

# SALES

## ENABLEMENT

MAGAZINE

### **Sales Enablement Transformed:**

INSIDE PTC'S READINESS  
AND GROWTH EVOLUTION

5 WAYS TO  
**GIVE BETTER  
FEEDBACK**  
WITH VIDEO  
COACHING

**THE SOPHOMORE-  
JUNIOR CURSE:**  
HOW TO RETAIN NEW  
SALES REPS IN YEARS 2-3

**WHAT MAKES A GREAT  
MODERN-DAY B2B  
SALES LEADER?**

**BRAINSHARK**

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# Sales Readiness? It's Not Just About Training

What's the difference between sales training and sales *readiness*?

The question comes up from time to time in conversations about sales enablement. Every company provides some sort of training to its sales force, after all. But there's a big difference between "completing training" and "being ready."

Do your reps know how to deliver your pitch? Are they all comfortable and up-to-speed with your latest product offering? Are they prepared to handle common customer objections the right way? In other words, are they actually **READY** to sell?

When it comes to questions like these – which go beyond whether a salesperson has simply been "trained" or not – a lot of sales organizations are left guessing (and hoping). Those same companies then annually over-hire and over-quota, in part to compensate for the lack of insight into which reps are truly prepared with the knowledge and skills to succeed.

It's just another reason why sales enablement and the technology that supports it have become such a priority for today's leading businesses. To keep sellers continuously prepared, a "set it and forget it" approach to training won't cut it. The best sales enablement strategies take a holistic approach to readiness that places an emphasis on coaching and assessments.

Video coaching and practice tools now make it easier to validate that even the most geographically dispersed sales teams have mastered key messages. Reps can review learning material from any location, record product pitches on their phones, and receive feedback digitally from sales managers and subject matter experts – and even receive instant AI-based analysis on message delivery and topic coverage.

The future of sales enablement and readiness is already here, and it goes beyond the same old training approach. Organizations that embrace coaching and assessments will be in the best position to sell, grow, and make better decisions for their businesses.

As my colleague Jim Ninivaggi likes to say, "if you're not assessing, you're guessing."

Greg Flynn

CEO, Brainshark



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# BRAINSHARK®

## SALES ENABLEMENT SOFTWARE FOR AN **ALWAYS-READY** SALES FORCE

Brainshark helps reps learn and prepare wherever, whenever, and however they work – so they're always ready for any selling situation.

### BETTER CONTENT

Engage reps with memorable content that can be created quickly, updated easily and accessed anywhere.

### FLEXIBLE TRAINING

Prepare reps with on-demand resources for everything from onboarding to just-in-time updates.

### POWERFUL COACHING

Certify that every seller has mastered your message with video-based coaching, practice and assessments.



View a short solution demo today: [bit.ly/bnskdemo](https://bit.ly/bnskdemo)



# Contents

---

3

From the CEO

Sales Readiness? It's Not Just About Training

7

The Buzz

Sales Books to Add to Your Reading List &  
5 Ways to Boost Sales Performance With Team Building

8

Sales Enablement Voices

What Makes a Great Modern-Day B2B Sales Leader?

10

Cover Story

Sales Enablement Transformed:  
Inside PTC's Readiness and Growth Evolution

14

5 Ways to Give Better Feedback with Video Coaching

16

The Sophomore-Junior Curse:

How to Retain New Sales Reps in Years 2 and 3

18

Seen & Heard

Keys to Inspiring (and Retaining) Your Millennial Sales Force

As the tides of business change, it's not always easy to prepare your sales force for what's coming next.

