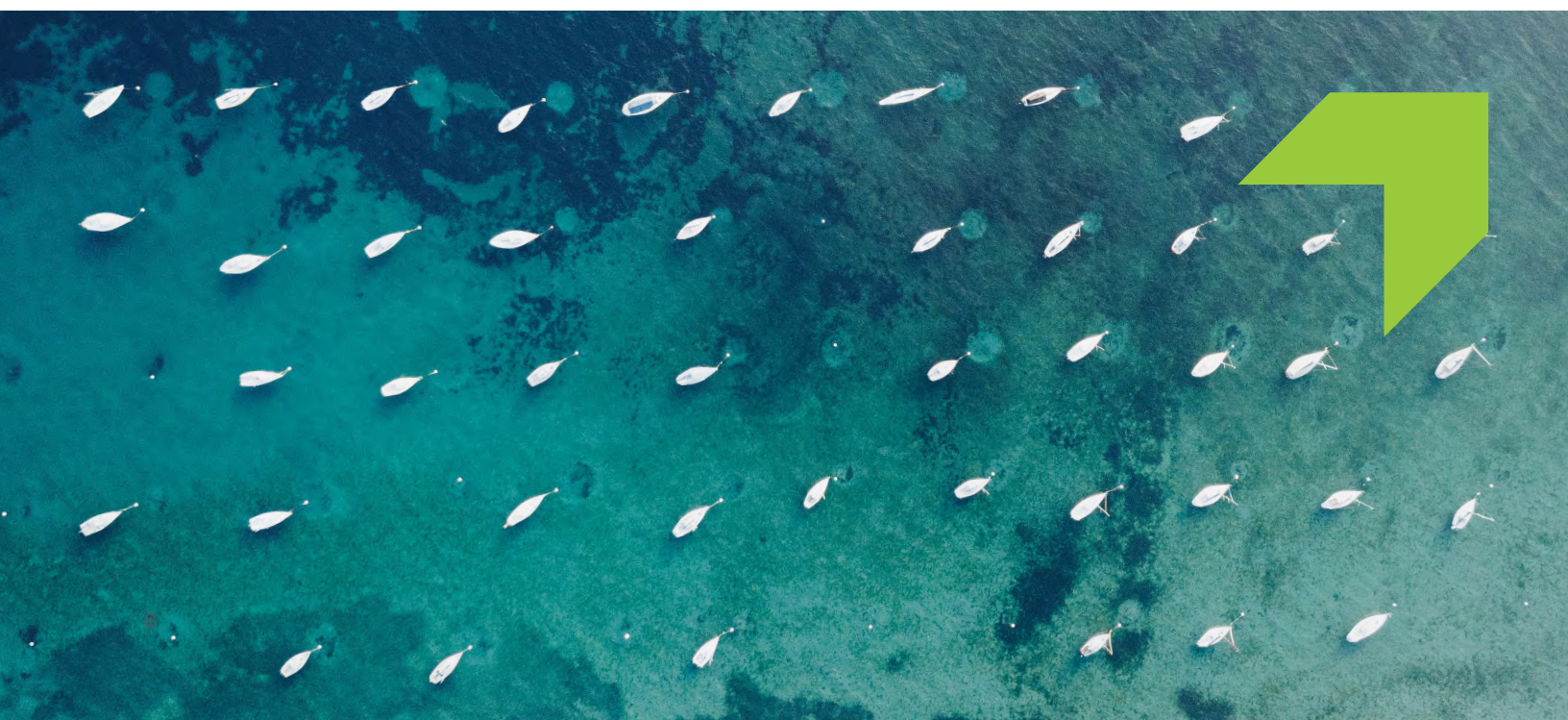
While working with a wide range of portfolio companies, we noticed a common gap in their sales organizations. Their salespeople did not have the knowledge, systems, and technologies they needed to excel — and consistently reach their sales quotas. As a result, the companies' revenue growth was not optimized.

