

Turning Growth Priorities Into Sales Execution

The rise of 'Revenue Plays'



Common realities for sales

Organizations invest heavily in revenue performance initiatives, however, ...

1

Many sales transformation programs disappoint

They often try to address too much too quickly. Results in slow progress, loss of initial enthusiasm as reality kicks in, and stalled momentum. Revenue performance barely impacted within 12 months of broad transformation programs starting.

2

Conventional sales playbooks go unused

They try to cover everything across the product range or are too dense, which overwhelms sellers and dilutes focus versus key priorities. Many playbooks become information graveyards used as an occasional reference guide at best. Sales behavior doesn't change.

3

Sales training events over-relied on

Leaders continue to over-estimate change that will result from sales training events. These are the start (only) with little resulting behavior change – unless followed by a closely managed on-going change program including coaching.

...and Sales Methodologies...

Are rarely specific to the different needs of Land v Expand v Retain selling that sellers face

While all sales methodologies typically contain some good content, few provide a framework for specific key plays.



Fall short of giving sellers the actual customer-centric and solution-specific content they need

What insightful repeat able story to share, what visual to show, what to know, what to do.



Aren't hard-wired to driving a company's specific growth priorities

They tend to provide general bedrock for skills and knowledge rather than orchestrate a concerted strategy-to-revenue motion for priority revenue goals.



A smarter path forward **Revenue plays in action**

Given these issues, leaders of Sales, Marketing and Product are increasingly using other approaches to quickly move the dial on revenue performance:

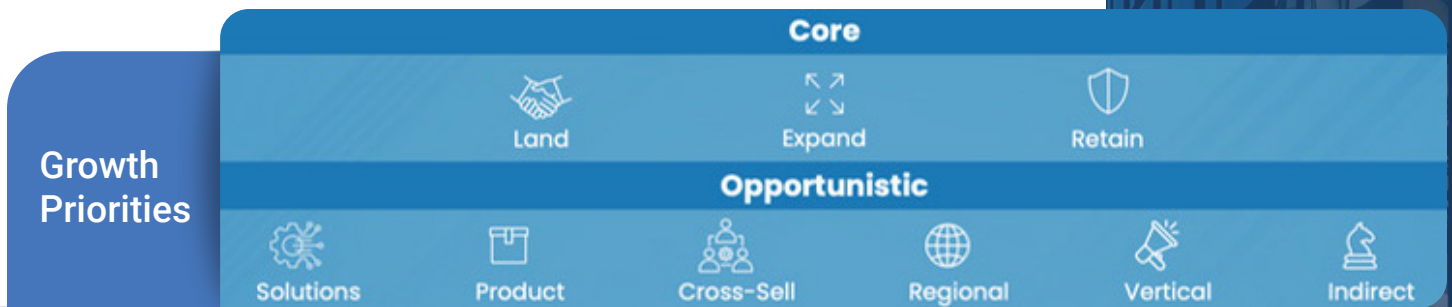
- **Designing** a sales execution 'revenue play' for those solutions, markets and accounts that can deliver outsized revenue impact
- **Implementing** a sales execution change approach that quickly delivers results



Prioritizing what matters

“When everything is a priority, nothing is a priority.”

Commercial leaders across Sales, Marketing and Product need to determine the priority sales plays that sellers need to run. When doing this, it can be helpful to distinguish between core and opportunistic priorities.



Core priorities

These priorities will always need executing to varying degrees.

Examples: Land, Expand, Retain.

Opportunistic priorities

These often change over time, whether year-to-year or even quarter-to-quarter.

Examples: Sell X product/solution, Sell Y product into Z customer segment, Target competitor A, Add X new distribution partners, Defend accounts from Z threat.

Putting it into action →

Turning growth priorities into execution

Too many strategic growth initiatives fail because sales execution cannot keep up. Eliminate that divide, otherwise sales conversations, sales activities, and sales coaching carry on like they always have – rather than be 100% aligned to drive sales priorities.



↑ ↓ Eliminate the divide ↑ ↓



The right Messaging, Process and Sales Manager Coaching needs to be bought together to create focused 'Revenue Plays'

Revenue plays

Strategy & readiness



The Strategy

Coordinated

- Sponsored
- Cross-functional team
- Outcome/Metrics

Set of actions to win

- Target Audience
- Solution
- Offer

Driven by data

- Size of opportunities
- Measure intent
- Track performance

Within a specific timeframe

Define success within a timeframe (typically 1-2 quarters)



Sales Execution Content & Tools

Go here...

To this account, persona, opportunity, path

Do this...

Get the meeting, bring in that specialist

Say this...

Tailor the message like this, ask these type of questions, differentiate by...

Show this...

Show visual asset, conversation prompter, research



Training & Implementation



Experiential



Continuous learning



On demand



Coaching

Implementation learnings

When Revenue Plays deliver desired results



Strong active sponsor

Typically C-Suite Revenue Leader or one level below – personally driving communication, holding other leaders accountable, managing upwards and downwards.



'Change management' programmatic mindset and approach

Not a 'sales training' mindset. Risks and enablers identified at the outset, with a subsequent management approach implemented for each and tracking of problem v success indicators. Identify and report on early wins to drive momentum across the field.



1st and 2nd line sales management buy-in

Involve this group early to help 'bake the cake' (revenue play design) before rollout.



Sellers committed and compliant

Sellers believe in the 'Play' and the robustness of the product/solution (implementation approach, support, customer success, etc). Clear message and management that this is not an optional program.



Adaptive on-going enablement of sellers and managers

After training, adapt coaching/content/support as needed based on leading and lagging success indicators.



Technology used to systemize and enable

Measure revenue play content/tool usage, and set weekly challenges to sellers. It's the control system for both the center and sales managers.

Implementation learnings

When Revenue Plays fail



A new sales message (only) is launched

There is no supporting systemized broader approach for sellers and managers that drives the right 'play' actions e.g. know this, go here, do this, say/show this. The new message can't make a difference by itself.



Change leadership and management not addressed

- Lack of executive alignment: One Commercial leader pushes ahead with a program without others also committed to the 'core' and/or 'opportunistic' priorities agreed.
- Sellers unwilling to change e.g. feel it is acceptable to carry on with their usual practices (even if misaligned to leaders' priorities), belief that this project will 'pass over' or is optional for them, or see no reason to change based on compensation structure.
- Leading and lagging success indicators are not identified and tracked.



Sellers told to carry on 'doing everything to everyone'

After sales training, old sales management habits don't change.



Over-index on a sales training event as 'the' solution

Rather than also on-going change management after training e.g. refresher training, coaching, challenges set, content usage tracking, etc.

About...

Kodiak Group helps leaders turn growth priorities into sales execution. Our consultants have served 300+ unique clients in 45 countries.

These change programs have ranged from small sales forces in a single country, through to enterprise-wide global initiatives requiring extensive cross-cultural engagement in matrixed organizations.

Kodiak has offices in the US, Canada and UK.



Contact

Pat Longworth

Managing Partner

plongworth@kodiakgroup.com



Pat Longworth · 2nd

Managing Partner, Kodiak Group --
Sales Transformation, Sales Effectiveness,
Sales Training

Kodiak Group · University of Arkansas at Fayetteville

Little Rock Metropolitan Area · [Contact info](#)