

Selling and Sales Management in the Complex Selling Environment



Executive Summary of Miller Heiman's
2008 Sales Best Practices Study



MILLER
HEIMAN®
The Sales Performance Company

ABOUT MILLER HEIMAN

Thirty years ago, *Strategic Selling*® launched a company. Thirty years later, *Strategic Selling*® is just one part of what Miller Heiman offers sales organizations. Over the years, we have earned our clients' trust with our in-depth knowledge of the sales process and our demonstrated ability to deliver results.

At Miller Heiman, we help companies overcome the challenges that affect productivity and top-line growth. We go beyond treating symptoms by introducing *The Miller Heiman Sales System*™ as a long-term commitment to understanding challenges and building solutions. With all of the appropriate tools and experience, we are able to quickly and effectively lead our clients to success.

Miller Heiman provides the processes that ensure results:

- Improving Sales Force Productivity
- Managing Sales Talent
- Transitioning from Product-led to Solution-led Selling
- Winning High-value Complex Deals
- Shortening Sales Cycles
- Improving Sales Forecast Accuracy
- Evaluating and Integrating Sales Forces Pre-and-Post Merger
- Protecting and Growing Strategic Accounts

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Executive Summary of Miller Heiman's 2008 Sales Best Practices Study

Every year for the past five years, Miller Heiman has surveyed sales professionals – executives, leaders and representatives – to better understand what differentiates the most effective sales organizations. This global study contains the input of more than 17,000 participants to date and is considered the world's largest ongoing study of complex, business-to-business selling and sales management practices.

Our findings have helped many organizations revisit their sales strategies and commit themselves to practices that keep Winning Sales Organizations (WSOs) on top. (WSOs are defined as organizations with a greater than 20 percent increase in revenue, new customers, and average account billing when compared to the previous year.)

This year, in addition to examining the best practices of WSOs and the perception gaps between sales representatives, sales management, and C-suite executives, we looked at year over year trends. By comparing themselves to WSOs and to their peers, sales organizations can learn about strategies, processes, and skills that will propel them toward WSO-like results.

This Executive Summary reveals the activities identified by this year's research as the most significant contributors to organizational results. It also includes insights from a panel of Miller Heiman executives. The results are categorized under three broad headings:

1. Customer-focused Behavior
2. Executive Involvement
3. Talent Management

Fewer companies qualified as WSOs in this year's study compared to last year, a fact Miller Heiman co-founder Bob Miller speculates, is due to a tightening economy. But regardless of the reason for this shift, Miller says, "The activities where WSOs performed well ahead of other organizations provide valuable direction for sales leaders to note. Especially in an uncertain economy, it's critical for companies to be able to identify activities where their efforts will make the greatest impact."

A primary objective of this annual study is to reveal the activities that most significantly influence an organization's ability to produce results. After reviewing these results, sales organizations should ask themselves: What can we do to provide added value and differentiate our products and services from our competitors?

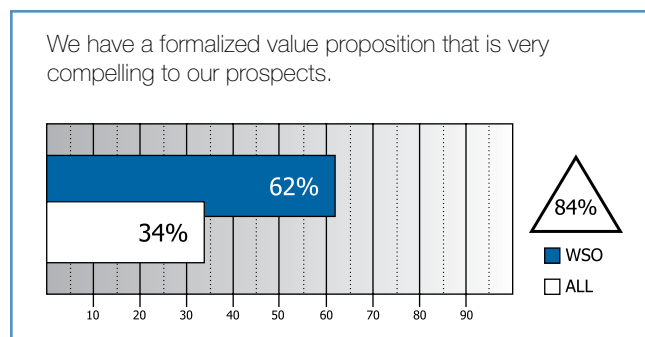
Sam Reese, Miller Heiman's president and CEO, notes that WSOs are always refining themselves based on their customers' environments. "Winning Sales Organizations know that everything they do pivots around the customer. They're systematized in terms of how they manage their customers," he says. "And they've figured out how to gain a sustainable advantage."

According to Tim Call, Miller Heiman's executive vice president of strategic accounts, "Buyers are more sophisticated; they're bringing in more salespeople, comparing them, and saying, 'The only difference is price.' Commoditization is taking place." Creating a position far removed from the perception of being a commodity is a key strategy companies should use to protect themselves from profitability erosion.

CUSTOMER-FOCUSED BEHAVIOR

A Formalized, Compelling Value Proposition

While 62 percent of WSOs report having a "formalized value proposition that is very compelling to our prospects," only 34 percent of all other organizations say they have such a value proposition.