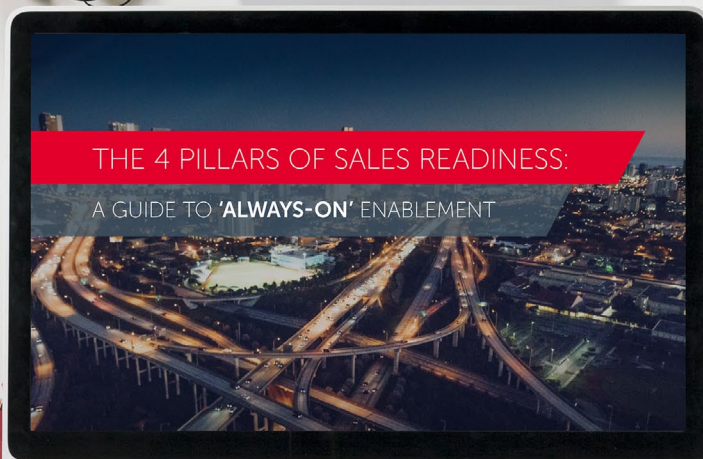
**Download this exclusive eBook to learn:**

- Definitions & goals for the 4 readiness pillars
- Readiness best practices
- How to leverage technology

**DOWNLOAD**

The 4 Pillars of Sales Readiness eBook:

[bit.ly/4pillarsreadiness](https://bit.ly/4pillarsreadiness)





# THE BUZZ

## Sales Books to Add to Your Reading List



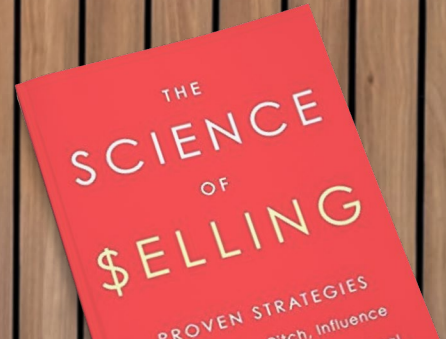
The Only Sales Guide You'll Ever Need  
By Anthony Iannarino

Check out nuggets from Iannarino's 25 years of sales experience and learn about the importance of self-discipline, accountability, storytelling, and more.



The Sales Development Playbook  
By Trish Bertuzzi

Features tips on how to build a more qualified pipeline, including aligning your sales development model with your buyer's journey, tactics for hiring and retaining reps, and more.



The Science of Selling  
By David Hoffed

Breaks down ways to engage buyers' emotions to increase their receptiveness, discover underlying objections and guide them through the purchasing process.

For more sales book recommendations, visit our blog: [bit.ly/bnskbooks](http://bit.ly/bnskbooks)

## 5 Ways to Boost Sales Performance With Team Building



1



### Pitch new ideas

Have your sellers come up with a new feature for your product and pitch it in a 60-second commercial.

2



### Develop skills through comedy

Get reps to collaborate and think on their feet through group improvisation activities.

3



### Engage your team while giving back

Foster team bonding through volunteering, such as building bicycles or helping at a soup kitchen.

4



### Cook up some teamwork

Have your team take a cooking class together to make a dish and assign everyone different roles based on the recipe.

5



### Explore your city

Organize a scavenger hunt where reps solve riddles, take photos, and find objects.





# WHAT MAKES A GREAT MODERN-DAY B2B SALES LEADER?

With over 20 years of experience at companies like Avention and SiriusDecisions, Brainshark's Chief Sales Officer Colleen Honan is no stranger to leading sales teams. We spoke with her about the biggest changes she sees impacting B2B sales today and the best leadership tactics to overcome them.



## What are the biggest changes you've seen in recent years in B2B sales?

**CH:** The biggest change is not with the sellers, it's with the buyers. Buyers are more informed, sometimes more than the salesperson, because they've done their research and talked to competitors and peers. We have to change the perception of sellers and we can only do that by asking buyers the right questions.

Another change is that the procurement power has risen so much at organizations. Procurement has the power to stop deals and sellers need realize they don't always manage the buying cycle. We need to make sure we educate our salespeople on what procurement cares about so they don't give things away to the business owner; they save things for procurement.

Although the buying process may have changed, it's still within the control of the rep to win the deal and in the hands of sales managers to help reps get there.

## How have you seen the workforce change and how does that affect your role as a sales leader?

**CH:** The makeup of the workforce is changing drastically; research suggests that millennials will make up 75% of the workforce by 2025. As sales leaders, we need to figure out what motivates them. Part of that means giving them a clear career path. For example, when someone

new comes in, be clear about how long they'll stay in their role if they perform well and set milestones and metrics for them.

