


SALES MANAGER SURVIVAL GUIDE



Lessons from Sales' Front Lines

David A. Brock

DAVE BROCK POSED A QUESTION ON LINKEDIN:

“Other than making the number, what is the single biggest challenge facing front line sales managers?”

AMONG THE RESPONSES:

“Empowerment to think outside of the box and not get caught in the trap of because it always been done this way.” *James Perkins*

“If as a sales manager, if you want excellence, then show what excellence looks like. Then manage the activity and coach to improve weak competencies within the process.” *Dylis Guyan*

“Building a framework for success that advances the skills of both the top and average performer.” *Doug Nyberg*

“I’m going to say it is either unteachable sales reps, or the lack of resource support from upper management that does not invest in a sales team, resulting in high turnover.” *Deric Mills*

“But the biggest challenge I see is adaptability. ... there is not a cookie-cutter model that you can coach your sales team to follow. Great sales managers will focus on situational awareness and use data and insights to prioritize and coach their teams...”
Hank Barnes

“How to balance their time between customers, sales team and management activities.” *Pascale Hall*

“How to coach, who, when and about what.” *George Bronten*

“Right people, in the Right role doing the Right things, effectiveness in the key to success and Good Growth.” *David Leaver*

“Execution!! (Well thought out, customer focused) Plan > Process > Praxis If you fail the first two you’re out. Fail the latter - all will fail.” *Patriek van Eijck*

“Sales managers need relevant metrics to assist in coaching that are leading indicators instead of only trailing indicators; need to have visibility into dips to coach proactively.” *Tim Preston*

“Talent, talent, talent! From scouting to acquisition to development. I typically have evaluated my front-line sales manager’s talent pipeline along with the more popular deal pipe!” *Art Petty*

“Tough to pick just one but I’d say effective pipeline and opportunity reviews/coaching along with forecasting which is interdependent. Very few I’ve worked with do it well.” *Don Mulhern*

**DAVE’S BOOK ADDRESSES THESE CHALLENGES—
AND MORE!**

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David A. Brock

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For Dad and Mom, Harold and Janellen Brock, without whom I wouldn't be, both figuratively and literally, where I am.

And For my wife, Kookie. As you will discover reading this book, Kookie has been my mentor in many ways, and is one of the most inspirational sales leaders I have ever known.

CONTENTS

FOREWORD	1
Mitch Little, Vice President of Worldwide Sales and Applications, Microchip Technology, Inc.	
INTRODUCTION	3
PART ONE: THE NEW SALES MANAGER	
1. So Now You're a New Sales Manager. What's Different	11
2. Your First 30 Days: Slow Down, Don't Move Too Fast!	15
3. 30-60 Days: First, Your People	20
4. 30-60 Days: Your Company/Sales Organization	26
5. 30-60 Days: Processes, Systems, Tools, and Metrics	30
6. Warning! Do You Also Have a Personal Territory?	35
7. 60-90 Days: The Honeymoon is Over: What Have You Done for Me Lately?	38
8. Leading Your Former Peers	46
PART TWO: COACHING IS YOUR JOB	
9. What's All This Talk About Coaching? I'm a Manager!	51
10. Coaching and Being Coached	53
11. Coaching and Training: What's the Difference?	55
12. How Do You Coach?	58
13. How Do You Find Time to Coach Your Salespeople?	67
14. Are You Coachable? If You Aren't, You Won't Make It!	70
15. Coaching to Close Performance Gaps, Coaching for Continued Improvement	73

16. Coaching A, B, C Players	77
17. What Does the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle Have to Do with Sales Leadership?	83
18. Guidelines for Giving and Receiving Feedback	87
19. The Secret to Effective Coaching	92

PART THREE: REVIEWS—ACCELERATE YOUR COACHING IMPACT!