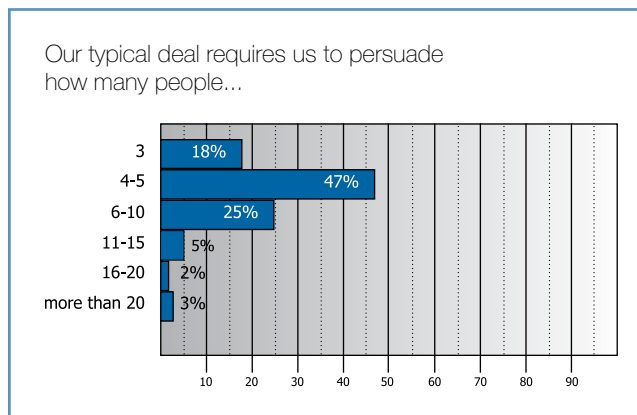
According to Miller Heiman’s vice president of client engagement, Bethany Schultz, the key words here are formalized and compelling. “You may have a proposition,” she says, “but is it based on what you know is compelling and relevant to your customers?”

Says Call: “A compelling proposition lives throughout the sales cycle. It’s a touchstone throughout the process.” Many sales organizations, he says, have a proposition, but not a formal one. One potential problem is that an informal value proposition may not be understood by everyone in the organization in the same way. That may lead to different interpretations of company strategies and goals. WSOs, says Call, announce their value propositions, print them, talk about them, and remind sales representatives of them at every step in the sales process.

“WSOs have a better understanding of customer issues and needs,” says Damon Jones, Miller Heiman’s president and managing director of international. He says that instead of having a generic value proposition, WSOs are closer to their customers and can tailor a value proposition to each customer’s needs. “This is about differentiation. If you can’t differentiate, the only way a buyer can decide is price. So show your expertise that is specifically relevant to the prospect.”

Sales Cycles Involve More People

While most respondents said they must persuade four to five people in the typical sale, more than a third report that they need to persuade six or more people for each opportunity they pursue. The number of decision makers involved with each sale shifted up by 16 percent compared to last year’s study. What accounts for the increase? And what does it mean to the sales professional?



Jones cites two reasons for the increase in decision makers: first, he says, the buying process is becoming more complex, more technical; procurement departments

often consult IT or other areas of the business when they make buying decisions. This brings more people into the process. Second, in today’s economy, buying decisions are being escalated from, say, directors to VPs and from VPs to CEOs. “C-level people don’t rubber stamp these days,” says Jones. “They jump into the buying process.”

Companies are getting more sophisticated about how they make decisions. According to Bill Golder, Miller Heiman’s executive vice president of sales, “They’re getting better at internal collaboration in decision-making.” That not only means more people involved, but more knowledgeable people. With this understanding, he says, salespeople need to invest time researching the stakeholders before they make a sales call.

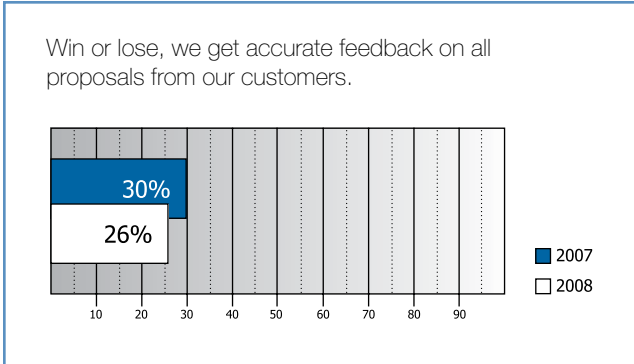
What’s more, in a post 9/11 economy, says Call, many business decisions have been pushed up to the C-suite – a situation he cautions is likely to continue in the coming year. “Executives are nervous about spending money, so more executives have gotten involved in the sales process. If companies are holding onto their cash, some decisions will require more decision makers at higher levels.” Call warns that this change may lengthen the sales cycle. His advice to salespeople: be prepared to make a strong business case to executives who may have recently joined the buying process. “Try to find out from inside coaches about who you’ll be meeting with,” he says. “And be prepared to approach executives, provide information, and make a strong case.”

Accurate Feedback

In 2007, less than one-third of respondents agreed with the statement, “Win or lose, we get accurate feedback on all proposals from our customers.” In 2008, the figure decreased to 26 percent. “It’s not easy to ask someone who rejected you for feedback,” says Call. But it is definitely worth pursuing. There are significant benefits to be gained from understanding why you lost.

