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FRAMEWORK
FOUNDATIONS

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INTRODUCTION

In today's fast-paced and competitive business world, a strong sales engine is necessary for any managed service provider (MSP) looking to grow and succeed. A well-oiled sales engine helps generate new leads, convert prospects into customers and increase revenue.

To build a successful MSP sales engine, you must understand the key roles and how they fit together, including inside sales, outside sales, warm lead generation, centers of influence (COIs), marketing and more. Each role plays a critical part in the sales process and requires a clear understanding of how they connect and work together.

You differentiate yourself from the competition and establish your MSP as a leader in the industry when you create an efficient, effective sales engine that meets your target customers' needs. Let us dive into the details and explore how you can create a powerful MSP sales engine that can drive growth and success for your business.

IN A PERFECT MSP WORLD

In a perfect MSP world, securing first-time appointments (FTAs) would be a seamless process achieved through primary marketing efforts. Potential clients discover your MSP through organic searches or by visiting your website. Alternatively, you could set FTAs using a well-crafted inside sales script to reach out to prospects and secure appointments.

During the appointment, you make an excellent presentation that showcases your offering in a compelling and informative manner. Your presentation highlights the unique value propositions of your MSP, the benefits of working with you and how you can help solve the client's pain points.

Finally, in this perfect MSP world, you close 20% of FTA's at the right price. You establish trust with the prospect and demonstrate that your MSP is the best choice to meet their needs, enabling you to close deals at a profitable price for your business while delivering value to the client.

Of course, the reality is that the sales process is complex and faces obstacles when securing FTAs and closing deals. However, by striving to achieve the ideal sales process outlined above and continuously improving your sales efforts, you move closer to building a successful MSP that delivers value to clients and drives growth for your business.

IT IS NOT A PERFECT WORLD

We often see in the MSP industry that the sales process begins with getting in front of prospects, making a presentation and sending a proposal. However, even after investing significant time and resources into the sales process, it is not uncommon for prospects to suddenly stop responding to your calls and emails — a phenomenon known as "the big fizzle."

Whatever the reason for the big fizzle, it is frustrating for MSPs who have invested significant time and resources into the sales process. However, it is essential not to give up on these prospects entirely. Sometimes, they may need more time to decide or require additional information or reassurance.

So why is the MSP sales world not perfect? Selling managed services is complex and challenging. Unlike physical products, MSPs sell services that may be intangible and difficult for potential clients to evaluate. Additionally, MSPs must often navigate complex technical requirements, service level agreements and other technical details that may overwhelm clients.

THE GRAY PAINT SALES PROCESS

In the perfect world, sales processes may be straightforward, but the MSP sales process is complex and often unpredictable. Unlike other industries, potential customers may not be aware of their needs and require education to understand the benefits of managed services. Recognizing and adapting to these challenges is essential to build an effective sales process in the MSP industry.

The approach to sales that works in other industries does not always apply to the MSP sales process.

In other industries, prospects have much more information and knowledge about their needs and the solutions available before talking with a salesperson.

» For example, in the copier industry, a customer may know what a new copier costs and how to change to a new model before a salesperson walks in the door.

» However, in the MSP industry, neither the MSP nor the customer always knows what they need. Customers may not fully understand their problem until the MSP helps them uncover it.

As a result, MSPs help customers attach real value to managing their pain and risk, including educating customers on the benefits of managed services and helping them compare what the MSP offers to other providers. MSPs build trust and win over potential customers when helping to educate prospects.

THE UN-SALES PROCESS

The un-sales process prioritizes building trust and solving the customer's problem over making a sale. It involves understanding the customer's current technology situation and future goals, assessing whether the MSP can help, explaining why and emphasizing the value of the partnership. Building a relationship with the customer and understanding their needs is emphasized over closing the sale.

» In this example, we compare the sale to holding an egg.

» The sale represents many things in the sales process, including the salesperson's commission, quota, business model, self-image and more.