20. The Review Process: Killing Two Birds with One Stone	97
21. Fundamentals of the Review	102
22. Deal Reviews	107
23. Pipeline Reviews	116
24. Call Reviews	124
25. One-on-Ones	129
26. Account and Territory Planning	134
27. Team Meetings	140

PART FOUR: RECRUITING, INTERVIEWING, HIRING AND ONBOARDING

28. Building a Team	149
29. A Frightening Look at “The Cost of a Salesperson”	151
30. Recruiting: Finding the Best and Brightest!	154
31. Sales Competency Model	163
32. Interviewing and Hiring	170
33. Onboarding	181
34. Attrition is a Leadership Problem	187

PART FIVE: PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

35. Managing and Evaluating Performance	195
36. Setting Performance Expectations	197
37. Performance Reviews	200
38. Problem Performance	206
39. The Measured Mile	214
40. On Terminations	219

PART SIX: TACTICAL BUSINESS MANAGEMENT—MANAGING THE BUSINESS WEEK TO WEEK, QUARTER TO QUARTER

41. Business Management Is Important— The day to day business of managing the sales team!	231
42. If You Can’t Measure It	233
43. Performance Metrics and Analytics	241
44. Forecasting	251
45. Time Planning	254
46. Compensation/Commission/Incentives	260

PART SEVEN: SALES ENABLEMENT: EQUIPPING YOUR PEOPLE TO SELL	
47. Sales Enablement: Effectiveness and Efficiency	269
48. Training	271
49. Processes	277
50. Systems and Tools	281
51. Sales Tools: The Nuts and Bolts	285
52. Content and Collateral Materials	289
PART EIGHT: TERM SALES MANAGEMENT ISSUES	
53. Strategies for the Overall Sales Organization	293
54. Enterprise Strategy	296
55. Customer Centricity	299
56. Sales and the Rest of the Company	301
57. What's Our Go-to-Customer Strategy?	303
58. Market Ecosystem	306
59. Talent and Culture	308
60. Continuous Learning and Continuous Improvement	310
PART NINE: YOUR FUTURE AS A SALES MANAGER—AND BEYOND	
61. You and Your Future	315
62. Managing Your Manager	316
63. When Things Go Wrong	322
64. Power Is Not What You Think It Is	327
65. Where Did the Time Go? Managing Your Own Performance and Development	329
66. What Makes You a Great Leader and Manager?	335
APPENDIX	337
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	339
INDEX	341

FOREWORD

My thoughts about Dave's book are inseparable from my thoughts about Dave.

Dave Brock has street cred! No BS, no hype, no simple theory. Dave has knowledge gathered from real life as a salesperson and leader. Like Dave, with his multiple decades of direct experience, I too have more time in this role than most of our audience has in life. Does that just make us old? It might. But not in this case.

In this case, Dave leads the evolutionary thinking about the forever-changing business world and the implication that this evolution is having on the role of the salesperson and their leadership. Dave is one of a handful of sales professionals around the world who truly grasps what we need to do TODAY to succeed, versus continuing to do what worked once.

Over the last few years Dave and I have had many conversations about the "new world" and how it affects our passionate pursuit of excellence in the art and science of selling. We are in violent agreement in almost everything. In fact, as I think of it now, I don't recall what we did not agree on.

Above all, we agree on the critical impact and importance of the role of the sales leader who is in direct support of the individuals that make up the client-facing team. It does not really matter much what the industry, the products, or services sales people are focusing on. It does not really matter what the "size of the deal" is or where in the world we are working. The simple matter is the singular most important role in any sales team, anywhere around the world, is that of their Front Line Sales Manager.

Now, I will give Dave a little grief here, and take the position that words are everything and that Manager is too tactical a word. Leader is a more accurate description of the role Dave writes about... But at the same time, I understand

most corporations around the world will not accept that differentiation in title. Too bad: their loss.

In any case, Leader or Manager title aside, the role and its application is the matter at the heart of Dave's book. He does a masterful job of spelling out the needs and the actions every rookie and seasoned pro trying to guide a sales team should dig into and understand in total.

This is a Survival Guide for one of the most challenging positions you will ever tackle in the sales arena. And Dave Brock gives you the knowledge, the tools, and the answers (even though he may not think so,) needed to master one of the most satisfying roles you will ever have.

So, let's all go out and make a difference with those whom we serve, and the clients whom they serve. We really can create a better world! It's a great calling. Have fun with it!

Mitch Little

*Vice President, Worldwide Sales and Applications,
Microchip Technology, Inc.*

INTRODUCTION

Sales Manager Survival Guide is intended to take you on a journey some of you have already begun. The journey starts the day you are named as a Front Line Sales Manager. I'll take you through the critical first 30-60-90 days, then move you through your life as a manager, all the way to the point you are looking for a more senior sales management role.

Before I go further, I hope you are asking yourself this question: “Why should I trust you?”

This book is data driven. Not in the sense of rigorous market surveys, but it is the result of literally tens of thousands of experiences and lessons learned over my career, the careers of my colleagues and clients in Partners In EXCELLENCE.