To bridge this gap, we created an enhanced sales enablement program — Sales Enablement 2.0. It's a unique and powerful lever for growth that is designed to enable salespeople to guide their prospects through the buyer's journey with greater skill, speed, and success. Many portfolio companies have transformed their sales processes with our innovative approach.

The secret sauce of our sales enablement program is our focus on frontline sales managers. They need to be a company's sales enablement leader. This means that before you coach your salespeople, you coach your sales managers. Then they train and coach the salespeople. This approach offers several advantages, including the ability to scale sales training as needed.

The goal is to continue coaching and reinforcing the salespeople until they have internalized your best-practice sales skills. The skills should be reinforced over and over until they are so ingrained that salespeople can consistently achieve or exceed their sales goals. In other words, train them until they have developed powerful muscle memory.

In parallel to sales coaching, you need to supply your salespeople with the right support. This includes stage-appropriate marketing materials throughout the buyer's journey and the right technologies to accelerate the process. When you embed your sales process into your CRM, for example, not only does this help your salespeople follow your best practices, but also it provides them with the data-driven insights they need to identify where there are new sales opportunities and where there are gaps. As a result, they are not flying blind.



Our Sales Enablement 2.0 Process Flow

In the Cortado Group Sales Enablement 2.0 process, our sales experts will help you create and implement your customized sales enablement program according to the following process flow.

A

Analysis

- 1 Identify ICP**
Clearly define your company's ideal customer profile
- 2 Buyers' process**
Determine how your buyers make their buying decisions
- 3 Critical moments**
Identify the critical moments along your buyers' journey

B

Alignment

- 4 Align journey**
Align your sales process to your buyers' journey
- 5 Sales skills**
Identify skills your salespeople need to remove friction
- 6 Training tools**
Create sales training tools to teach salespeople

C

Enablement

- 7 Train directors**
Train your sales directors first
- 8 Train reps**
Assign sales directors to train the salespeople
- 9 Ongoing coaching**
Continue reinforcing the new sales skills

D

Support

- 10 Marketing support**
Create materials to support the sales journey
- 11 Technology support**
Integrate sales with your automated systems
- 12 Playbook**
Empower your sales reps with a best practices guide



1

STRATEGY

The Revenue Growth Impact of Sales Enablement 2.0



Dan Bernoske

Founder and CEO

To achieve their revenue goals, company leaders need to advance sales training from a tactical to a strategic mindset.

Too often, companies don't have a clear sales strategy. This leads to predictable results. Their salespeople don't perform optimally. Deals are lost. Win rates are low. Opportunities are squandered. In the worst cases, sales training programs can introduce or reinforce bad selling behavior. Bottom line: Salespeople won't consistently achieve their revenue goals.

Company leaders likely understand this challenge, but not necessarily the solution. To solve the problem, organizations often assume sales training is the remedy. But sales training is just a tactic. It's not a strategy. What you need is a comprehensive sales strategy.

If you research the impact of sales training, you'll find the stark reality. An often-quoted 2016 study by ES Research found that between 85% and 90% of sales training programs have no lasting impact after 120 days.

In 2019, the [Harvard Business Journal](#) posed this question: Organizations spent **\$359 billion** globally on training in 2016, but was it worth it?

The conclusion? No.

- 75% of managers were dissatisfied with their company's learning and development function
- 70% of employees said they don't have mastery of the skills needed to do their jobs
- Only 12% of employees applied the new skills to their jobs

Another study found that a standalone sales training program results in learners forgetting 75% of what they were taught within six days. That's a very bad return on investment.

Among the many reasons why sales training programs aren't working today is that humans don't change their behaviors based on a few training sessions.

If training programs don't work, then what? The answer is a strategic sales enablement program. It's the only way to strengthen your sales organization in meaningful ways that produce lasting change.

How to Take a Strategic Approach

A strategic approach to sales training requires sales leaders to step back and view their sales program in its entirety. This includes answering critical questions such as:

- 1 What are our specific sales challenges?
- 2 What are our revenue goals, including opportunities and win rates?
- 3 How well do we understand our ideal customers, including how they buy?
- 4 What is the root cause holding us back from obtaining our goals?
- 5 How are changing market conditions impacting our sales results?
- 6 If we implement sales enablement, how will we know when it's working?