» The salesperson's goal is to prevent damage to the sale, but this approach hinders the sales process in the MSP industry.

» The un-sales process focuses on getting to the basic facts of the customer's current technology situation and where they want to be.

» The salesperson should ask themselves whether they believe they can help the customer and explain why they think that.

» Finally, the salesperson ensures the customer understands why the MSP can help them and the value they will receive from the partnership.

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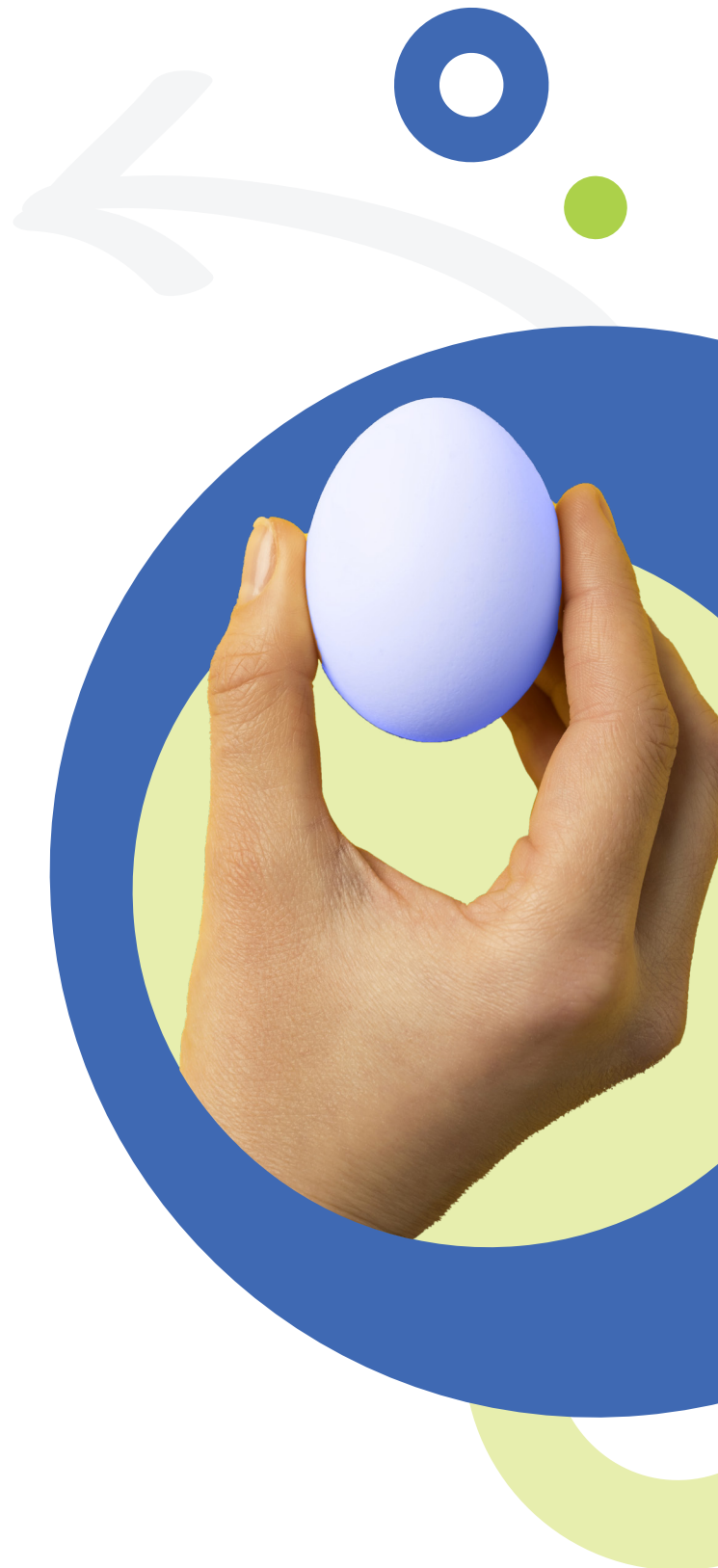
IN THE REAL MSP WORLD

In the real MSP world, sales begin with understanding and communicating the actual value of your service offering. The process starts long before the salesperson walks through the door, with up to 80% of the work happening beforehand. It helps if you recognize that not all leads are equal, and it is essential to focus on the right priorities with discipline to achieve the desired results.