These lessons were learned the hard way. Some I was proud of, and others not so much, but sometimes, even in the mess made by a terrible mistake, I've been able to find insights that help me achieve future successes.

Let's look at some of the data. I've been involved in selling and sales management for over 35 years—yes, some of you guessed right, I started when I was 5 years old—would you believe... Over that time, I've participated in more than 30,000 deal and sales call reviews, over 9,000 pipeline reviews, and tens of thousands of one-on-ones.

Cumulatively, in my responsibilities as a line manager/executive, and through our clients at Partners In EXCELLENCE, we've been involved in producing over \$67 billion in revenues. I've been directly involved in interviewing, hiring, and firing hundreds of sales people and managers, as well as and developing over 100,000 sales professionals.

I've worked for and with some of the top corporations of the world. I've also worked for and with some of the hottest start-ups in the news. I've worked

with family-owned, small and mid-sized businesses. This work has taken me to dozens of countries, working with teams in Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Latin/South America, India, Europe, Australia, the Middle East, Eastern Europe, and, naturally, North America.

Through my travels I've picked up tens of thousands of experiences. The lessons I've learned have been instrumental in shaping me both personally and professionally. There are things I wished I'd done better, but had to learn through sometimes tough experience before I could improve. Layer onto this the experience of the people on my team and our clients—we have a collective data base of hundreds of thousands of reviews, meetings, hiring/firings we've learned from—and there is plenty of wisdom and insight to draw from.

Global spending in Sales Training is \$4-6 billion a year. Yet we spend less than 5% (\$200-300 million) of that on formal training for sales managers. It's a huge difference in investment, yet the front line sales manager is the most important person in driving day to day sales performance.

There aren't a lot of resources available to managers who want to learn and develop. Just a quick search of Amazon, shows over 16,000 titles related to sales and selling, yet only 1,700 titles related to sales leadership.

Where do sales managers go for answers and ideas for even the most basic issues they face every day? How do managers "hack" sales management, learning the things critical to them and their teams, without having to go through the 30,000 deal reviews, call reviews, and endless pipeline reviews? I hope to help you accelerate your growth, avoid some of the mistakes I've made, and contribute more quickly to the success of your team, your manager, and your own.

This book focuses on the *Front Line Sales Manager*, but is a resource to all sales managers. By front line sales manager, I mean managers who have sales people reporting directly to them but have no managers among their own direct reports. I'll use the terms front line and first line sales manager interchangeably.

I believe the front line or first line sales manager is one of the most important and most difficult jobs in sales. Front line sales management is the point where we translate strategies, ideas, programs into tactical day to day execution.

If you'll excuse the military analogy, the front line sales managers are the sergeants of today's sales armies. They are the people who make things happen, and upon whom executive, corporate and sales management depend to get things done.

Despite—or perhaps because of—the importance of this mission, the front line sales manager is often caught between a rock and a hard place. You already know what I mean. You aren't a salesperson, and so, unless you also carry a personal territory, you aren't directly responsible for finding and closing deals.

You aren't responsible for driving the strategies of the company. Unless you are "the sales manager" in a very small company, you aren't even responsible for driving the strategy and priorities of the sales organization—though you contribute to the development of these.

The Front Line Sales Manager, particularly in any company over roughly \$50

million in sales, is given their “marching orders” and expected to lead their team in sharp execution.

The role is even more difficult for someone new to the position. For most, this may be the first management/leadership role they have ever had. There’s always that difficult transition from individual contributor—managing one’s own territory, being accountable for their own results—to managing a team accountable for the results they must produce.

So this book is intended as a guide to helping the front line sales manager do the things that are most critical both for his or her personal success and that of the team.

I’ve tried to write the book in a simple, very direct manner. I won’t cloud it with a lot of stories or examples, but will offer simple explanations of things you will encounter as a manager, and the issues you must be attentive to. It is my hope the book will help you identify land mines and challenges that can derail you or your team.

I won’t necessarily provide answers. In reality there is never a “right answer.” Each situation will be different. But I’ll help you identify the issues you should be thinking about and how to figure out the answers most relevant to you and the specific situation you face.

I’ll provide tools to help apply some of the things we talk about in this book. Among these tools will be checklists, templates, and references to other materials. There will also be a website, salesmanagersurvivalguide.com, where I will provide more tools, as well as generating discussion and idea sharing, with you and your peers from around the world.