Once you answer these questions, you've arrived at a starting point for creating a strategic sales enablement program aimed at revenue growth.

Done right, sales enablement delivers a clear path forward for more opportunities, higher win rates, and revenue that reaches — or exceeds — the metrics important to your company.



Done right, sales enablement delivers a clear path forward for opportunities, win rates, and revenue that reaches — or exceeds — the metrics important to your company.

Dan Bernoske

CEO and Founder, Cortado Group



2

SKILLS

To Achieve World-Class Sales, Reps Must Get in Sync with their Buyers' Journey



George de los Reyes

Managing Partner and COO

To elevate your sales success in ways that meet a private equity firm's financial vision, requires you to put yourself in the mindset of your buyers.

When salespeople are not hitting their sales quotas, sales leaders must ask themselves the tough questions: Why aren't we reaching our sales goals? Why aren't my salespeople consistently making their numbers? Why isn't every rep on my team performing at the same high level? What else do they need to consistently make their number?

You can conduct sales analysis. You can price your products correctly. You can deploy the latest technology, tools, and processes. But at the end of the day, sales is all about the people who talk to your company's potential buyers — it's all about the salespeople on the frontlines.

If your salespeople aren't working in sync with your potential buyers, they may never achieve the level of sales success you expect them to achieve.

Salespeople Must Understand How Your Buyers Buy

To be in sync with your buyers requires your salespeople to understand them — including how they buy. Then they must be skilled in how to guide the buyers through the buyers' journey at every step. This includes understanding the key inflection points and milestones that each buyer needs to overcome before they will move toward a sale.

There are specific sales skills that salespeople need to fulfill this mission. Your sales enablement program must include the lessons and modules that teach these specific skills. Sales enablement must be customized to each company's exact buyers' needs and challenges. That's why cookie-cutter training and sales enablement programs never work.

By the Numbers

52.6%

higher win rates experienced by companies whose sales skills training exceeded their expectations

— [Sales Readiness Group](#)

Build Your Salespeople's Muscle Memory

Even if you have one or a few sales superstars, that still won't be enough to ensure your company consistently reaches its monthly, quarterly, and annual sales goals. What you need is far more than just training your low-performing salespeople. Your entire team needs to move in the same direction, with everyone consistently executing at the highest possible level — all fully in sync with your buyers' expectations. Also, you need a system in which your new hires can join the team and ramp up quickly to achieve sales success.

Every salesperson on your team needs to develop a type of sales muscle memory. In this way, your sales program becomes deeply ingrained and predictable. Launching a comprehensive and customized sales enablement program ensures you are pulling all the levers to elevate the performance of your entire sales team. When you do, your company will be better positioned for revenue growth.



Sales enablement is the last mile of your growth strategy. Done right, a portfolio company trains and reinforces the skills and behaviors that its salespeople need to consistently perform at a world-class level.

George de los Reyes

Partner and COO, Cortado Group



3

JOURNEY

The Power of Stage-Appropriate Marketing Materials in the Buyer's Journey



John Auer

Partner and CRO

To move the sales process forward successfully, salespeople must have access to stage-appropriate marketing materials at every step of the buyer's journey.

Buyers and prospects need to move at their own pace, stage by stage, through the buyer's journey. When I'm explaining the power of stage appropriate selling to salespeople, I use the following story as an example.

Imagine you've never skied before but want to try it. You walk into a ski shop for the first time in your life. A salesperson rushes up to you and asks what type of new skis you're looking for? "We just got in the new Rossignol 86 Tis. The titanyl construction will give you great stability on black diamond slopes. We sell all the top brands: Rossignol, Salomon, K2, Dynastar. Which ones do you want to look at?"

Intimidated by the sales spiel, you back up towards the door. "I'm just looking, thank you." You leave the store, never to return.

Before giving up on skiing all together, you decide to try a smaller ski shop. The clerk approaches you and asks, "Welcome. Have you been skiing long?"