According to Golder, there is a lack of discipline here. “On the whole, sales organizations are putting more processes in place,” he says. “But there is still a long way to go.” He says that without a process for getting feedback, organizations will simply react to what is directly in front of them. “It takes discipline to circle back to our prospects and ask them, ‘Why?’”

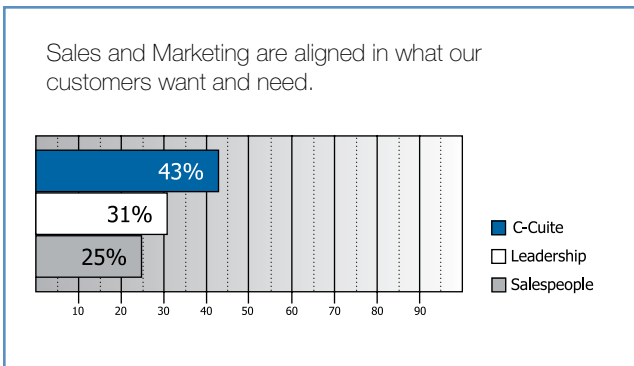
Jones says that after a deal is lost is an excellent time to go back and ask about what went wrong. “All the tension and stress is gone, you’re not in sales mode, there’s nothing for you to gain – except to learn. I think your credibility improves.” He notes that very often a salesperson will assume the deal was lost because of



price, yet from the prospect's perspective it is rarely about price alone. Asking for feedback from prospects in lost deals is a tremendous way to learn and to improve.

Sales and Marketing Alignment

Forty-three percent of C-suite respondents agree that, "sales and marketing are in alignment in what our customers want and need." But only 25 percent of salespeople agree. Call suggests that this perception gap occurs because organizations don't always define the terms they use to describe events. "It's easy for sales to say, 'The lead wasn't qualified,' and for marketing to say, 'A good salesperson could have closed that sale.' This is because they may not be on the same page regarding the definition of a lead." Or they may not have a system in place to get true data about the quality of leads. One possible solution to this perception gap – and a good way to align sales and marketing – is to get the two groups talking, defining the terms they use and coming to a mutual agreement on exact meanings. This will reduce misunderstandings and generate data that are better understood by marketing and sales.



Jones echoes this recommendation and adds, "They can't create their business plans in silos," he says, noting that often sales and marketing report to different people and have few common perspectives. "Marketing should know how sales intends to make its numbers. Then marketing can truly support sales."

"It's an age-old alignment issue," says Schultz, noting that the most successful companies have a strategy and a market focus that is customer-driven, based on customer-response surveys or even regular discussions with salespeople about customer needs. "If you're not aligned," she says, "you may have internally-focused strategies, or sales may not even be at the table helping marketing understand customer needs. In high-performing organizations, the sales and marketing teams know each other, talk, meet, and understand each other's business."

Key Individuals in Prospect Firms

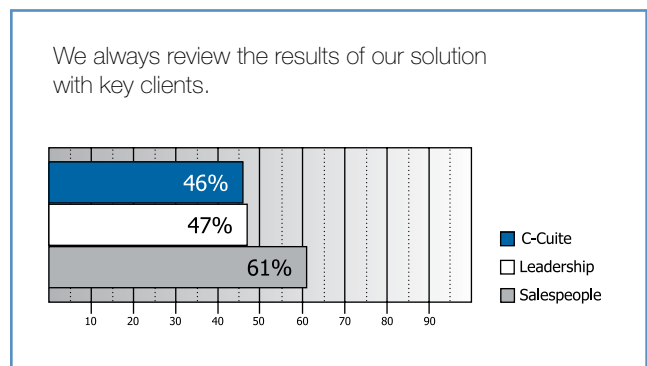
Only 19 percent of survey respondents agreed with the statement, "We always know what key individuals in prospect firms think of our proposed solution." Call says it is hard work to make sure everyone has visibility into the proposal. "Salespeople may be making assumptions," he says. "They need to make sure people with influence know what is being proposed and why it's being proposed."

According to Jones, people are often afraid to ask because they are afraid of the answer. "Get to the facts," he advises. "If decision makers are saying they have a problem with your solution, get as much feedback as you can throughout the whole process." At the final decision, he says, there should be no surprises. Don't surprise the customer with new information at the last minute. You must have integrity in the process."

Reviewing Results of the Solution

While 61 percent of sales representatives agree that, "We always review the results of our solution with key clients," only 46 percent of the C-suite respondents agreed. Why the perception gap?