The first section of this book will cover your initial days as a front line sales manager and how to have a great start in your new role. But the bulk of the book is intended to be a comprehensive reference guide to any sales manager. While I believe even seasoned front line sales managers and sales executives can benefit from the material in the opening chapters, for those of you with more experience, feel free to skip to the chapter most relevant to what you need right now.

Keep this book on your desk, or bookmarked on your computer or tablet. Highlight it, annotate it, bend the corners of pages down for reference. Use it as a quick reminder of how to excel in your role. For example, if you are coaching a deal, skim through that chapter to remind yourself about what you want to accomplish. If you are hiring, read those chapters to look at how you search, recruit, interview, hire, and onboard new sales people. Use the Sales Competency Model to help identify your ideal candidate.

A few notes about what this book isn’t:

- This book won’t give you the answers. It will help you identify the questions you should be asking, those you should be answering, and things you should be considering in developing the answers. But every manager’s situation is different. It’s *your* job to figure out the answers most important to you. **It’s mine to help you become confident that you’ve considered all the**

possibilities and consequences of the professional challenges you'll face.

If you want “the answers,” this book probably isn't for you. Then again, if you want someone *telling* you the answers, rather than helping you develop the capabilities to figure things out for yourself, you won't be successful in sales management.

- This book focuses on the tactical day to day leadership required to execute these strategies and plans, and to get each salesperson contributing to the highest levels. This book doesn't address a number of very important issues that concern top sales executives or CEOs. I only touch lightly on the development of overall sales strategies, the organization and effective deployment of people and resources, the “business of selling,” and a whole lot of other strategic topics. I'll be writing another book to address those issues. For some of you, in very small organizations, this will leave you in a bit of a tough spot because in addition to the day to day tactical execution, you are responsible for the overall strategy. As I mentioned, in later sections of the book I'll provide some thoughts—hopefully to help you until you read the next book.
- This book is not a book about the latest cool ideas and pop culture in sales management topics. It's a “down and dirty, let's get the job done” book. It's about the hard work of selling and sales leadership. If you want to be titillated by the latest hot and cool ideas, this definitely isn't for you.

Every day, there are new tools and technologies being announced that help sales people and sales managers. But without rock solid operating principles, great thinking, and relentless execution, these tools are worthless. They are, in fact, often distractions that divert your concentration from the basics of your job and its responsibilities.

One of the things I hope you get out of the book is the pure joy and fun of being a front line sales manager. This might seem an odd thing to say, particularly when your boss is hammering you for forecasts, budgets, and your team is struggling to make the numbers.

This may seem odd, especially when you look at your own career and want to advance and develop as much as possible. Many view the front line sales manager position as a stepping-stone, rather than a role filled with joy and fun.

Perhaps it takes some years and reflection to understand this. In my own career, I have been very ambitious—moving from front line sales manager to SVP or EVP of sales roles, moving further to General Management and CEO roles in both large (Fortune 100) and start-up organizations.

Don't get me wrong, there's a lot of fun in those roles, as well. But the greatest joy I've ever experienced came from working every day with sales people. Helping them perform at the highest levels possible, helping them think about deals and their territory, getting out and making calls on customers, feeling bad when we've lost, feeling the exhilaration when we've won.

Despite everything else, the real action in selling comes from working with sales people and customers. The real action in sales management is not sitting in a conference room figuring out next year's plan, but working with the sales people who work with customers every day.

I hope this book helps you with the details and challenges of those days—but I also hope that it helps you recognize and appreciate the joy your days as a front line sales manager can contain.

PART ONE

**THE NEW SALES
MANAGER**

1

SO NOW YOU ARE A NEW SALES MANAGER. WHAT'S DIFFERENT?

First, congratulations! Your first job as a front line sales manager is a huge step forward in your career.

Now, don't screw it up—you'll get a lot of people who will immediately congratulate you, shake your hand heartily, and smile widely as they say:

“What have you done for me lately?”

Before we get on with getting in shape to answer that question, let's backtrack a little bit.

How did you get here? Probably one of a couple of things happened. You are working for the same company and have gotten a big promotion, moving from an individual contributor role to the front line sales manager role.

Alternatively, you were employed by another company, applied for this job and were hired.

In either case, you probably got the role for a number of reasons:

- You were a top performer as an individual contributor. You consistently met your numbers and did a great job.
- Your peers and your management may have considered you a role model.
- As a top performing salesperson, you may have mentored and coached your peers. Management became aware of your potential for leadership and promoted you.