Consider creating a mentoring program where business development reps are assigned to experienced salespeople, so they work alongside each other. It's all about working with people doing the role so they can learn and decide whether they're a fit for sales. In addition, a future leaders program can be a great way to groom people so they can learn what it means to be a leader, how to lead and manage, and how to coach and develop people.

## What is an important area for leaders to emphasize with their sales organizations?

**CH:** The level of activity is a significant one. If you're not measuring your reps' activities, then you're not measuring productivity. However, it is not activity for activities sake, they must directly align to pipeline and ultimately revenue. At Brainshark, we measure the velocity of our pipeline. How long does it take to move something through the pipeline? We can tell where a deal gets stalled and coach reps on why they might be stuck. Perhaps they are not having conversations with the decision maker or maybe they haven't asked the right qualifying questions.

The top salespeople are usually the ones with the most activity; it doesn't guarantee you will close more deals, but if you have no activity, you won't be closing any deals. This also comes into play during onboarding. If

you want to know if reps can do the job, look at their activity and yield in terms of the time to first deal and pipeline.

## As a sales leader, how would you describe the importance of sales enablement?

**CH:** If I didn't have a sales enablement team, I would spend most of my time developing and delivering content and making sure reps were consuming it and understanding it. I would be responsible for onboarding our reps and training and developing them. This would have a huge impact on the productivity of me and my managers.

The sales enablement industry has grown so fast and it's really exciting. Sales enablement helps sales organizations and leaders tackle new products, competitors, buyers and functions in the market in a streamlined way. We want our reps selling and doing activities that relate to closing deals; if they're trying to find content or figure out products on their own, that won't scale and it's a big prohibitor to making their numbers. It's valuable having sales enablement responsible for the formal training, coaching and developing of sales professionals.

## What's your advice for aspiring B2B sales leaders?

**CH:** As you're coming up through a sales organization, look around for the top consistent sales managers and latch onto them. Ask them for some time to discuss your career path. Always take the coaching and development that's provided and if it's not offered, be proactive and ask for it. ■

# Sales Enablement Transformed

Inside PTC's Readiness and Growth Evolution

By Lauren Brousell

Photography by  
Charlie Robinson



PTC is one of the leading companies in the internet of things (IoT) and augmented reality (AR) markets. But it wasn't always that way.

Just a few years ago, when PTC was still best known for providing CAD and PLM solutions, a significant transformation toward IoT and AR began, leading to a series of acquisitions that included ThingWorx in 2014 and Kepware in 2016.

"There was a market trend taking place around companies looking to connect to physical and digital worlds," said Don Cooper, VP of global sales enablement and programs at PTC. "Our CEO had the foresight to see that market opportunity."

In the years that followed, the transformation would not only affect the focus and trajectory of PTC's business; it would also present unique challenges and opportunities for sales enablement.

### Where Sales Enablement Meets Transformation

Sales enablement began to take shape as a dedicated function at PTC over a decade ago, said Lisa Casello, senior director of sales enablement, who previously worked in sales operations at the company.

"I started seeing more from the sales development organization, which is what [enablement] was called at the time. They were getting more involved in direct

sales activities instead of just providing training and putting it online. That's why I moved over to that department."

Around that time, PTC was using a learning management system (LMS) to onboard and train its salespeople, however the system was outdated and didn't provide the flexibility and control required for sales enablement. As the business began to shift toward IoT and AR, it was clear that it would only become harder to keep reps informed of the changes and validate that they understood the material.

Most notably, the transformation impacted three key areas that directly



PTC HQ in Needham, MA  
Left: Lisa Casello & Don Cooper



affected sellers: PTC's go-to-market strategy, *how* they were selling and *what* they were selling.

From a go-to-market perspective, this meant a shift from a direct to a partner-based sales model, which included a massive change in skills and people, according to Cooper. *What* the company sold expanded to include new products as a result of acquisitions, while the *how* was changing from a perpetual model to a subscription model, which began with converting existing customers.

"Lisa and our team had to spin out the new information to our sales team," said Cooper. "We were having to hit sales from all sides and that meant understanding it ourselves first. We wanted to present it to sales in a way that didn't crush them."