First, says Reese, there may not always be agreement on what "reviewing results" means. Does it involve formal meetings? Does it reveal knowledge of why



customers buy from you? “The rep kinda maybe sorta knows” how his or her solution worked out for the customer he says. But nothing gets documented. There is no methodology. “Meanwhile,” says Reese, “the C-suite gets nervous because they hear that the customer loves the rep, but they don’t know what the customer loves about him or her.”

Says Call, “There may be executives who don’t know what the organization’s sales process is. You see more C-suite people going on sales calls, but sales managers need to keep executives informed, make sure they don’t oversell and set appropriate boundaries.”

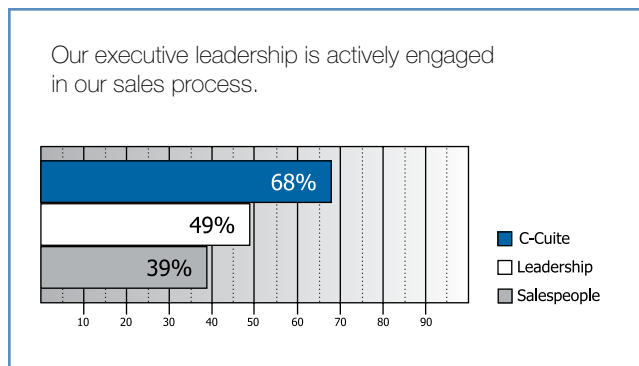
Jones suggests that the C-suite isn’t always close enough to know what sales is actually doing. And C-suite executives may be looking for different answers than the ones salespeople are seeking. After all, salespeople sell mostly to users, not to C-suite executives.

According to Schultz, “There are a large number of leaders, even sales leaders, who do not talk with customers. So even though salespeople may understand how they communicate with their customers throughout the entire sales process, the C-suite may not understand at all. “You need actionable strategies for how to manage customer relationships,” she says. “That means knowing who is important to you today, what their teams look like and who the decision makers are.”

EXECUTIVE INVOLVEMENT

Executives Engaged in the Sales Process

The study noted a significant perception gap over agreement with the statement, “Our executive leadership is actively engaged in our sales process.” Sixty-eight percent of C-suite respondents agreed, while only 39 percent of sales representative respondents agreed. Call suggests that sales reps have a different mindset than sales executives, and that the reps simply may not be aware of the executives’ role.



Miller believes bringing the CEO to a sales call should be about long-term strategy, not about closing a deal. “When a salesperson trots their CEO in at the spur of the moment, it never works,” he says. “When neither party knows what the CEO is doing there, it becomes a social call.” Involve high-level executives as part of an overall strategy, Miller advises. “It should further the relationship. It should be about where the relationship will be in two or three years, not for a specific deal. If a manager is brought for a specific deal, it should be the sales manager, not the CEO.”

According to Golder, “The big issue here is definition. Everyone defines ‘actively engaged’ differently.” Some executives may feel they are actively engaged if they ask questions, or if they respond whenever they are asked. “At WSOs,” says Golder, “they have a clear definition of executive involvement. They have plans, tools, processes, resources so everyone in the organization is on the same page about what executive involvement looks like.”

Jones says it’s a good idea for organizations to come to an agreement on what “actively involved” means. Salespeople may define that as “executives making sales calls” – which may not always be a good idea. “Know your roles,” he says. “Know where your executives can provide the most value.” And when executives do get involved in selling, be sure salespeople know that it is still their responsibility to sell, not the executives’.

Reese says that if CEOs aren’t asked to join in a sale from time to time, there’s a problem. “When executives aren’t involved in the right opportunities with the right people, they get off course.” Reese says that sometimes salespeople want the C-suite to attend a sales call when there’s no need. “They lose respect by attending and only nodding their heads. And salespeople diminish their credibility by bringing in a senior person too soon or if it’s not necessary.” He recommends having the C-suite attend a sales call when the customer wants to hear a long-view of the company’s history or when there are “lots of moving parts” to the sales process. “And when you bring in a senior executive, you should expect the customer’s senior executive to be there too.”

Most of the time, says Reese, executives have no real standards for when to step in. “This happens when you’re not customer-focused.” He warns that too many executives are out of step with salespeople. “As a senior executive,” he says, “you should frame your messages to salespeople in ways that are consistent with the customer management process.”

