

A man wearing a VR headset is shown in a digital environment, interacting with a large, glowing wireframe sphere. The background is a dark blue space filled with a network of glowing nodes and lines, suggesting a digital or virtual world. The man is wearing a white t-shirt and green shorts, and is sitting on a rock. The overall scene is futuristic and high-tech.

Next-Gen Coaching

for the Next-Gen
Sales Force

BRAINSHARK
Power your content. Power your sales.™

Introduction

Millennials are quickly becoming the majority of the workforce, making up an expected 75% by 2025¹, and they are forcing organizations to rethink how they train and prepare their employees. This is true for sales enablement leaders as well, who need to cater to both their 30-year sales vets as well as new reps with just a few years under their belts.

Millennials like to learn in new and different ways – strongly preferring a less formal, just-in-time training structure that they can consume in “snackable,” bite-sized amounts. While the preferred methods of learning

may change slightly from generation to generation, what stays the same is the need for reps to have impactful conversations with buyers every time they engage with them.

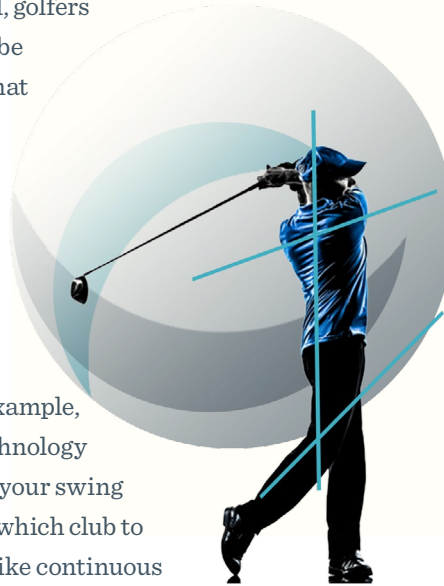
Fortunately, [sales coaching technology](#) now enables organizations to cater to a healthy mix of both informal and formal learning to help new reps prepare for buyer interactions.

This eBook looks at ways to alter your coaching strategy to appeal to next-gen sales reps using sales coaching technology.

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1. Across Digital Channels

Learning to sell is not dissimilar to learning to golf. While the methods of learning to improve your golf skills may have changed, the basics of the game have not. After all, golfers still need to be coached. What has changed is that we now have technology to help us further improve our game. For example, the right technology can analyze your swing and tell you which club to use (sort of like continuous learning for the golf course).



Key Consideration:

Ensure that your sales coaching technology can be accessed and utilized from your reps' mobile devices in order to achieve maximum engagement.

Millennials are digital natives. Not only are they comfortable with things like video and mobile technology, they prefer it. Sales enablement for the millennial generation is about making your content and resources accessible to reps digitally, preferably in a mobile-first environment. So as with golf, while the basics of selling haven't changed, what has changed is the way in which training and coaching can be delivered.





2. How Video Coaching Technology Works

Unlike other corporate employees, salespeople can't just complete their training and be done with it; **they have to master the skills and knowledge necessary to sell effectively.** Just as important, sales managers need to be able to validate that reps have mastered critical messaging, processes, systems, and more. Video coaching technology can help with both of these areas, while creating a culture of coaching that is ingrained in the DNA of your sales organization.

Video coaching starts with a request. For example, a sales manager may request his or her team to share their best elevator pitch on a new software feature that the company is offering. Reps can submit their video responses to this challenge via their phone or laptop. The videos can then be assessed by the manager or others, who can score and rate each rep's performance, provide constructive feedback, and identify which team members need more practice.

The best submissions can be turned into on-demand learning content for the rest of the team, allowing others to see real examples of what a great pitch looks like.

Key Consideration:

Video coaching allows for an open feedback loop. Adopt a coaching program that not only allows managers to issue challenges, but also enables reps to get feedback by initiating their own coaching requests as well.

- 1 Leader Requests Challenge
- 2 Rep Submits Response
- 3 Leader (or Peer) Provides Assessment & Feedback



3. The Brainshark Video Coaching Model

The most effective video coaching models incorporate a mix of both informal and formal. To use a millennial analogy, think of formal and informal learning like Facebook and Snapchat. Both are useful and can be used interchangeably – but many prefer one over the other depending on the content being shared.

