

» SPECIALTY SALES

REPS OF TOMORROW WILL NEED BOTH SCIENCE AND CRM SKILLS

To survive and thrive in the future, sales reps will have to be specialized and service-oriented.

Given the environmental and sales target changes, the sales model must change to a concierge model, our experts say. This requires a very different approach and even a different type of salesperson.

“Pharma companies can learn much from management consulting and service-selling skills,” says Dave Ormesher, CEO of closer-look. “Selling to a policymaker or a payer requires a partnership orientation and a focus on a mutually identified value proposition. Consultative selling assumes a long-range perspective and an investment in relationship building.”

To get to the core of this consultative selling model, companies are training reps to listen to the physician’s needs during a sales call.

“Companies are learning that they must bring their customers what they want, rather than simply what they want to bring,” says W. Scott Evangelista, principal, national commercial practice leader, Deloitte Consulting. “Armed with bigger ears and an effective support structure, sales reps are bringing products as part of the solution and helping their customers meet their needs rather than those of their employers.”

All companies are introducing new commercial models, and for the first time, they are actually taking different paths from each other to create competitive differentiation, reports Dan Goldsmith, VP, Europe, Veeva Systems.

“These strategies range anywhere from positioning the sales rep as the account quarterback to coordinate the access and usage of different company resources, to integrated,

Dan Goldsmith

Veeva Systems

“Some sales roles will be more oriented to a scientific sell, while others will be oriented to a relationship and account management model.”

multi-disciplinary strategies, to establishing sales as simply an execution channel,” he says. “As the market continues to be saturated by me-too, large-molecule products, pharma companies will likely differentiate themselves based on science in the small-molecule and biologics areas. This will create an integrated selling team environment where each rep serves a new and different type of role. Some of these sales roles will be more oriented to a scientific sell, while others will be oriented to a relationship and account management model.”

The successful sales rep of tomorrow will be better educated and trained, more skilled at consultative selling skills, more informed and capable of having higher-science dialogues around disease state issues, and adept at understanding and using clinical studies and evidence-based medicine with physicians,



according to Rick Keefer, president and CEO, Publicis Touchpoint Solutions.

START WITH SEASONED REPS

As sales teams become more specialized and service-oriented, representatives are expected to have knowledge beyond the product that includes topics, such as disease management and reimbursement.

“As a result, a level of experience and maturity is required on commercial teams,

Buzzword for Tomorrow's Sales Reps: Consultancy

LAST YEAR IN OUR YEAR IN PREVIEW ISSUE, EXPERTS REPORTED THAT THE SALES REP OF THE FUTURE WOULD NEED TO BE MORE SPECIALIZED, MORE TECHNOLOGICALLY SAVVY, AND CLINICALLY KNOWLEDGEABLE. THOSE SKILLS ARE ALL STILL ON THE TOP OF EVERYONE'S LIST THIS YEAR, ONLY WITH A BIT MORE URGENCY. REPS NEED TO CATCH UP SO THEY CAN BE IN TUNE WITH THE EVER-CHANGING ENVIRONMENT AND THEIR CUSTOMERS.



GREG BARRETT is VP, Marketing, of Daiichi Sankyo Inc., a member of the Daiichi Sankyo Group, dedicated to the creation and supply of innovative pharmaceutical products to address the diversified, unmet medical needs of patients in both mature and emerging markets. For more information, visit dsi.com.

The sales force of the future will need to embrace new technologies and find innovative ways of enhancing productivity, effectiveness, and influencing behavior. Reps will need to keep pace with changes in prescribing decisions and gain fact-based insight into how promotion activity drives prescribing behavior. New technologies will help drive higher performance by enabling reps to better understand metrics such as patient demographics and physician prescribing preferences.



JAY BOLLING is CEO of Roska Healthcare Advertising, a full-service advertising agency with expertise in engaging prospects through communications that integrate data and insight-driven marketing and advertising solutions. For more information, visit roskahealthcare.com.

Consultative selling skills will be a must-have, identifying the needs and problems of the practice, and providing solutions accordingly. The need to leverage resources and relationships will also be important to provide physicians with information and services they can't get on their own.



NICK COLUCCI is President and CEO of Publicis Healthcare Communications Group, a healthcare communications agency network with 40 offices around the globe. For more information, visit publicishealthcare.com.

Physicians still want to see reps — but their limited time demands a deeper, more meaningful conversation. Dedicated managed-care sales reps, with expertise interpreting analytics around

patient-centric outcomes, compliance and disease-state management, are critical in creating unique selling positions and cutting through clutter.



W. SCOTT EVANGELISTA is Principal, National Commercial Practice Leader, Deloitte offers a menu of professional services delivered in an integrated, collaborative approach that cuts across all segments of the health plan, health provider, and life-sciences industries. For more information, visit deloitte.com.

We are not in an environment where we can tweak the skills of a sales rep to enable a new way to do business. We have to redefine the objectives for personal interaction with customers and build teams with complementary skills to meet the needs of the market. If pressed to identify a single skill that sales reps need in the future, it would be consultative selling, or in other words, shaping solutions around needs.



KELLY GRATZ is President of inVentiv Selling Accelerators, a subdivision of inVentiv Commercial, which is comprised of industry sales experts who bring the experience, knowledge, and skill necessary to develop and flawlessly execute successful sales strategies. For more information, visit inventivhealth.com.