Executive-to-Executive Selling

While the perception gap between the C-level and sales reps was considerably smaller regarding the statement, "We have a formal process for utilizing executive-to-executive selling," (C-suite 21 percent, reps 18 percent) we were surprised at how few organizations have formalized their executive-to-executive selling practices. Call points out that many executives aren't salespeople; they're uncomfortable in that role. But, he emphasizes, executives who want to get involved should complete the company's sales training requirements, just like any other salesperson. "This enables the C-suite to give valuable feedback to reps," says Call.

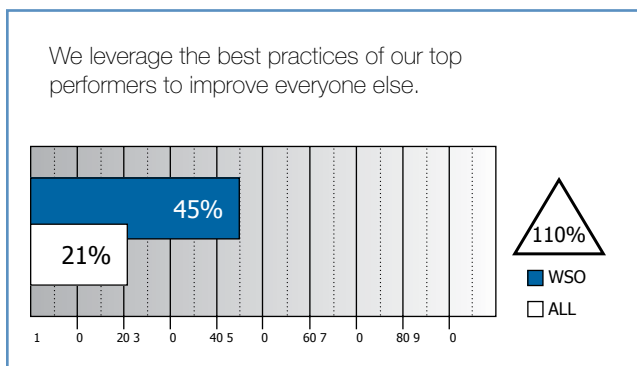
If executives don't participate in sales training, Jones says they at least need to know what's going on at the sales level. He notes that many executives don't understand the sales process. If they are going to approach their peers at a prospect company, they need to have a good handle on their own company's selling process.

Says Schultz, "The fantastic news is that WSO C-level executives know the customer, and they know the sales process and the tools the sales force are using to get in front of the customer." She says that executives need to learn which customers are important. "Then there has to be a plan that resonates with the customers." She points out that executive-to-executive selling is not about closing the deal. "It's about alignment, about knowing what's going on in this customer's business." Part of this, she says, is identifying which customers are important enough to warrant this level of involvement.

TALENT MANAGEMENT

Top Performers

WSOs are 110 percent more likely than other organizations to leverage the best practices of their top performers to improve everyone else's performance. Yet, less than 50 percent of WSOs do this. These findings suggest there is room for improvement across the board in this vital area.



According to Jones, sales is the one function in many organizations that has not been the subject of analysis and process. "Sales," he says, "is the land of mystery!" Noting that many C-suite people did not come up through sales, Jones says their focus may be on brand and product, yet they don't think about what sales is doing. Some executives believe that great salespeople are born, not made. "But there is so much that can be learned from best practices," says Jones. He says the cost to analyze what makes a top performer great is minimal. Yet, very few organizations do so. "It's cheap, considering the cost of hiring." He says that when he delivers keynote presentations, he often asks his audience for a show of hands on how many have analyzed their top performers with the view of hiring or managing to that model. Usually, fewer than 10 percent of the audience will raise their hands.

Schultz says there is a myth that sales does not require a process, that there is little predictability, little if anything that is repeatable. "At Winning Sales Organizations," she says, "the C-level knows what sales is up to; they recognize that sales isn't only tactical, so they pay attention." What's more, she says, top performers may not always know how to talk about what makes them successful. "But when you analyze, you see that there are repeatable behaviors, there are tools that can help organizations to understand what the top performers are doing."

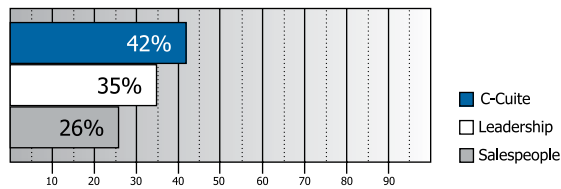
According to Golder, "Sales has always had an art approach, not a science approach. Sales organizations, he says, "have a long way to go in bringing more science into the art." Golder says that WSOs use standardized tools and best practices to leverage what the stars do. "It takes effort to capture best practices and cascade them effectively," he says. But when done right, the reward can be significant.

Leveraging Top-Performers' Best Practices

Surprisingly, only 42 percent of the C-suite executives said they knew why their top performers were effective – although just 26 percent of reps agreed. Similarly, very few C-suite executives agree that, "We leverage the best practices of our top performers to improve everyone else." Only 32 percent of the executives (and 17 percent of the reps) agreed.

"There's tremendous value there," says Call, if the C-suite and sales management understands something about top performers, they should take steps to ensure this information is shared in ways that can improve other members of the sales team. He notes that star salespeople may not be eager to share the secrets of their success, so the company may want to promote events where top salespeople are encouraged to talk about what makes them successful. He recommends devoting time at annual meetings for sales stars to share their success stories.

We know why our top performers are successful.



“Management should be driving this,” says Reese. “Sales sometimes is not monitored, no strategy is discussed; people bring in their own practices, stars have their own methods. But you’ve got to have a foundation.”