- You may have had a management role at another company and been recruited by your new employer.
- Someone may have died, been promoted, or left the company, and you were the most “painless candidate to select.”

Don’t get me or my humor wrong. No matter how you got the role, congratulations are in order. You were made a sales manager because you earned it and deserve it.

But...

What you did, and how well you did, in your previous job has little to do with your new job as front line sales manager! Your past glory and awards don’t count!

Being a great sales manager is different from being a great salesperson.

You are a newbie!

You are starting fresh!

It’s a great opportunity—if you make the most of it!

The BIG change with becoming a front line manager is now your job is to get things done through your people.

Your past success was based on your ability to get things done yourself. Whether it was your adeptness in developing and executing winning deal strategies, or getting partners and others in your organization to help you, your success primarily rested upon what you did and how you performed.

As a sales manager, your success will be based on your ability to get each person on your team to perform to their fullest potential. If you can’t get each of them to be successful, then there is no way you can be successful.

However great you were in making sales calls, closing and negotiating deals is relatively meaningless in your new position. Your own personal sales ability doesn’t count. What matters now is your ability to get each member of the team doing the right things with the right people at the right time.

Don’t get me wrong, **you have great experience in doing all these things yourself, and that experience will serve you well.** Your experiences and the seasoning they gave you will provide a strong foundation for the teaching, coaching, and development of your people.

You know all the what, how, why—the trick is how you get your people to know the what, how, why, and to execute it as well or better than you did.

How do you help them see the things that maximize their performance and results they produce?

How do you get them to execute consistently, at a cadence that supports the attainment of the overall team goals?

Answering these questions (and hundreds more)—and putting your answers into action—is the heart of your new job.

Some things you need to know are true, whether you want the knowledge or not:

- **You can't tell your people what to do.** Think back to when you were a salesperson not so many days ago. How did you react to someone *telling* you what to do?
- **You can't do the selling for them—there just aren't enough hours in the day.** Let's do some quick math. Say you produced \$1M a year, consistently. (Yeah, I know you did much more, but humor me.) You know that you worked full-time to do that—and probably worked evenings and a little on the weekends, as well. So now you have 10 people, each with \$1M to achieve. If you try to do it yourself—they may be glad to let you do it—the math works against you. It's simply impossible as long, as you are managing any more than one person.
- **You can't do nothing,** sit behind a desk, producing reports and trusting that your team will produce the numbers. What happens when they don't?
- **You can't swoop in as “Super Sales Manager,”** closing the deals yourself. Go back to 1 and 2—re-read that.

There are some things that will frustrate you:

- **Much of the time, you know you can do better and work faster than any person on your team.** You may be right, but that doesn't help them improve and perform. Besides, you've already done the math: You don't have enough hours in the day to do their jobs for them.
- **Sometimes, your team members just seem too slow; they don't have the urgency you do.** It's your job to figure out how to light a fire within each of them and, if necessary, *under* them.
- **Sometimes your temperamental 4-year-old at home will seem to have more sense and maturity than people on your team.** There have been many times when I've been tempted to tell a whining salesperson to go to his desk for a “time-out.” There are times when they just don't seem to “get it.” It's your job to figure out how to overcome this.
- **Sometimes, you will discover you have the wrong people.** They simply won't be able to get the job done, no matter how well you teach, coach, and develop them.
- **You will always be caught between a rock and a hard place.** Your management has high expectations of your performance—and you are dependent on your team to get the job done. Sometimes the directions provided by your management and what you need to do will be in conflict.
- **There are no easy answers.** Sales management is a thinking person's job. There is no magic, there are no tricks or techniques, there are no short cuts. You have to do the work. Suck it up, that's what management is all about!

But you'll quickly learn that part of the job and joy of being a manager is—figuring it out!

- **Figuring out who each person is on your team**, what they are good and bad at, what their capabilities are, what their aspirations are, and what makes each of them tick.
- **Figuring out how to inspire and light a personalized fire in each**—getting each to perform to their full potentials.
- **Figuring out the right systems, tools, processes, programs, and training** to provide to help your people be successful.
- **Figuring out how to get your people what they need to be successful**—and what to do when you can't.
- **Figuring out how to manage your manager**, getting her out of your way so you can do what you need to do, but getting her support through the process.

Being a sales manager, especially the first time, is like working a puzzle, without knowing the picture, and being certain a couple of pieces may be missing.

