

The SuMo Sales Academy

Smash Your Sales Target By Maximising Your Middle Performers



Industry Expert: *Richard Vidler from SIG*

- Leading distributor of specialist building products in Europe.
- Employing just over 9000 team members across Europe, predominantly UK, France and Germany.
- Richard Vidler is National Sales Director at SIG.

What was your vision? What were you trying to achieve?

Our aspiration was to find a CRM tool that could help us measure, support, track and give us a clue of the conversion of our opportunities and really turn those into successful winning orders for our business. We've now been using Salesforce for 6 years.

What we wanted to achieve was to get Salesforce to become a fundamental part of our salespeople's life so it could enable them to do things faster and better and improve their behaviour.

Our company is large and we have a lot of departments and brands within our organisation. We started to look at the whole cross section of people who would benefit from Salesforce which included both internal and external sales people and the marketing team.

We have a very special focus on the training of our workforce, be it product, skill-set or knowledge of our team. We want our guys to speak the same, and the right, kind of language with our customers.

Firstly, we wanted to maximise our opportunities and to close more and bigger orders so we can build some real value into our business.

Secondly, we didn't have a particularly good understanding of those deals that we did lose. We didn't know our competition or reasons why prospects went for them instead and it's here where Salesforce came in to play, to enhance and support that.

We wanted to get behind the outcomes, looking at our people and their behaviours and how these influenced our results. We've got some brilliant performers who are well trained and successful in what they do and some new comers who still needed guidance, so it was interesting to be able to look directly into their performance.



“CRM systems can only reap results if used properly. If you're placing a methodology around the technology. Otherwise, it's like buying a Rolls Royce without an engine.”

What sort of behaviours did you want your team to exhibit more frequently?

We looked at two main things:

1. The type of training our team had.
2. Defining our sales journey.

We're moving away from selling products, into selling solutions for our customers so we needed strong intel to tease out what that is. For this, we're looking into not just the quantity of our reps behaviours but the quality of them. We want to know about the entire journey, from first contact with customer to final close. We're striving for quality in every part of the business.

At the end of the day, it's all about collaboration. About stringing our entire business together to become stronger.

This new way of doing business is allowing us to get the right sort of deals – stronger commitment, repeated business, etc. We've gone from being suppliers of materials to becoming our clients' partners.

What results have you seen so far?

We've learnt that we've got some brilliant top performers who are very well trained and successful in what they do. We now know, it's not about getting those top performers to do more but concentrating on our middle performers.

Thanks to the fact that we have identified the top performers and pinpointed what makes them successful, we're able to help the rest of the team become more like them. We're finding our management team are now very concentrated in coaching, supporting and leading by example. Modelling our coaching on top performers has allowed us to integrate a sales academy to our training programme.

One of the biggest shifts we've had has been around adoption. Our sales guys were really behind utilising Salesforce and its capabilities. We've seen an increase in our opportunities, an improvement in quotations and their management and a spike in close and activity rates.

But we've seen a big shift in our people's mindsets. They're now working as a team, encouraging and supporting each other to become more successful.

All the analytics **SuMo** has brought on has helped us set benchmarks and really analyse our outcomes.

We've got some clear insight into those good-practice behaviours and understand much better how people work and what incentivises them. Everyone is different so we can now really adapt our coaching to the individual.

What is the demographic of your users? Did you get any resistance?

This isn't always an easy process and of course, we found cynical people who didn't want to adopt it.

We have a big mix of people in our business; we've got people near retirement who have all the construction knowledge, they know a lot of people and our customers rely on them to deliver the goods. On the other hand, we have a lot of young people joining the business who need nurturing. So it's a real mix of traditional workers who are used to doing things a particular way and new comers who are very open to innovation.

The new transparency this process brings has really helped our team understand the consequences of their actions and pick out what's in it for them. Our reps have a clear view of our entire process and they know what is expected of them and why.

What's next?

We don't see an end point to this. We've achieved the first phase of this method and we're going to keep doing the great things we're doing, nurturing and supporting our staff and rewarding that great behaviour. It still needs refinement but as I said, it's still phase one.

What we have done well is identified our 'super users' and used their behaviours to help others excel.

There's an apparent change in the relationships of our team, we're definitely a stronger, more united team.

We will carry on fine-tuning our process so our team really gels together and works in a consistent manner.



Richard answers your questions...

How big is your field team?

We're in the region on 1000 customer-facing people and 400 external sales guys on the road.

Can you tell me more about your sales methodology?

We have four clear principles to our business - we follow a clear and defined strategy that comes straight from SIG UK. We believe in having the right people in the right locations, we believe in looking into behaviours and having set procedures and finally, we have a clear focus on deliverables.

How did you launch SuMo?

We launched at our sales conference back in April where we had around 1000 people attend and as part of that, we delivered our message about our sales journey, the importance of our CRM tool and how we could work together to improve our performance.

How do you encourage your sales people to fill information in? Do your sales manager use that information?

Firstly, you've got to get the right tools in place – the right mobile devices, laptops, CRM too, etc. Enabling staff with the right kit, can help with that task.

Secondly, it's about pushing engagement from the top down. If the directors do it, the managers will follow and then the reps will. Encouraging and recognising commitment with rewards rather than getting out the big stick. That never really works.

3 THINGS TO TAKE AWAY

1. How are you currently coaching your sales reps and is it sufficient?
2. Is there untapped potential in your middle performers?
3. Is your adoption and return on your Salesforce investment good enough?

Listen to the recording here.