Sharing best practices, however, isn’t actually about divulging trade secrets. Reese says it’s about sharing information about customer industries and what’s going on in customers’ minds.”

Schultz says that if you cannot communicate or document what is consistently successful in your environment, you can’t share it. “If you don’t identify what those best practices are, you cannot leverage them.”

Sales Training vs. Product Training

WSOs have a higher ratio of sales training to product/service training than other organizations – there’s a 12 percent difference. Tim Call points out that while pretty much every organization provides product training so salespeople can talk about nuts and bolts, features and benefits, “many organizations struggle with soft skills.”

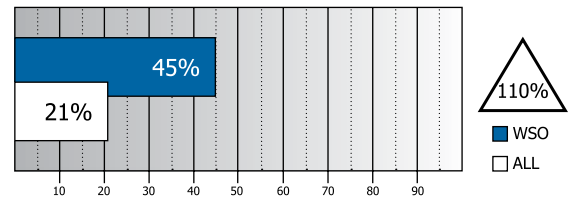
Says Schultz: “I have seen organizations that do not have a consistent process or methodologies that the training supports. Product training is a given,” she says. “But actual training in how to sell is harder to measure, especially if you lack a sales process.” First, she says, put your methodology into place, and then do sales training to support your methodology.

Golder says that WSOs have a better understanding of the customer than the average company. “Organizations that put more emphasis on products tend to be more attentive to their products than to their customers.”

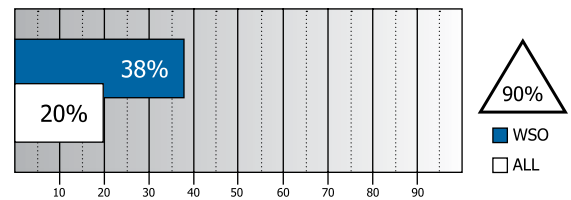
Reese agrees. “WSOs see product training as normal,” he says. “But they’re obsessed by what’s happening with their customers. It always starts with the customer, not the product.”

Top 5 Winning Sales Organization Activities

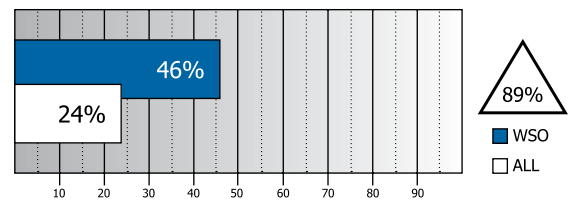
1. Leverage best practices of top performers.



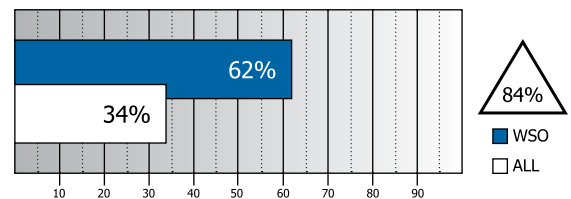
2. Consistently utilize comprehensive prospecting plans.



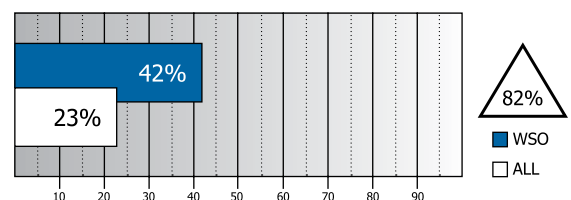
3. Engage strategic accounts in product/service planning processes.



4. Formalized value proposition that is very compelling to prospects.

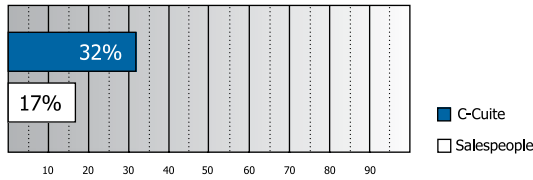


5. Performance review process helps improve the sales force’s job performance.

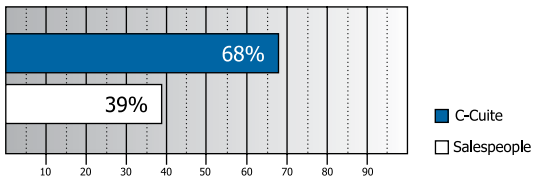


Perception Gaps Between C-Level and Sales Reps

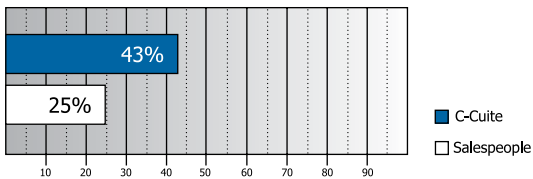
1. Leverage best practices of top performers.