"No, I've never skied. But I am curious."

"It can be a lot of fun. Let's start with why you want to learn how to ski."

You have just been empowered to learn about ski equipment at your own pace by this salesperson's approach. You don't feel intimidated. You feel empowered. You decide to give this store your business.

Lesson learned: Be stage appropriate. Meet your buyer where they are in the buyer's journey. Help them get to where they want to go at their pace, not yours.

Right Materials at Right Time

A critical aspect of sales that many sales organizations get wrong is that they don't create stage-appropriate sales materials to meet buyers' needs as they travel through the buyer's journey. This is a big mistake. Buyers need the right marketing tools at the right time to pass through each stage of the process.

There are typically five to seven stages in a B2B buying cycle — from awareness to close. What's more, there are usually multiple buyers who enter the sales journey at different stages. For example, executives are looking for business case insight to explain the why. And the actual users are looking for how-to insight.

Without the right marketing support for each stage of the journey, you'll handicap your salespeople. Organizations that clearly map out their buyer's journey and provide the right stage-appropriate marketing materials will be setting up their salespeople for greater sales success.



An important aspect of sales that many sales organizations get wrong is that they don't create stage-appropriate sales materials across the entire buyer's journey.

John Auer

Partner and CRO, Cortado Group



4

PLAYBOOK

Empower Your Salespeople with a Best-Practices Sales Playbook



Bill Piacitelli

Principal and ICRO

As sales leaders, it's our job to ensure our sales teams are given what they need to continuously uplevel their skill set. And one thing they need is a sales strategy playbook.

Launching a sales enablement program is one of the most impactful initiatives a sales leader can undertake. It has the potential to influence everything related to running an optimized sales program.

A critical step in the process that is often overlooked is the sales playbook. But it should not be given short shrift. A playbook is a vital part of a successful sales enablement program. It provides a standardized framework that documents a repeatable process to guide the entire sales team. It helps ensure that every salesperson is using the same sales approach and methodology.



Every Salesperson on the Same Page

A well-documented sales playbook delivers many powerful insights, including:

- 1 **Buyer persona descriptions:** When sellers understand their customers, they have a huge advantage. Knowing a buyer's unique characteristics, objections, pain points, and decision-making processes, salespeople can tailor their approach and messaging for each scenario.
- 1 **Real-world sales processes:** Playbooks need to include the scripts a salesperson should say to prospects — whether they're pitching, prospecting, nurturing, or closing.
- 1 **Sales stage sequencing:** The playbook needs to describe how to take a prospect from being aware that they have a problem through a product purchase decision. Each step should include insight into a buyer's mindset and how to address questions and get past objections.

Salespeople want to be successful. They don't want to struggle to meet their sales targets and their employer's revenue goals. A playbook is an important way to empower them to improve their performance. When you hand them a playbook, they feel more confident and ready to succeed. That is sales enablement at its finest.



An important aspect of sales that many sales organizations get wrong is that they don't create stage-appropriate sales materials across the entire buyer's journey.

Bill Piacitelli

Principal and ICRO, Cortado Group



5

TRAINING

The Secret to Successful Sales Training is Reinforce, Reinforce, Reinforce



Sarah Bedwell

Consulting Principal,
GTM Enablement

You can transform an entire sales team's performance with proper sales enablement. You just need to know how to do it the right way.

"We've trained them on everything they need to know. Why are we still losing sales?"

This was the question my frustrated executive vice president of sales asked me one day. I did not have an easy answer.

Six months prior, a new competitor had launched in our market — and was eating our lunch. Our win rates had plummeted. Our sales team's morale had cratered. Every month, our EVP had our product marketing team tell our sales team how we were better, why our new competitor was worse, and what to say to counter their attacks.

The result of these one-way training sessions? Our win rate kept dropping.

In desperation, our EVP turned to sales enablement. We took a step back to observe conversations between our salespeople and prospects. What we discovered was shocking.