For now:

- **Be proud you are a front line sales manager.** It is the toughest sales job in the world, but it's through you things happen.
- **Know your job is different.** The one lesson to take from this article is: "Your job is to get things done through your people!" (Write this down and keep it on your desk, read it 3 times a day.)
- **Right now, don't rush to change anything.** Get to know your people and what they face. Get to know your company and how it works. Get to know your customers and what they think of your people and accompany.
- **And don't screw up**—you'll have unlimited opportunities to do that later!

The next few chapters will explore your first 30, 60, 90 days in the job. As you'll see, the job doesn't necessarily get any easier—after all, you didn't take the job because it was going to be easy.

But, trust me, it does become far more fun the better you get at it.

2

YOUR FIRST 30 DAYS: SLOW DOWN, DON'T MOVE TOO FAST

No, I'm not channeling Simon and Garfunkel's "59th Street Bridge" song or Tyga's "Movin 2 Fast."

I'm talking about your first 30 days as a new manager.

It's human nature, particularly if you are in sales and very action oriented, to start doing things.

We feel compelled to take action, to start solving problems, to get things going—after all, it's that proclivity to take action that probably contributed to getting the job in the first place.

Sometimes, we feel we have to make a mark or set a tone of some sort. (Actually not much different than a dog marking its territory.)

Often, when we are hired as a new manager in a new/different company, we tend to think "something's broken, I have to fix it." Even when we are replacing a manager who has been promoted, we have the same thoughts.

That's the single biggest mistake we can make—despite anything the hiring manager may have said about needing to take action.

Here's the issue, "How do we know what action to take? How do we know the most important things we should do?"

The most important thing for a new manager to do—regardless of the situation—is to do *nothing!*

No, I don't really mean do nothing. I mean don't rush into changing things.

I've been involved as a CEO or top executive in a number of turnarounds. In many cases, the situations have been quite dire, with the company on the brink of

failure. But even in those times, the worst thing to do is to start making changes. (Toward the end of this chapter I'll talk about triage: dealing with immediate critical distractions, so you can take your time with important, but less urgent challenges more systematically.)

The most critical things you need to do in your first 30 days as a new manager is figure out what drives your people, how they work, what's going on, how things get done, what people think, why the organization is where it is, and where you can have the biggest impact on the people and organization.

Until you do these, you don't know what actions—if any—you need to take, or which may have the highest priority.

Slow down! Even if the hiring manager has told you, “You need to fix these problems!”

So how do you figure things out?

1. **Your frame of reference is very important.** It's important to look at things through fresh eyes, as if you are the new kid on the block. If you are new to the company, this is easy: You actually are the new kid on the block! The biggest challenge is if you have been with the company for some time and have been promoted into a role. Too often, you become a prisoner of your own experience. Because you've been involved in the company, perhaps years of service, you make assumptions based on your experience, or the way things have always been done—and these may be entirely wrong.
2. **You don't have to prove anything.** You already have the job! So resist the temptation to try to prove yourself by taking quick actions, or by any kind of posturing you might do. It doesn't help you—in fact it probably hurts you.
3. **Focus on learning everything you can from anyone who's willing to talk to you**—yes, I mean the receptionist in the front and the janitor too! There's a checklist for your first 30 days at salesmanagersurvivalguide.com, but here's a starting point:
 - **Visit or talk to 30 customers, prospects, past customers.** You aren't there to sell them; you are there to ask them their views: What do they think about your company? What do they think about your competitors? What do they think about the sales people who support them? What about the other people from your company? What would they like to see different, why? Why do they, or why would they, do business with you? What company has the sales people they like the best and why? There are a lot of other questions. Go on many of these visits without the sales people so the customer can be open.
 - **Spend good quality time with each of your people.** Ride along with them, go on calls, listen as they are on the phone. Here you'll get to “visit” another 30 customers. Get to know your people as human beings. Get to know their aspirations and dreams. Learn how they do their jobs, ask about their frustrations. Get into the weeds with them, look at details—

how do they use the CRM system, how do they prepare for a call, how do they put together a proposal, how do they research, how do they prioritize and manage their time, what resources do they leverage to get things done, do they understand/own their metrics/numbers, do they have a growth or fixed mindset, what's their orientation to learning? *Don't critique or try to correct anything you see going on.* Ask lots of questions, listen, ask more questions, observe, ask more questions—and take plenty of notes! You'll have time to correct and improve them later, once you've figured out what you need to do.