### The Need for Speed

The key components of the business transformation trickled down into numerous initiatives for sales enablement to support, including creating training for new and existing product lines, rolling out sales processes and tools, and supporting the partner organization. If that wasn't enough, PTC was also building out its inside sales organization, which required hiring a new crop of millennial sellers.

Casello said there was no way sales enablement would be able to support all of those areas with its existing LMS. "With the shift in our business, we needed that boost desperately. We needed a centralized way to deliver everything, easily see what reps were doing, and measure and report on that."

Cooper added that keeping up with the objectives of the transformation came down to the need for speed and efficiency.

"The speed at which we were delivering content to sales had multiplied. As our business started to go, there was a natural pull for more demand and the only way we could get there was by matching the right technology with the business."

To hit the ground running, the team looked at existing systems within the company, and found that Brainshark was already being used by the marketing organization. The platform provided a simpler, more flexible option for preparing PTC's growing sales force.

**"The speed at which we were delivering content to sales had multiplied. As our business started to go, there was a natural pull for more demand and the only way we could get there was by matching the right technology with the business."**

"Brainshark definitely fit where we needed to be with content delivery and creation," said Casello. "We're very in tune to the needs of our young and millennial-based sales organization, and we were looking to build in micro-learning so they could take in key information as needed."



## A New (and Ever-Evolving) Look for Onboarding and Readiness

With Brainshark, the sales enablement team took the existing onboarding process and flipped it on its head. They developed a role-based, 30-60-90-day onboarding program for the entire sales organization that would balance the needs of both millennials and veteran sellers.

For example, all sales roles receive training via Brainshark with introductory information on PTC and its markets. Roles that focus on specific products move on to deeper training paths, whereas broader roles get training with a more general view of the product portfolio.

After the 90 days are complete, sellers continue to receive training that covers product and company updates, as well as video coaching activities to prove comprehension of the material. For instance, after viewing a training presentation on product positioning, the reps may be asked to record a video via Brainshark to demonstrate how they would present that information to a customer. Each video can be reviewed with feedback so the rep knows what they did well and what they can improve upon.

“[In Brainshark], we’re building in coaching activities in our post-learning courseware that show [reps’] adoption of the learning. The overall goal is to build a cultural and organizational awareness around coaching,” said Casello.

The work is paying off. Since PTC has evolved its sales enablement strategy to keep pace with the business transformation, they’ve experienced less turnover than the industry average, improved time to productivity and readiness, and observed higher levels of confidence and competence across their inside sales team. The team now provides enablement to a selling ecosystem of over 2,200 people, ranging from inside salespeople to channel partners.

**“The overall goal is to build a cultural and organizational awareness around coaching.”**

Cooper believes a perpetual state of transformation, for both the business and sales enablement, is a good thing.

“We’re transforming how we do business internally and helping customers transform their business with our offerings. We’re on a constant journey of transformation and we can never feel like we’ve arrived, especially in sales enablement where we’re always looking at new ways to do it.” ■



## Sales Onboarding



30 days:

Introductory training about PTC and its markets



60 days:

Foundational, role-based training around the value of the products



90 days & beyond:

Continuous training, including microlearning and just-in-time learning, for product and company updates



5  
WAYS TO

# GIVE BETTER WITH VIDEO COACHING

By Jenn Haskell

When it comes to sales coaching, feedback is key. If you coach your reps to practice and reinforce what they learned during training, it's these critiques that will lead to a change in their behavior – and improvement in their performance.

Video coaching technology allows sales managers to scale the delivery of feedback so it's still individualized, but can be tracked and sent in an efficient manner. However, sales managers can get stuck in a rut of providing unimaginative feedback that doesn't always help reps with their specific needs.

Here are 5 ways to give better feedback with video coaching technology.

## 1. Be sincere

With team-wide coaching, there's a high probability that reps will discuss their experiences with each other. If a sales manager just copies-and-pastes the same feedback from one rep to the next within your coaching tool, it could be perceived as insincere, which will be less impactful. The sales team will figure it out and you'll risk ruining credibility while demotivating them. Remember, employees appreciate thoughtful and honest feedback that's specific to the skills they're working on.