At least 90% of the time, our salespeople were not asking prospects the right questions. For example, they didn't ask, "What other solutions are you considering?" Even worse, when they did ask and our competitor was mentioned, the salespeople offered up only weak reasons for why we were better. Clearly, they needed better training to get over this hurdle.

We designed a four-week program that we called "compliment, plant, explain." This was our game plan:

Week 1: Teach sales leaders how a best-practices conversion should go: First, compliment our competitor. Then mention a legitimate doubt. Then, explain how this would impact the customer's company.

Week 2: Sales leaders were tasked with teaching this approach to our salespeople.

Week 3: Salespeople roleplayed the messaging process back to our sales leaders.

Week 4: Upon successful completion of the process, we certified each salesperson on this new skill.

The result? In four weeks, our win rate improved by 9%. This is the power of sales enablement done right.

By the Numbers

Companies that aligned their sales process with their buyer's journey achieved:

10%
higher win rates

14%
higher quota attainment
— CSO Insights, Miller Heiman

What's Missing from Sales Training Today?

What's missing from many sales enablement programs is real-life application and feedback. Humans learn new skills by immediately applying what they've learned in the real world. This is key: They must receive feedback immediately. While studying human memory, German psychologist Hermann Ebbinghaus found that if new information isn't applied immediately, [we forget about 75% of it after just six days.](#)

At the Cortado Group, when implementing sales enablement, we start by modeling effective sales skills for salespeople. We then give them ample opportunity to practice the skills in a variety of settings. We observe their performance, then provide immediate feedback and coaching until they consistently demonstrate proficiency.

We've seen time and again that this approach delivers phenomenal improvements in the way salespeople sell and in their success. It's the critical key that is missing from many of today's sales training and enablement programs. And it's the key that can make the difference between lagging sales and profitable growth.



If you want a sales training program that sticks, you need a sales enablement program that ensures your salespeople gain new sales muscle memory.

Sarah Bedwell

Consulting Principal, GTM Enablement, Cortado Group



6

TECHNOLOGY

Data Analytics Takes Sales Enablement to the Next Level of Success



Robert Gammon

Practice Leader,
Revenue Operations

There are two essential insights that sales enablement provides to salespeople. First, what actions they need to take to move a buyer toward a close-win deal. Second, what actions they need to stop taking because they aren't working. Technology and data provide insight into both.

To reach super-seller status, salespeople need to know the impact of their actions based on factual data rather than guessing. They need to know what prospects and customers are experiencing, their buying journey, and their buying signals. Too often, critical insight is overlooked. Yet, it has a significant impact on sales.

Accessing and sharing this insight requires deploying the right sales enablement processes, systems, technologies, and measurement tools. We have designed successful systems by capturing data at each step of the buyer's journey — from opportunity, to prospect, to account. By understanding customers better, we don't waste time capturing data points that don't matter to prospects.



By the Numbers

After implementing sales enablement, organizations have seen:

+5-point
gain in retention

+1-point
lift in attainment

+3-point
improvement in win rates
— [Sales Enablement Pro](#)

When a company deploys a sales enablement program backed by intelligence, they gain several capabilities, including these.

- 1. Move prospects to win-close.** The most important data point needed is the outcome of a salesperson's action. In other words, they took X action and Y happened. With that insight gained over time, salespeople learn exactly what they need to do to move their prospects closer to a sale. What's more, they understand what's not working — such as knowing that a particular prospect will never close. As a result, they can spend their time making the right sales motions that offer true opportunities — and avoid wasting valuable time.
- 2. Forecast sales outcomes.** Big picture, companies like to know their future odds of sales success. When they capture sales enablement data, they can layer it onto a forecasting engine. This works because it includes prospects in the equation. If you try to forecast sales results without including your prospects, you're not going to get a true result. Forecasting accurately makes their wins, losses, and revenue more predictable.
- 3. Capitalize on digital conversations.** Today, companies are recording millions of conversations, but not yet leveraging their potential. For sales enablement, the conversations can be a treasure trove. You can pull insights such as tonal inflection, common words and terms, and competitor mentions. This insight can be used in a variety of ways. Some companies are changing the game with digital conversations. For example, they use them to help train salespeople to spot challenges and understand how to overcome them. Companies can also use the insight to learn, for example, why a prospect chose a competitor instead of them.

