



MAXIMIZING BUSINESS **SUCCESS** THROUGH THE USE OF **COMPETITIVE SALES SIMULATIONS**

Four reasons you need to consider sales simulations
for continued competitive advantage



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Business leaders are under consistent pressure to deliver significant growth, quarter after quarter. Even in the best economic conditions, this is a tall order. In tough times, though, this task becomes almost Herculean. While meeting ever-increasing expectations requires close attention to the bottom line, perceptive leaders understand that driving top-line growth is just as important. Achieving growth targets in trying conditions demands renewed focus on building capability in the sales force.

Paradoxically, while organizations are investing heavily in learning and development, we see quite often that learning and development efforts fall short of expectations. Among the sales and learning executives we've queried, the consensus seems to be the inability of traditional sales training approaches to engage digitally native new-age learners who have low attention spans and expect seamless learning experiences.

While most organizations grapple with the challenge of making the training experience meaningful, successful organizations have been steadily moving towards linking knowledge and expertise. They have come to recognize that a smart approach to any learning program must include experience-based learning.

When it comes to the systematic acquisition of the knowledge and skills through sales training, success depends on a combination of several factors, the most important of which appears to be reassessing whether training content is still relevant to the organization. In most cases, while the technical content and learning objectives may still be effective and usable, the training delivery approach is not. In today's environment, the most successful program is a combination of customized organizational content and hands-on experience. In this approach, Sales Simulations have proved to be an extremely useful capability builder. Sales Simulations have the effect of taking learners closer to the on-the-job skills experience that drives the results organizations need. Call execution skills, presentations skills, negotiation skills, strategy development, and other skills programs are critical to developing a world-class sales team. However, it's important to realize that these types of programs are intended to develop skills. Business impact comes from mastery of these skills, plus in-depth practice and feedback in the application and integration of the skills under real-world conditions. This latter objective requires a different type of learning experience and a different learning environment. Sales Simulations are potentially a great answer to this challenge.

Sales Simulations help learners immerse themselves in an active, real-world experience that facilitates rapid, on-the-job outcomes. Sales Simulations can replicate the reality that sales teams face on a daily basis. This dynamic combination of skill development with real-world application amplifies the learning experience and is one of the most effective methods of adult learning.

Here are **four good reasons** to consider sales simulations:



They create a realistic environment to test “what if” scenarios and provide the opportunity to make mistakes in a safe environment



They provide context, content, and process, which are relevant, realistic, and directly applicable to the job



They shorten learning cycles because of immediate feedback



They drive business impact through strategic application of critical selling skills

Sales Simulations today are hugely popular and are often the preferred approach for building the skills in teams that need to foster a variety of competencies. They are also intensely ‘social experiences’ where learning happens by interacting with peers and facilitators. The process is often more successful where the first part is devoted to Skill Development and the second part is focused on the application of these skills in a simulated real world environment, so they are more likely to have success once they are back in the field. In the second part, the learners are often encouraged to focus on the essential skills, take risks and learn from their mistakes. The environment is designed to be a safe place, where learners can express themselves, hone their style, and in the process explore their growth path.

Meet the Authors



Steve Gielda

Steve Gielda is the principal partner at Ignite Selling, Inc., a global sales training and consulting company and co-author of *Premeditated Selling: Tools for Developing the Right Strategy for Every Opportunity*. Steve has spent more than 20 years helping Fortune 1000 companies in the healthcare, manufacturing, distribution, and IT industries to improve their sales performance. His emphasis on building and maintaining strong relationships and his focus on driving business results is what sets him apart with his clients. Steve began his career in sales with Lanier Worldwide, a document management solutions company, eventually becoming a regional manager. He was also vice president of sales and channel management at CTN, an office equipment manufacturing and distribution company. After CTN, Steve worked as a senior sales consultant for Huthwaite, helping to create unique sales training solutions for his clients. Most recently, he was a franchise owner with the Advantage Performance Group consulting and learning firm, and an active partner in building the business of Sales Momentum, a customized sales training organization.



Kevin Jones



Kevin Jones is the principal partner at Ignite Selling, Inc., a global sales training and consulting company and co-author of *Premeditated Selling: Tools for Developing the Right Strategy for Every Opportunity*. Kevin has been designing and delivering training solutions that impact people's lives for last 15 years. Kevin's goal is to create a learning environment where participants can thrive and where lessons learned can be translated to the field. Kevin has worked in finance, sales, and sales training. It was in sales training that Kevin found his true passion—developing people. Kevin received a B.A. in Business from North Carolina State University, and an M.B.A. from the Kenan-Flagler Business School at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Kevin uses his academic exposure and real-world experience to develop training solutions that drive business results. Kevin's work has enabled him to influence hundreds of companies in more than 30 countries worldwide.

About Ignite Selling, Inc.

Ignite Selling is a sales performance improvement company with over eight decades of combined experience in sales, sales coaching, and sales training. With our strategic sales consulting and learning alignment approach, we design custom programs that are unique to our customers' needs and enable them to achieve their specific business goals. Our programs use Interactive Learning Maps™ and Competitive Sales Simulations to give learners an engaging and relevant learning experience and prepare them for their real-world challenges. We focus on igniting and inspiring teams to take their sales to the next level.

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Sales Simulations that Inspire