## 2. Be specific

Feedback should always be as specific



# FEEDBACK

as possible. Instead of saying “good job,” tell the rep specifically what they did well. For example, “Great pitch! Pointing to how another customer from the same industry has been successful was an excellent touch.” When your reps know exactly what they’ve done well, they’ll be more likely to repeat those good habits in the future.

Providing constructive feedback can also result in a positive experience that fosters employee trust and growth. For example, “You demonstrated that you understand the features of our product. With a little more practice, you’ll be able to cut down your pitch to 1 minute and only highlight the features that are MOST important to the client.”

Your goal should be to challenge the employee, not flatten their confidence. Feedback should always be descriptive and directed to the action, not the person. Keep your ideas succinct and focused on improvement and strengths so the rep will be more likely to remember them all.

### 3. Respond in a timely fashion

Give your feedback as soon as possible after a coaching activity has been submitted. For video coaching, it’s best to provide feedback within 48 hours, but it should never take you longer than a

week to respond. Set expectations and a realistic timeline upfront with the rep so they know when to expect an assessment of their performance.

### 4. Acknowledge the effort, not just the results

Offer praise for reps’ efforts, even if they don’t achieve the desired result. The art of feedback is about helping someone improve, but it’s important to acknowledge their preparation and participation. This is especially true with coaching since it’s not always the most natural thing for people to record videos or simulate situations for others to see. According to a Globoforce survey, 78% of employees say being recognized motivates them in their job (which is no surprise!) and 69% would work harder if they felt their efforts were recognized.

Balance the feedback on what needs to be fixed or adjusted. Don’t end with ways they can improve as it will overshadow the positive feedback you’ve already provided. Express your belief that they can do better and ask the participant what you can do to assist in them to achieve the desired results. Ask what training, mentoring or resources they need to move forward. Be clear on next steps, such as the timeline for when they should complete further training or when they will be expected to

re-submit a coaching response to show they’ve incorporated feedback.

### 5. Show “what good looks like”

When possible, provide examples of the best submissions from others on the team. This is a great way to encourage peer learning and:

- Show reps that are struggling specific ways to improve
- Motivate the team by recognizing reps that are the first to complete the coaching activity and achieve the desired results
- Turn top coaching activities into future learning content – if you have new hires, would they benefit from seeing how other reps pitch certain products? Or would demo or pitch examples help existing reps stay fresh?

If you’ve made the investment in video coaching technology, that’s only half the battle. It’s equally important to provide reps with thoughtful and specific feedback that will help them perform well and improve upon their shortcomings. It will also encourage them to use the coaching tool knowing they will receive constructive feedback. ■



# THE SOPHOMORE- JUNIOR CURSE:

## HOW TO RETAIN NEW SALES REPS IN YEARS 2 – 3

By Jim Ninivaggi

Getting new hires productive faster is a huge need for many organizations. But there looms another problem: the curse of the sophomore and junior year reps. This is one of the most critical times in the lifecycle of a salesperson; it's when they decide if they can make it or not – or whether it's time to start looking for greener pastures.

Most sales enablement leaders lack a real strategy to deal with this. Yet retaining reps in those critical sophomore and junior years has a huge impact on the ability for a company to hit its current numbers, and more importantly, future growth targets. Sales enablement leaders have to put as much emphasis on retention as they do on onboarding.

Let's explore why sophomore and junior reps leave and strategies to prevent that from happening.

### Move from reactive to proactive learning

In a SiriusDecisions study of high-performing salespeople, 36% reported a lack of a learning paths as their key reason for leaving a company. For many sales organizations, it seems that after the initial onboarding, the “formal” learning ends and reps are only met with the occasional informal training around product launches, pricing changes and other updates.

Many sales enablement leaders I've worked with would argue that they've built continuous learning paths, but the problem is that reps, focused on selling (as they should be), don't take advantage of them. What sales enablement leaders need to do (with the support of the CSO) is move from a “reactive” learning approach, where reps participate on their own, to a “proactive” learning approach, where reps are engaged to learn automatically, and continuous learning is expected and measured.