Sales enablement should be viewed as the science of improving and proceduralizing the right moves at every step of the buyer's journey. When we do that, we know what's working and what's not working. Then we know the best path toward close-win deals versus closed-lost deals.



While it's easy to be skeptical about making an investment in sales enablement, when it's correctly implemented and supported, it's clear as day that these programs improve go-to-market performance.

Robert Gammon

Practice Leader, Revenue Operations, Cortado Group

CASE STUDY

The Power of Sales Enablement 2.0 in Action

Medical Education Company Overcomes Sales Gaps and Boosts Sales

To overcome missed revenue milestones, a private-equity-owned medical education company transformed its clinical subject matter experts into stronger salespeople with a comprehensive sales enablement program — customized for its unique sales needs.

About Our Client

Founded in 1999, this portfolio company improves patient care by creating specialized education programs related to the latest developments in clinical care. It provides evidence-based educational and innovative solutions in six clinical areas, such as oncology and infectious diseases.

Recognizing a growing demand for its specialized service, The Riverside Company, a private equity firm, purchased the company in 2020. It launched Cortado Group's Sales Enablement 2.0 in 2023. The goal was to elevate the company's sales performance so it could expand its brand on the global stage and grow through larger contracts and acquisitions.

Challenge: Sales Process Not Sustainable

By 2022, the portfolio company's sales division was not meeting its revenue milestones — including its close-win rate, sales cycle speed, and average sales price. Among the many problems it faced were siloed best practices within its six clinical sales teams. Other challenges included losing several experienced salespeople to retirement, gaining new salespeople through acquisitions, and a slowdown in its largest vertical.

The medical education company wanted to turn around its sales performance. Hiring new salespeople who were also clinical subject matter experts was not a viable solution. From experience, the company knew that it's difficult, even impossible, to find clinical experts who can also sell. Instead, the company decided to improve the sales skills of its existing subject matter experts through a formalized sales enablement program.

Solution: Turn SMEs into Salespeople

With no sales enablement experts in the company, the medical education company and Riverside decided to outsource. They needed a partner who could create a customized solution that met their unique sales requirements. They interviewed several firms and chose the Cortado Group to lead the project.

In particular, the company wanted to overcome the internal hurdles and barriers facing its salespeople. Through sales enablement, the company saw an opportunity to gather the best practices of its six divisions. It could then bring them together into one holistic sales process that every subject matter expert could use across the entire organization.

Partner: Cortado Group “Got It”

While many large, name-brand companies offered their sales enablement solutions, Riverside’s Managing Director of Commercial Growth, Chris Davy, wanted to work with a boutique firm. He had worked with the Cortado Group in a previous partnership and knew its reputation for excellence.

“Cortado Group was the only firm that got it,” said Davy. “Their team came back with a comprehensive, customized sales enablement plan that included timelines, milestones, and measures of success.

“The CEO of our portfolio company said, ‘I don’t want to hire a consultant to give me a bunch of PowerPoint slides. I want execution.’ Cortado said, ‘We are not going to give you a theory. We’re coming in to make change.’ That was a big selling point for the company’s CEO.”

“What’s more, they introduced us to the person who would lead the project, Sarah Bedwell. Neither of the large companies we talked to even knew who the project lead would be. They just had theories, not practice plans.”

Also, the portfolio company appreciated the fact that the Cortado Group made impactful sales enablement recommendations that didn’t force its teams into a box. Instead, it worked with the company according to its unique needs.



Cortado Group was the only firm that got it. They came back with a comprehensive, customized sales enablement plan that included timelines, milestones, and measures of success.