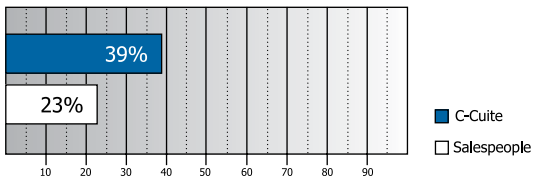
2. Executive leadership is actively engaged in sales process.



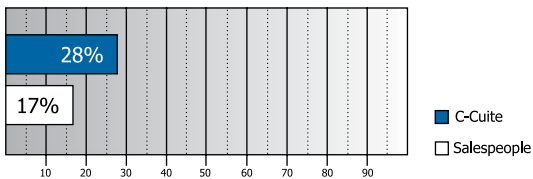
3. Sales and marketing are aligned in what customers want and need.



4. Proactively terminate poor performers.



5. Training and development programs are aligned with the needs of individuals.



LEARN MORE

The results of this study are extensive and include more than 50 selling and sales management best practice activities. Additional analysis of the data will be published throughout 2008, providing industry-specific benchmarks and WSO points of comparison.

Receive future articles, research reports, and data by subscribing to Miller Heiman publications. Articles based on the research will elaborate on the study and include in-depth analysis of the key challenges, issues, and trends in the current selling environment, including industry-specific reviews for Technology, Healthcare, Financial Services, Energy, Hospitality and Food Service, and Manufacturing.

To receive alerts as new articles and data becomes available, subscribe to the Miller Heiman *Sales Performance Journal* or *Sales Secrets* at www.millerheiman.com/subscribe.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY CONTRIBUTORS



Sam Reese
President and Chief Executive Officer

After joining Miller Heiman as CEO in 2000, Sam immediately began expanding product and service offerings and the network of world-class sales consultants. His passion for achieving results for clients has inspired individual team members to strive for performance and results, while contributing to a culture based on ethics and integrity. He firmly believes that individual excellence drives organizational excellence. Sam's experience and success in sports, business, technology and leadership give him a unique perspective on what it takes to win in today's competitive business environment.



Bob Miller
Co-Founder of Miller Heiman, Inc.

Thirty years ago, Bob Miller developed and introduced Strategic Selling®. Since then, his passion for elevating the role of the sales profession has resulted in several additional methodologies, all of which are incorporated in The Miller Heiman Sales System™. He continues today in a consulting and advisory capacity, focusing primarily on product development. His mentorship drives innovations in sales performance that are consistent with the vision for the company he started three decades ago.



Damon Jones
President and Managing Director
of International

Damon joined Miller Heiman in 1999 as vice president of international sales and immediately developed a network of partners and sales consultants worldwide. In his current role, he has been instrumental in our multi-national expansion. Damon's efforts have resulted in strong global relationships and a vigorous international presence for Miller Heiman. His background includes 25 years of experience in sales and business management.



Bill Golder
Executive Vice President of Sales

Bill brings a solid history of providing results to complex organizations. His primary expertise is in leading business-to-business sales professional services and multi-unit operations management, with key strengths in driving results, developing and implementing strategy and leading sales teams. He has a bold reputation for taking on challenges and turning around unfavorable situations.



Tim Call
Executive Vice President
of Strategic Accounts

Tim Call brings extensive experience to Miller Heiman from his previous roles as a top-performing sales leader with a strong record of leading organizations to double and triple digit percentage increases in sales revenues. His broad range of experience and history of successfully closing large, complex deals makes his expertise invaluable to Miller Heiman clients. Tim leads Miller Heiman's efforts to build strong productive relationships with strategic accounts. His propensity for strong customer orientation has contributed greatly to Miller Heiman's growth.



Bethany Schultz
Vice President of Client Engagement

Bethany joined Miller Heiman as a sales consultant, bringing more than 20 years of experience in sales, management and consulting. As a consultant, she experienced many wins with *The Miller Heiman Sales System™*, including Miller Heiman's largest single engagement to date. In her current role, she assists clients with tracking, measurement and realization of results as a result of their engagements with Miller Heiman. She also works with customers to identify their needs in order to enhance new product development efforts.