Based on where a rep is against the required competencies, learning is continuously pushed to them, ideally in micro-learning (3-4 minute) sessions, and via the devices and systems they use every day, such as mobile devices or the CRM. There should also be the expectation that there will be regular assessments to ensure reps are mastering the competencies along the way. This proactive approach can only work if leaders and managers are committed to it and foster an environment of improvement. Without that support, reps will likely be allowed to ignore the learning, and you will find yourself back in reactive mode.

### A culture of coaching

Coaching continues to be a significant problem in most organizations, and the lack of it contributes greatly to the sophomore/junior curse. If this is a problem in your organization, either finally resolve to fix it and create a coaching culture, or live with the consequences of not having one.

Some companies are looking to solve this by creating dedicated coaching positions, specifically to focus on reps

in early tenure, rather than trying to turn managers into coaches. They are justifying the costs of these coaches by looking at the lifetime value of reps, increased rep productivity, and the cost savings from reduced rep turnover.

### Peer-to-peer learning: connective intelligence

It can be lonely out there in the field, especially if your reps are working from remote offices, and they only get together with the entire sales team at the annual kickoff.

Establishing a peer-to-peer program to connect these newer reps with their peers is essential. There's nothing like learning from the best, and it gives your new hires the ability to do just that. It also gives them the opportunity to join the discussion, share their key learnings as they ramp and ask specific questions of reps that have been there and done that. Lastly, it gives them the chance to stay to connected with their "classmates," the folks that were part of their new hire class, sharing successes (and failures), stories and advice.

### New hire recognition

We all love to be recognized – and salespeople are no different. Look for ways to provide recognition to your early tenure reps, who often are overshadowed by their

more senior peers (e.g. the Salesperson of the Year is rarely a first-year rep). I'm not advocating the "everyone gets a trophy" approach, but some real meaningful recognition, such as Rookie of the Year, Sophomore of the Year, Energizer Bunny (opening the greatest number of new accounts), First Million Club, and so on.

### Provide a career path

Another key reason reps leave organizations early is a lack of a career path. Often times, it's not long after they start that they begin to wonder "what's next?" and if there is not a clear path, they start to think about where else they need to go in order to move up the ladder. Early on in their tenure, provide them with a pathway for growth and career advancement. Tap those who have manager potential (and have demonstrated a high-level of competency and productivity) and use them as mentors for the new reps coming in under them. Offer a clear learning and assessment path that reps can follow to "up-skill" for other sales positions, such as moving from a territory rep to a strategic account manager.

Sales enablement leaders are always looking for ways to demonstrate their value to their sales leaders and executives. Focusing on and improving the retention rate of your sophomore and junior reps is a great way to demonstrate that value. In other words, turn that "curse" into a "blessing." ■



# INSPIRE

## (& RETAIN) YOUR MILLENNIAL SALES FORCE

Is your organization ready for the next generation of sales leaders? Here are 4 key areas to focus on:

Be proactive with their careers

Consistently set expectations and outline a career path for new hires. (Ex: "If you do X, Y and Z, I expect you to progress to role B in 18 months.")

Provide others with their own path to sales

Create a program that pairs millennials from other departments (like customer support) with experienced sales reps so they can listen to calls, learn how to negotiate, prepare for meetings, etc.

Make things fun!

Salespeople of any generation are competitive by nature. Initiate games and contests that enable millennial reps to achieve work goals while also earning meaningful recognition.

Coach, coach, and coach some more

The good news about those new to the sales profession is that there are no bad habits to break – and millennials are eager to learn! Take advantage of this by providing them with consistent, ongoing coaching and feedback.





## About Brainshark

Brainshark sales readiness software equips businesses with the training, coaching and content needed to prepare salespeople when, where and how they work.

With Brainshark, companies can: enable sales teams with on-demand training that accelerates onboarding and keeps reps up-to-speed; validate readiness with sales coaching and practice that ensures reps master your message; and empower sales organizations with rich, dynamic content that can be created quickly, updated easily, and accessed anywhere.

Thousands of customers – including more than half of the Fortune 100 – rely on Brainshark to identify and close performance gaps, and get better results from their sales enablement initiatives. Learn more at [www.brainshark.com](http://www.brainshark.com).





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