Chris Davy

Managing Director of Commercial Growth, The Riverside Company

Salespeople's confidence in their sales skills increased over 8 weeks:

+48%

ability to describe buyer personas and the process they go through to make a sales decision

+47%

ability to develop a compelling grant idea to submit at the assigned quality level

+42%

ability to create and run an engagement strategy while supporters are considering a deal

+41%

ability to perform all the above in full compliance

Process: Extract Sales Best Practices

The Cortado Group sales enablement team performed these steps to extract the organization's sales best practices and create a customized sales enablement program:

1. Documented their buyers' journey and personas
2. Designed a sales process strategically aligned to that buyers' journey
3. Codified the skills a salesperson needed to execute the sales process
4. Built those skills into a scalable e-learning program
5. Put the entire team through the training program
6. Enabled the skills to stick by coaching the frontline managers week over week with 1:1 observation and feedback
7. Empowered the frontline managers to coach their own teams

Results: Confidence and Collaboration

The early results of the new sales enablement program included a 29% increase in confidence in the salespeople's ability to perform essential sales skills. Everyone wholeheartedly embraced the sales enablement program. They viewed it as a reflection of the company's investment in their success.

According to the VP of Neuroscience, "I can say with a high level of confidence that we have more in our pipeline versus this time last year. I very much believe it is a byproduct of our comprehensive sales coaching."

According to the VP of Infectious Disease: "As we closed out the first half of 2023, we found that our team achieved solid year-over-year growth — with two lead salespeople performing above their quota. We credit our new sales process from the Cortado Group for our success, including creating a stronger sales strategy, and setting detailed yearly objectives, timeline-driven actions for feeding the pipeline, and a new tracking system to follow quarterly quotas at a regular cadence. Thanks again for all of the support!"

According to the Chief Strategy Officer: "Through the process, I have learned that any organization looking to scale must address sales enablement. If you don't you'll have disparate processes that aren't performing well. That will work against your revenue goals. If you want to grow and scale, there must be a systematic approach — and that is sales enablement."



If you want to grow and scale, there has to be a systematic approach — and that is sales enablement.

Portfolio Company's Chief Strategy Officer

Next Steps to Profitable Revenue Growth

How Will You Begin

Your Sales Enablement 2.0 Journey?

The best time to invest in sales enablement was yesterday. But today is not too late. The right approach requires a shift in mindset. There's more to sales enablement than just sales training. Doing it right requires a comprehensive approach — from mapping the buyer's journey to extracting best practices to deploying the right support systems.

When done right, a sales enablement program can transform your entire sales team into a powerful sales force. The team will be set up for success and can achieve outcomes not available with traditional sales training methods. Your salespeople will be empowered to do the right things, at the right time, to drive the right results. And your sales organization will reap the benefits of tighter alignment, predictable outcomes, stronger and more consistent sales performance — and, ultimately, higher revenue growth.

How the Cortado Group Accelerates Your Sales Growth

The Cortado Group approach to sales enablement involves addressing and overhauling every critical step in the entire sales process. It requires thinking beyond just training, just technology, or just hiring all stars. Instead, sales leaders take a holistic strategic approach that encompasses every aspect of the sales process — from understanding the ideal customer profile to mapping the stages of the buyer's journey to creating a detailed sales playbook.

These revenue-focused steps are all within the skill set of the experts at the Cortado Group. We approach sales enablement like we approach every challenge — we fix everything that's broken and rebuild processes until they run optimally. The result is setting up your company to generate the highest level of profitable growth.

Ready for a Sales Growth Consultation?

How do you know when Sales Enablement 2.0 is right for your company? Consider your answers to these high-level sales questions:

- 7 Have you deeply researched your real-life buyers and how they make a purchase decision?
- 7 Have you designed a strategic sales process that aligns with how they buy?
- 7 Have you identified the sales skills that will help your salespeople consistently deliver the desired outcomes?
- 7 Have you both trained and consistently reinforced the right sales skills with your team?
- 7 Have you embedded your buyer-centric sales process into your CRM?
- 7 Have you provided the right marketing and technology resources to help your sales team perform their new sales skills successfully?

If your company is struggling with sales growth and you don't have a sales enablement function in place, now is the time to get started.



Contact us today to schedule a consultation on how to deploy the Cortado Group's revenue-focused Sales Enablement 2.0 program at your portfolio company.