ABOUT THE MILLER HEIMAN SALES BEST PRACTICES STUDY

Miller Heiman's annual research study of sales practices, success metrics, and Winning Sales Organizations is recognized as the largest continuous research project dedicated to sales performance in the world. Sales leaders benefit from the resulting trends, insights, and best practices revealed by our research. Even more significantly, the research results support benchmarking exercises that enable companies to understand how they compare to their peers and how they can better identify areas for improvement.

Since the study was launched, more than 17,000 sales professionals have participated. Our formal research projects, day-to-day business relationships with sales professionals and the wisdom of our own top sales executives enable us to continually validate and refine our thinking in the real world.

Miller Heiman's research focuses on complex, business-to-business sales which, for this study, we've defined as having sales cycles longer than one quarter and more than three decision-makers influencing the outcome. The current study represents more than 21 industries including technology, healthcare, business services, finance and manufacturing. Respondent companies are located in the U.S., Europe, Australia, Asia, South America, the Middle East and Africa.

OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH

Objective

To obtain a clear understanding of the complex selling environment, its challenges, and trends in the current economic environment.

Research Method

The survey was designed as exploratory research to collect primary data using a structured design. Formal statistical procedures were employed to analyze the data. Such procedures included exploratory factor analysis, reliability analysis, and frequency analysis.

Survey Instrument

After the broad issues and metrics were reviewed and discussed with key informants, the instrument was subjected to a pretest. The final instrument contained seven challenge sections with a total of 55 closed-end questions based upon a 7-point Likert scale for responses of Strongly disagree, Disagree, Somewhat disagree,

Neutral, Somewhat agree, Agree, Strongly agree. Twelve metric questions were added to this study. Finally, five demographic questions were included.

Time Frame

Data were gathered from October. 1, 2007 to December. 31, 2007.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population

Responses were solicited globally from sales professionals who are currently or have been in contact with Miller Heiman. The study was not limited to Miller Heiman clients. We actively pursued participants for the study from a variety of databases through marketing partnerships and paid placement, including solicitations for participation from the databases of Hoover's.

Respondents

The large number of responses to this survey adds to previous four years' momentum and continues to be one of the most comprehensive and statistically usable research efforts on sales effectiveness done to date. There have been approximately 17,800 participants since the inception of this research study. The substantial number of responses came from a broad cross-section of industries, positions, and company sizes. Respondents included in this report are only those who are in the complex selling environment, defined as needing to influence more than three people in the sale and a sales cycle of longer than one quarter. The responses were as follows:

- 4,549 total responses
- 2,819 responses meeting the criteria of "complex selling environment"
- C-Suite: 359 are C-Level Executive, President/GM (12%)
- Sales Leadership: 1,285 are Sales VP/Director, Sales Manager, Sales Operations (46%)
- Sales Force: 919 are Sales Reps, Business Development, Account Management (32%)
- Other Respondents: 256 are from training, marketing, human resources, and customer service (10%)

Over 21 industries were represented, with the greatest percentage of participation in business services, consulting and professional services, and technology.

In Depth

There were a number of data-soliciting campaigns for this research project. In the final analysis there were a total number of 4,549.

The resulting data is statistically valid with reliable results and implications. The information enables Miller Heiman to gain in-depth understanding and insight into the attitudes and preferences of the sales industry.

Data Analysis

Upon receipt, all survey responses were initially reviewed by Miller Heiman staff and then subsequently cleaned and coded. A database was developed in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 15.0). Survey data were entered for analysis. One phase of data analysis employed Factor Analysis as a technique that addresses the problem of analyzing the structure of the interrelationships among a large number of variables. Based upon this step a data reduction, if necessary, can be achieved which allows for a summarization of the data and subsequent interpretation. Also the structure of each Element area was assessed for the visibility of the underlying descriptors supporting the overall challenge. In all instances the KMO and Reliability of each factor was assessed and found to be acceptable for data processing.

Strength of the Study

The strengths of this study include the large and extremely diverse overall sample and its timeliness in assessing the current issues facing sales organizations. In addition, this is the fifth year of the study during which the inherent structure and descriptors have been further solidified.

The comparisons provided in this report include Winning Sales Organizations compared to all other sales organizations in the study.

Winning Sales Organizations are Defined as:

- 20 percent or more growth in average account billing
- 20 percent or more growth in revenue compared to last year
- 20 percent or more growth in new account acquisition

Qualifying Winning Sales Organizations:

- 163 respondents qualify as WSOs
- 6 percent of all respondents
- Complex sales only

All Other Sales Organizations:

- 2,656 respondents
- Complex sales only

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