All through the sales process, MSPs must identify and prioritize the best leads while remaining disciplined. MSPs achieve success in the competitive sales landscape when they understand the value of the service offering.

PERSPECTIVE ON BUILDING AN MSP SALES ENGINE

We will investigate the five critical points, providing valuable insights and perspectives. You can step back and ensure your TruMethods journey is on the right track.

SERVICE DELIVERY STRUCTURE
When set up correctly, you can effectively manage and deliver client services when you understand the service delivery framework.

TECHNOLOGY SUCCESS PRIORITY
Technology Success refers to providing reliable and effective client services using technology alignment and strategy.

PROSPECT DATABASE DISCIPLINE
It is essential to have database discipline with your prospects to ensure your leads are accurate and up to date, allowing you to target and convert new business opportunities effectively.

WARM LEAD FOCUS
You are focusing on your warm 250 means prioritizing these warm leads and focusing your sales efforts on converting them into customers.

OUTSIDE SALES PROCESS COMPETENCE
It is not required to master the sales process but use the previous points as guidelines so your outside sales process is effective and focused on generating new business.

Implementing and mastering these five key steps is instrumental to building a robust sales engine. Let us look at them in more detail.

SERVICE DELIVERY STRUCTURE

ALL RESOURCES IN FIVE DELIVERY AREAS

The five delivery areas include technology alignment, vCIO, Centralized Services, Service Desk and Professional Services (projects). No matter the number of employees in your organization, at least one person is dedicated to each role, ensuring your company has the right personnel to handle different aspects of your business.

NO CAPACITY FOR SUPPORT OR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

It is necessary to have a balanced workforce. You should avoid putting excess capacity in support or professional services and instead allocate them to high-value roles, such as technology alignment or vCIO, which provide proactive customer assistance.

THE TEAM TRAINED ON THE DELIVERY STRUCTURE AND ESSENCE OF EACH SERVICE DELIVERY ROLE

Your team must train in the TruMethods delivery structure and understand the essence of each service delivery role. Training certifies that your employees are well-equipped to provide excellent service delivery. It guarantees everyone is on the same page, clearly understanding their roles and responsibilities, allowing your company to deliver consistent, high-quality services to clients.

TECHNOLOGY SUCCESS PRIORITY

DEDICATED TECHNOLOGY ALIGNMENT MANAGER WITH SCHEDULED TIME FOR EACH ACCOUNT

It is essential to have a dedicated alignment manager on-site for a full-day assessment with each customer to guarantee your Technology Success process runs effectively.

A CULTURE FOCUSED ON STANDARDS AND ALIGNMENT

Achieving success in technology requires a shift in culture toward a focus on standards and alignment, prioritizing high-value tasks over low-value tasks and reducing reactive time.

VCIO PROCESS BASED ON TECHNICAL ALIGNMENT

The vCIO process plays a role in improving a client's IT environment by leveraging alignment findings to generate solutions.

CLIENTS DERIVE PRIMARY VALUE FROM YOUR TECHNOLOGY SUCCESS PROCESS

Clients must understand the value they receive from the Technology Success process, including proactive functions, vCIO and TAM, since this is where they derive the primary value from your services.

PROSPECT DATABASE DISCIPLINE

ALL ACCOUNTS CATEGORIZED (BUCKETS)

To effectively manage your prospects, you must categorize all accounts in buckets based on criteria such as industry, company size, potential revenue and so on. It makes it simpler to prioritize and allocate resources based on the importance of each prospect.