Sales reps need to want to solve problems. Healthcare providers (HCPs) are looking for knowledge they don't have already, more importantly that they don't know they don't have either. As a result, reps will need to be more inquisitive as to the challenges HCPs are facing, and then solve those challenges through a variety of ways, for example data, peer groups, etc. Reps need to be increasingly more tech savvy, as HCPs continue to lead adoption of some of the newest technologies in the marketplace.



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Sales reps will need to be able to profile each customer by assessing their roles within their practice and key interests — teaching, science, research, etc. — and then customize their offering and message to address these specific needs.



JEFF LAIDLAW is VP of BioPath Consulting LLC, a specialty company focusing on scientific and clinical training and education of sales forces. For more information, visit biopathconsulting.com.

Sales reps will need to be transformed into consultative reps, who have comprehensive scientific knowledge and clinical acumen. They will need to be able to paint patient profiles; uncover unmet customer needs; and deliver relevant, nonbiased information, through customer-focused interactions. This type of interaction will allow HCPs to see value in the rep and will provide the greatest patient benefit and the greatest return on the training investment.



DAVID ORMESHER is CEO of closerlook inc., a strategic marketing agency specializing in healthcare. For more information, visit closerlook.com.

The sales rep of the future will need to learn how to be quiet and listen to the needs of physicians and use those insights to position products and communicate a value proposition in a way that is transparent and that builds trust. This includes being able to admit a particular product is not the right fit for a certain class of patients.



MATT WALLACH is Chief Strategy Officer of Veeva Systems, a provider of SaaS-based CRM solutions for the global life-sciences industry. For more information, visit veevasystems.com.

Going forward, sales reps will need to act more like quarterbacks, helping customers to quickly navigate the internal pharma organizations in search of drug information.

2011 ■ YEAR IN PREVIEW

Jay Carter*Abelson-Taylor*

"Reps will begin to add value the way that they did before: by getting information and samples into the physician's hands."

which translates into hiring more seasoned representatives with higher levels of experience, industry awareness, and understanding," suggests Dean Tozer, senior VP of Advanced BioHealing. "Once these seasoned representatives are on board, the training and education will have to be augmented to equip them for this changing landscape."

According to Jeff Laidlaw, VP of BioPath Consulting, pharma companies have self-reported that fewer than 33% of their sales force has a scientific/clinical background and that less than 25% are consultative reps.

"Until companies are able to deploy scientifically and clinically trained consultative reps, their goals will not be achieved," Mr. Laidlaw says.

To meet the emerging requirements in a very competitive landscape, companies are increasingly employing customer service representatives — either alone or in combination with their field sales team. These customer service representatives do not conduct product

**Dean Tozer***Advanced BioHealing*

"A level of experience and maturity are required on commercial teams, which translates into hiring more seasoned representatives with higher levels of experience, industry awareness, and understanding."

state and program objectives — who work with physicians and/or patients on patient adherence and retention issues."

Mr. Keefer explains that clinical health educators focus on both disease state education and education around the therapies prescribed, including therapeutic options such as behavior and lifestyle changes.

These roles will be crucial in the new world of comparative effectiveness, our experts say.

"Reps and MSLs were always expected to be familiar with and experts in the science of the drugs they promoted," says Sushiel Keswani, executive director, advisory services, life sciences customer domain, Ernst & Young

discussions but rather provide a high level of service to physicians' practices via samples and patient education materials. Mr. Keefer says this is the key to success in the future.

"Many companies are also integrating clinical health educators into their message delivery mix," he says. "Clinical health educators are credentialed healthcare professionals, who are often nurses, but could be other healthcare professionals, such as diabetes educators, dietitians, depending on the disease

EXPERTS

JAY BOLLING. CEO, Roska Healthcare

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Advisory Services. “In the new world, the strategies that will be employed will be based on comparative effectiveness evidence of the product, documented health outcomes, and the value of the therapy to the patients.”

REPS WHO KNOW SCIENCE BRING MORE VALUE

The future success of sales forces will be measured on the overall value they bring to the provider, not on the market metrics that have driven the industry for decades, says John White, R.Ph., MS director, medical science liaison programs, The Medical Affairs Company. “Promotional messaging still needs to be delivered, yet this needs to be done in an environment that leverages the science of the product and the disease state even more,” he says.

As medications and medication management have become increasingly complex, pharmaceutical representatives must, by design, be more learned in their science, and there will be a greater trend toward individuals with scientific and clinical training.

“While medical liaisons will continue to work with and develop the thought leaders and academicians who are influential to research and education, there is a vital need to use clinically trained individuals who can bring the same level of scientific expertise to the traditional, office-based physician practices,” Mr. White says. “These clinical specialists will cross over multiple products and focus on a more disease-state approach.”

This new era of reps must be more than mere conduits of a brand’s promotional message.

“Reps must provide value to each prac-

tice, based on individual needs and characteristics, in the form of relevant data, peer-to-peer connections, and access to patient support and services,” says Jay Bolling, CEO, Roska Healthcare.

No problem, says Jay Carter, senior VP, director of strategy services, AbelsonTaylor, because in many ways, this focus is similar to that of the past when there was one sales force, trusted with multiple brands, calling on a physician and creating a trusted relationship where product information matters.

“Reps will begin to add value the way they did before: by getting information and samples into the physician’s hands,” he says.

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