Top performers like working for winning teams.

When winning seems more like hit and miss, a question to ask is, “Do we have a clearly articulated and understood vision — a ‘target for winning’ for all to charge to — so that even if the road gets bumpy, our company stays aligned to the marketplace, and everyone stays motivated and focused in the right direction?”

Now it’s more important than ever for leaders to take the time to redefine or reinforce their vision for winning, communicate it repeatedly and be loud about it.

Your vision statement defines your desired future. Does your organization have a strong intention statement that provides everyone a common focus with the momentum to take you to where you want to be? Does your sales culture align to the vision statement?

Think of it this way, if it isn’t aligned, it’s like going on a trip with a destination in mind but in a car missing a wheel. Not fun and a hard ride for everyone.

A mission statement clarifies how you’re going to get there. What are the road markers, those stretch goals and objectives that when accomplished become the milestones of success for everyone to celebrate?

Executive views

Organizational and leadership changes can make the target for winning fuzzy. It can knock a selling organization right out of alignment with customer and marketplace expectations and demands — oftentimes defeating the anticipated value of the organizational change.

Change, especially as an outcome of mergers and acquisitions, can cause havoc with a company’s focus and direction. Layne Levine, senior vice president of sales and support enterprise for Broadwing Communications, reflected on that company’s pre-acquisition sales culture.

“Prior to acquisitions, we were small, the industry underdogs,” he said. “And, we knew what we wanted to be — our vision for success. We developed a collaborative sales culture with everyone motivated and working together, all focused on winning and winning big, and we did!”

Goal attainment can get derailed with a sales culture that does not support their corporate vision.

Broadwing had a vision. Does it stop there? No, of course not. Visioning needs to be continuous. For sustained success, it is critical to redefine the vision, communicate and communicate again the new direction. Companies should provide focus with new goals and objectives that motivate and retain top performers, and ensure that the additional four sales culture elements — talent fit, sales processes, standards and rewards — align to and support the new vision.

Executives tell us that sustained success and goal attainment can get derailed with a sales culture that does not support their corporate vision. Bill Monroe, vice president sales of Bombardier Business Aircraft, said it this way: “To be a preferred supplier, we have to be driven by a sales culture mindset across every functional discipline, along with operations. Our focus needs to be that with every process, every staff meeting, every decision made, we ask ‘what are the implications for our customers?’ When a customer has an issue, Code Red should be heard and embraced by everyone in the building — this is not just a sales function.”

Bombardier realizes that to continually succeed in the competitive selling environment of business aircraft sales that the whole organization must operate with a customer driven and sales culture mindset.

Each of the executives that we interviewed shared the pros and cons of developing their vision statements and offered the following advice:

1. What’s your sweet spot? Set the target for what you do really well; that will elicit passion and commitment and that has new growth potential.

2. Do you have their hearts? Involve others in defining the corporate vision to engage hearts and commitment to the new direction and focus.

3. Do you have a formal communication plan? Communicate clearly, often and with conviction the vision to engage people’s imagination and motivation for action.

4. When do you reconsider the viability of your vision? With organizational change, give your top performers a new “target for winning” to retain and recruit top talent.

5. Are all of the engines fine-tuned and aligned? Proactively align your sales culture, defined values, resources, goals and objectives to reflect the desired future — your vision.

What, no corporate vision? No need to wait for others to design your future. Apply all of the above using a self focus. What do you want your desired future to look like personally or professionally? Define your vision, communicate to others and set your goals for success.

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