MONTHLY REVIEW OF PROGRESS

You must review your progress regularly, at least once a month, to ensure you are on track and that your database is up to date. Focusing on this discipline helps you to identify gaps or weaknesses and take corrective action if necessary.

EVERY "PROSPECT" HAS A FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITY

You must have a follow-up activity for every opportunity in your database to keep your prospects engaged and interested. It could be a phone call, email, newsletter or other touchpoint that keeps your company top of mind for the prospect. It would help if you habitually follow up to avoid losing touch with potential leads.

WARM LEAD FOCUS

NEW COI MEETING (NOT JUST NETWORKING)

Building relationships with people who help you connect with the right prospects is more beneficial than attending networking events. Set up meetings with COIs who refer you to the right people at the right time.

REFERRAL/LINKEDIN PROCESS WEEKLY

It is a priority to have a process for getting in front of decision-makers who are the right fit for your MSP. Use LinkedIn and other channels to identify and reach out to prospects and establish referral programs to encourage current clients to refer you to their contacts.

WARM 250 DEVELOPMENT

The most qualified leads with the highest close ratio are the lever to building a successful sales process. Focus on developing and nurturing relationships with these warm leads rather than asking whether they are ready to buy. It requires a combination of regular outreach, targeted messaging and personalized follow up to keep your MSP top of mind when they plan to decide.
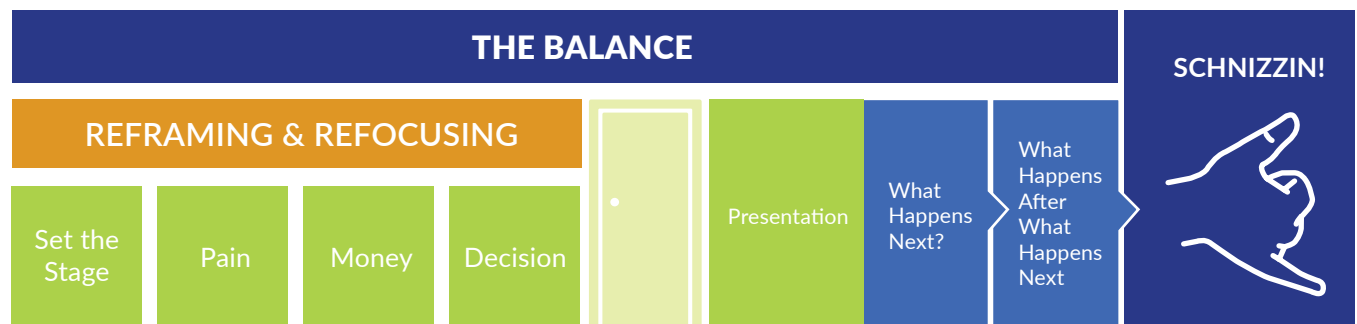
TruMethods Framework

OUTSIDE SALES PROCESS COMPETENCE

UNDERSTANDING YOUR PROSPECTIVE BUSINESS

Understanding their business allows you to identify their challenges and create customized solutions for their needs. It helps you avoid the generic approach to selling and focus on the prospect's specific issues and requirements.

CONTROLLING THE SALES PROCESS

Controlling the sales process is about understanding where you are in the sales cycle, setting clear expectations and driving toward a defined outcome. You avoid the prospect dictating the conversation and wasting time if you control the situation.

THE BALANCE								SCHNIZZIN!
REFRAMING & REFOCUSING						What Happens After What Happens Next		
Set the Stage	Pain	Money	Decision		Presentation	What Happens Next?		

Combining these steps gives you some flexibility in the sales process. You do not have to aim for perfection every time because certain aspects of the sales process are malleable. You can afford to make some mistakes and still achieve a successful sale. Ultimately, it is about reaching the end goal and developing a refined sales process by mastering core concepts such as packaging and pricing, service delivery and understanding the anatomy of a world-class MSP.