Informal	<p>Just-in-Time Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-on-one coaching • Additional development • Rep-requested coaching • Buyer meeting preparation 	<p>Peer Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capture & share tribal knowledge • Identify best practices • Tips and techniques from the field • Regional meeting prep (pre/post)
	<p>Formal</p>	<p>Individual Mastery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Onboarding • Individual mastery development • Leadership development
	Individual	Team



For example, Snapchat is more informal and instantaneous. It's used on a one-to-one or one-to-few basis, and users don't feel the pressure of receiving likes, comments, or feedback on their posts.



On the other hand, Facebook is more formal, and users tend to get caught up in how their posts will be received because the content lives forever.



The Brainshark Video coaching Model is broken down into four quadrants (above), covering different phases of formal and informal learning.

The next two sections will take a deeper dive into the difference between formal and informal coaching.



4. Peer & Just-in-Time Learning

Peer and just-in-time learning make up the informal section of the Brainshark coaching model. There's no structure or scoring criteria for these challenges, so reps will feel less pressure and have more fun with them.

Peer learning drives reps' performance by capturing and sharing tribal knowledge throughout your sales team. Through video coaching, this knowledge can be passed down from veteran reps to newbies, or from A players to B players. One example of a peer learning challenge would be to have your reps explain their most innovative prospecting technique. Reps can share their best selling tips while picking up new ideas from colleagues to add to their repertoires.

Peer learning challenges should happen often – weekly or bi-weekly – and submissions should be under five minutes long. This type of learning should be subject matter expert created, sales enablement refined.

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Just-in-time learning is one-on-one coaching that can be initiated by either the sales manager or the rep. If a rep wanted to practice how they were going to handle a major closing call that was coming up, they would be able to practice via video and then send the recording to their manager. Or, a sales manager may initiate a just-in-time coaching session for a rep who is struggling with their negotiation tactics.

This type of learning can be thought of as “in the moment” coaching and should happen often – at least once per week.

Key Considerations:

#1 Your veteran reps have years and years of selling experience to share with their millennial colleagues. Peer learning is a great way to help bridge that gap and initiate knowledge sharing.

#2 Millennials strongly value personal development opportunities. Just-in-time learning allows for in-the-field coaching opportunities for reps to hone their skills.



5. Individual & Organizational Mastery

Individual and organizational mastery make up the formal section of the Brainshark coaching model. These learning opportunities will be highly structured and involve content that is essential for sales reps to master to have impactful conversations with buyers.

Organizational mastery consists of core competencies that must be mastered by the entire sales force. For this type of training, measurements of success should be clearly defined up front so that the reps are fully aware of the criteria upon which they are being assessed. **Examples that require organizational mastery include new hire onboarding, new product launches, or a new sales methodology.**

Individual mastery is classified as continuous coaching and assessment focused on the ongoing development of individual reps. This could include leadership development or even onboarding if a rep joined the company after group onboarding already occurred.

Rather than giving reps a star rating, ease into feedback. Ask reps what they thought they could've done better, as well as helping them understand what they did well and could improve upon.

Key Considerations:

#1 Let your reps know who will be reviewing their submissions up front and keep the number of reviewers to less than five. Full transparency is critical to the success of organizational mastery.

#2 Consider switching up the reviewer every so often. This allows reps to receive different points of view while taking some of the pressure off of having to present to their own manager.

Summary

The way millennials learn is not entirely dissimilar to the sellers that came before them. The key difference is that technology-based programs will resonate best with their digital native generation. Features such as mobile-first environments and video-based coaching are critical to rep adoption.

Remember, the core competencies that a sale rep must master have not changed. At the end of the day, it's about ensuring that you have the best coaching strategy possible to ensure your reps are prepared for every buyer interaction.

Footnote

1. *U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016*



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About Brainshark

Brainshark sales readiness software equips businesses with the training, coaching and content authoring capabilities to achieve sales mastery and outsell the competition.

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

Thousands of companies – 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.

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