- **Do similar things with the people and organizations in your company that support your team.** There may be a pre-sales group, there may be customer service, sales operations, sales enablement, marketing, lead gen, legal, finance, HR and others. Learn their roles, learn their opinions of the sales team, and their views of customers.
- **Get to know your peers in the organization.** Ask lots of questions, get to know your peers, get their perspective on how things work. Just listen, observe, take notes.
- **Do the same with your manager, and if possible with your manager's manager.** You may have to be a little more structured in your questioning and your use of their time, but spend time with them. Understand what's important to them. And while it's become unfashionable to ask this question, "What keeps them up at night?" (You'll want to make sure it isn't you or your team.) Understand their perspectives on your team, but take that as input to consider, not what must be done.
- **Find people who may know your people and organization but may not be directly involved with them.** Ask their opinions of the team and how things are done. Remember the lowest level people in the organization often have the most astute and pragmatic assessments of what's going on.
- **Spend time analyzing data**—look at what's available to you, understand it, analyze it, drill down to make sure you really get what's going on. Learn how good the data is, learn where you can get the data you need, understand the systems available to provide the data and analysis. Understand the key goals and metrics, look at performance trends. But do this in off hours and on the weekend. During the work week, spend all your time with people.

4. Realize, as you do all of the above, you are killing a number of birds with one stone:

- **You are figuring out what's going on, how things get done, what people's attitudes and opinions are, and where the problems and challenges are.**
- **You are starting to build relationships and trust with your people and across the organization.** When you figure out what you need to do, you have to have strong trusted relationships.
- **You are starting to let people to get to know you—as a person.**

5. Take lots of notes. While I've said it before, it bears repeating. Your objective, right now, is not to solve problems and make changes, your objective is to collect as much information as you can. Resist the tendency to critique or challenge—even if someone is doing something wrong. Correcting their mistakes, for now, is not critical to figuring out what you need to do.

- **Every evening, sit down, review your notes.** Start developing some ideas or premises about issues or problems. These may form great questions you may ask in subsequent meetings. They may give you ideas about new things to look for.
- **You may want to go back to some people and “playback” what you have observed or heard.** Do it in neutral—don't express an opinion, positive or negative, just use the playback to validate what you heard or observed.

In most cases this will take you 30 days. Sometimes, you may be forced to do it faster—but, even with the direst of turnarounds I've done, this first 30 days of wandering around, learning, understanding, and building your network/support system is the most important thing to do to set up your future success.

Sometimes it may take more than 30 days—but that's probably rare, unless you have hundreds or thousands of people reporting to you. And if you do have a huge number of people reporting to you, you probably don't need to be reading this book: you probably have extensive management/leadership experience.

Earlier I mentioned “triage.” Triage is fixing some immediate problems. Usually the fix is for something simple or to deal with a single critical issue. For example, in emergency rooms, doctors want to stop the bleeding, get someone's heart beating, or get them breathing. They don't want to diagnose and fix the underlying problems, they just want to get the person to survive long enough to start the diagnostic process.

So in your first days as manager, you may have to triage a few things. Keep them to a minimum—otherwise you get consumed with Band-Aid fixes and never get around to doing what you were hired to do.

But sometimes, one of your people may be having difficulty getting something approved, or getting some support. You might help by making a phone call. Or they might need someone to help open doors with a customer, you might do that, but let them run the show and support them on what they need.

The biggest thing to remember about triage is it is very seductive. You are doing things, you are solving problems. It's what you have fun doing, you want to be doing more of it. Be very careful. Sometimes a paper cut won't cause the patient to bleed to death, so don't worry about it.

The problem with just triaging problems or issues is that you aren't addressing the root problems; you are just addressing the symptoms. If you want to drive sustained high performance in the organization, you have to identify and address the root problems.

Don't get caught up in the excitement and adrenalin rush that comes with

“fixing” problems. Just do enough to eliminate the distractions so you can identify and focus on the real issues.

You now have some ideas for your first 30 days.

Since I’ve been using medical analogies, remember the first oath doctors take is to “**Do no harm.**” It’s good advice for sales managers as well.

How much and how well you learn in your first 30 days is key to your success. If you don’t take the time to do this, you are putting your future—and that of your team at great risk.

In the next chapters, I’ll focus on what you do next—how to handle your next 30-60 days, how to start taking action.