Once you establish the five steps as your top priority, you can now focus on other aspects of your business. You could start prioritizing inside sales, revamping marketing brochures, refining your onboarding process and updating client documentation. However, if you prioritize these tasks over the essential five steps, you are not taking the most efficient path to developing a successful sales engine in this industry.

A PROVEN FRAMEWORK

FOLLOW THE PROCESS

Follow the steps and procedures outlined in the framework to achieve the desired outcome. The framework has been developed, tested and proven that 100% of MSPs who follow the process as presented get results. Therefore, following the process ensures you are taking the most direct route to developing a successful sales engine.
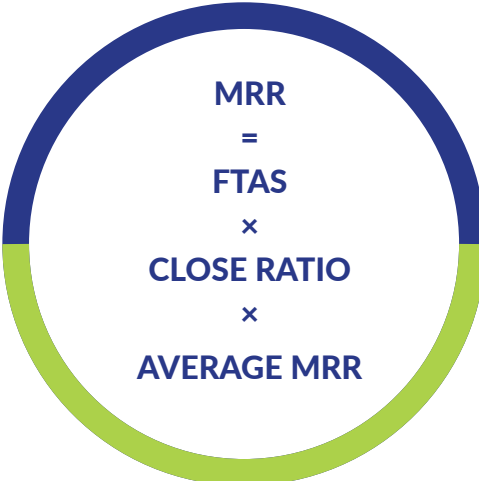
IMPLEMENT THE FRAMEWORK

Implementing the framework is a required step to achieving the desired results. If you continue to do the same things you have always done, you cannot expect to get different results. When implementing the framework, you take the right steps to develop a successful sales engine in the MSP industry.

NEW MRR SALES AT THE RIGHT PRICE

The framework leads to new MRR sales at the right price. The designed framework helps MSPs package their services correctly and price them appropriately so they sell their services at the right price.

MSP MATH AND SCIENCE

There is a simple method of calculating your MRR using a few variables:

$$MRR = FTAS \times CLOSE\ RATIO \times AVERAGE\ MRR$$

TruMethods Framework

Most people focus on the FTA variable

- » Many people tend to focus too much on the number of FTAs they can generate and see it as a measure of success.

- » However, it is essential to note that FTAs alone do not guarantee sales and revenue.

- » Instead, the focus should be on generating the most sales with the fewest FTAs.

- » You shift your focus to the other two variables and improve your sales process when focusing less on new FTAs.

Close ratio: Value and warm leads

- » To improve your close ratio, you need to focus on two variables: value and warm leads.

- » Value refers to the benefits and value proposition you offer to your prospects. You create more separation from your competitors and increase the likelihood of conversion by improving your value proposition.

- » Warm leads refer to prospects more likely to convert because they have already shown interest or are in the market for your services.

- » Focusing on warm leads improves your close ratio and increases your recurring revenue sales.

Avg. MRR: Value and target prospects

- » To increase your average MRR, you need to focus on two variables: value and target prospects.

- » Increasing the value of your services justifies a higher price point and generates more revenue per customer.

- » Target prospects refer to the types of customers most likely to benefit from your services and generate the highest revenue.

- » Targeting the right prospects and tailoring your services to meet their needs increases your average MRR and recurring revenue sales.

TruMethods Framework

SUMMARY

Building a successful MSP sales engine requires a strategic approach prioritizing the right factors. Having the right support offering, such as Technology Success, guarantees your clients derive primary value from your services. Additionally, focusing on warm leads and implementing an effective outside sales process helps you meet the correct number of target prospects and have the right conversations that lead to new MRR sales at the right price. Following the sales process and implementing the framework means MSPs achieve successful outcomes and get the results they desire.

Most people focus on the FTA variable, but to truly build a successful MSP sales engine, it is essential to focus on the other two variables: close ratio and average MRR. Increasing your value and targeting the right prospects helps achieve your outcomes. Prioritizing these factors and implementing the right strategies enable you to create a thriving sales engine that generates recurring revenue and drives business growth.