THE
SALES
PIPELINE MANAGEMENT
SIMULATOR

by

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SETUP INSTRUCTIONS

INTRODUCTION

This simulation has been designed as a training aid. It can be run with the competing teams remote from each other but it would normally be done in a classroom with everyone present. It is much more fun when everyone is in the same room and can hear the successes and failures of the other teams.

There are 12 playing periods and these periods are best punctuated with lecture sessions or other training exercises.

In my own training classes, I would run a half hour or three-quarter hour session to get the game going. The playing teams would do one or two rounds. After that the game became far more lightweight. For example, they would be asked to do a round during coffee breaks.

The couple of rounds of the game is particularly useful as a session run directly after lunch. It is active and collaborative and keeps everyone alert!

TEAM ORGANISATION

The Game Master/Trainer sets up and runs the game from one browser. There is a simple dashboard that allows the game master to initiate each playing period and to keep track of which teams have entered their data for that period.

The game supports up to four competitive teams. Each team can have up to 5 members but truthfully that is too many. With 5 members some of the participants will become passengers and will not be engaged with the process. The ideal number is 3 although 4 is also OK.

The game master does not need to be too clever in selecting who goes in which team. I have run the game with a group of secretaries competing against a group of professional salespeople. The secretaries won.

EQUIPMENT

Each team runs its territory from a browser on a PC or tablet. A PC with a wider screen is marginally better than a tablet.

There is only one restriction. The game uses a modern internet feature that has not been implemented in Internet Explorer. Other than Internet Explorer, any other browser is fine, Chrome, Microsoft Edge, Firefox, Opera or Safari.

Unless you have sufficient equipment in the classroom, the participants should be asked to bring along some appropriate equipment. They should also bring a power charger as the game takes a couple of hours in total.

PHYSICAL LAYOUT

There should be space for each team to huddle together to make its decisions. There is no need for syndicate rooms. In fact, the game is far more fun if each team can hear the successes and failures of the other teams! The game is full of sound effects advertising successes and failures.

PRE-REQUISITES

Before running the game, the participants need to understand the concepts of Qualification and in particular the use of the acronym SCOTSMAN, its scoring mechanism and its use to drive out the agenda items and commitments needed in a sales campaign. So, unless the participants are already familiar with the concepts, prior to running the game there should be

a classroom session covering these concepts, either a lecture or a video. Online videos are available from AdvanceTM, www.commitmentbasedselling.com.

If the participants are already familiar with the concepts, then on the pipelinegame.click Home Page there is a document called 'Qualification and Background to the Game'. This document summarises the concepts as a refresher.

After this session, I like to give participants an exercise looking at real life sales. It gets everyone active and then more receptive to the description of how the game works.

Then there is a second classroom session describing the game and how to play it. This description is almost identical to the document 'Instruction Manual' on the pipelinegame.click Home Page. I like ask the participants to click on the link and to talk the teams through the document so that they know what's coming and know where to find the instructions.

RUNNING THE GAME

I have never just run the game through from beginning to end. After every two or three periods I like to do some classroom tutorial work to highlight some of the issues being found as the game develops. Remember that the primary purpose of the exercise is training.

Every few periods the output of the game shows the playing statistics of the teams such as how much time they are spending on prospecting, need creating, keeping in tough, qualifying etc as well as the raw stats about sales and pipeline. It is interesting and instructive to compare the team stats and ask the teams to describe their strategy for winning.

COST OF PROSPECTING

There is the option of charging each team member a small fee every time they go Prospecting or Need Creating. I strongly recommend that you play it this way. If you charge 30p each time then the total cost per person is rarely more than a couple of pounds. The total pot then becomes the prize for the winning team. Salespeople love the extra win/lose dimension it creates.

Only once have I had a salesperson refuse to play this way. He said that for religious reasons he did not gamble.

After Period Nine, there is no longer a charge for prospecting. I have implemented it this way to encourage salespeople to build up their pipeline for next year. This relaxation also allows a team that is behind on overall sales to gamble on a lot of prospecting at year end and overtake the leader. They can do this gambling because the overall winner is the sum of sales year to date plus 20% of next year's pipeline.

COLLECTING THE MONEY

As a game master, I was quite tough on the next issue. I absolutely refuse to move to Period Ten until everyone pays up. If you move on without collecting the money then, at the end, the losing teams sometimes make all sort of excuses not to pay.

If you collect at Period Ten, then peer group pressure from the other teams, who are keen to move on, makes sure they pay.