APPENDIX

Throughout the book, I've mentioned a number of resources to help with the ideas presented in this book. They are all available at the book website

<http://salesmanagersurvivalguide.com>

Registration at the site is free for anyone who has purchased this book. You will immediately have access to:

- **Sample Sales Competency Model**
- **Roles and Responsibilities Model**
- **First 30 Day Front Line Manager Checklist**
- **Sales Manager Checklist**
- **Sales Management Ecosystem**

Over time, we plan to add additional tools to this site, and your registration will ensure that you're notified as new material appears.

For any special issues, questions or needs; as well as to get in direct contact with me for consulting, coaching, training, or speaking, feel free to reach out at **dabrock@excellenc.com**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are thousands of people to acknowledge. This book is a result of my experiences both in being managed/led, and my own experiences in managing/leading. It's the result of experiences with thousands of individuals, great people in companies I've worked for, and great clients. My thoughts have been influenced by colleagues, fellow consultants, and others.

Some truly outstanding managers and leaders who inspired me, and from whom I learned valuable lessons. However, I won't forget some horrible managers. Perhaps, some of my most important lessons in leadership and management came from them. Not because of what they did, but because of the sharp contrast between them and the great leaders. I learned important lessons from the bad examples they set—though I think those lessons are not things they would have been proud of.

Even more important in my personal development as a manager, coach, and leader, are the people who worked for me or in my organizations. They put up with me and all the mistakes I made. For the most part, they were patient and forgiving. Most of all, they cared enough to teach me and help me be a better manager, coach, and leader. Many had the courage to push back, saying, "Dave, you need to clean up your act!" It's through them, that I really developed and learned what it takes to be successful.

We've been blessed with a very diverse client base, and with the managers for those clients. They come from every imaginable industry, from over 60 countries, and range from very small family owned businesses, to exciting start-ups, up through the very largest corporations in the world.

They have provided our company a real-world lab to develop, test, and apply

many of the concepts outlined in the book. Many of these clients have been world class leaders themselves, sharing their approaches, experiences, and ideas.

As a consultant, I've had the privilege of working with and sharing ideas with many others in the consulting community, learning from them, debating, and sharing experiences. They contributed and enriched this book.

Many colleagues in the consulting world have been very encouraging in getting me to write a book, and advising me on the process. One stands out, Charles Green of Trusted Advisor Associates has long encouraged me. As the book reached publication, he provided great advice and insight helping make this better.

There are the people that literally made this happen. My wife Kookie has been an inspiration as a sales leader—helping me learn what great sales leadership is. Tactically, however, she literally put me on a Performance Improvement Plan in writing the book and getting it done.

Publishing this book has put me in touch with a whole new world of people—editors and graphics artists who have taught me more about publishing a book than I thought I needed to know. At the head of the pack is Keith Ferrell, who did a masterful job of guiding me from a lot of ideas and pieces into putting together a cohesive, and, I hope, impactful book for readers. Keith did a great job in editing and making my ideas readable. It was great fun working with him, and learning about writing books (and a few other life lessons). Jennifer Melzer undertook the tedious task of the final copy-editing, making me look smarter—at least grammatically and spelling-wise, than I really am. KS Rives Revivo is responsible for the stunning cover design and the graphic treatments of the website, all the promotional materials associated with the launch of the book. Angie Hodapp did a wonderful job of transforming a complicated manuscript's messy pages into this book's attractive and readable pages.

Finally, my Mom, Janellen Decker Brock. As the proud son, I sent her some early drafts of the book. Little did I know her background in journalism and writing caused her to pull out a red pencil and start editing and correcting the manuscript.

Writing this book has been a work of pure joy. If it provides you just a fraction of what I got from writing it, I will have achieved my goal.

The Indispensable Guide to the Toughest & Most Important Job in Sales!

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"This is a Survival Guide for one of the most challenging positions that you will ever tackle in the sales arena. And Dave Brock has given you the knowledge, the tools, and the answers (even though he may not think so) needed to master one of the most satisfying roles you will ever have." —MITCH LITTLE, VICE PRESIDENT OF WORLDWIDE SALES & APPLICATIONS, MICROCHIP TECHNOLOGY, INC.



DAVID A. BROCK is founder and CEO of Partners In EXCELLENCE, one of the world's leading sales consulting, coaching, and training companies. Dave's deep experience in every aspect of sales and sales management gives him unparalleled insight into all facets of the profession—and explains why he is among the most popular and in-demand sales speakers in the business.

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