



Expression
for Growth

Whitepaper

The true cost of untrained salespeople in commercial roles

How to embed capability and behaviours for growth

With contributions from
senior global commercial
and HR leaders from:

Global
Pharma.
Ex-P&G

karo[®]



Global
Entertainment
Conglomerate

Global Water
Company
- 80,000
employees

Geistlich

AkzoNobel



Contents

Introduction	2
Section 1: Commercial team learning & development: Do it yourself or bring in an expert?	10
Section 2: The impact of technology on sales teams	36
Section 3: The importance of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in commercial capability teams	48
Key takeaways	56

Republication and reuse is by
permission and reference only.

With thanks to our **global experts**—

Without their insight and expertise, this publication would not have been possible.



Kayla Campbell
Pernod Ricard



Elif Canakci
PepsiCo



Marianne James
Hasbro



Silvia Morgan
Geistlich Pharma



Kevin Nolan
Karo Pharma



Malcolm Pickup
AkzoNobel



Sharon Rai
NatWest



**Senior Global
L&D Expert**
Ex P&G, Consumer Goods,
Pharmaceutical



**Senior Global
L&D Expert**
Strategy, Sustainability &
Communications
Waste Management, Utilities, Water



**Senior Global
L&D Expert**
Strategy, Planning & Communications
Global Film, Media & Entertainment

Introduction

Commercial capability is playing an increasingly important factor across global organisations. Its impact on sales' ability to build relationships, articulate value, negotiate prices, and close deals have become critical. But the difference between the very best salespeople and the rest can often be stark and dramatically impact company success.

This has been highlighted as the pandemic and technological advances have dramatically impacted and changed techniques used by sales teams. To keep up, you'll need more innovative, intelligent, and collaborative ways to develop your organisation's commercial capability.



In this whitepaper, we bring together senior global leaders in commercial capability and learning & development (L&D) functions across multinational global enterprises.

We ask the fundamental questions impacting commercial and sales teams across the globe.

We delve deeper into how senior leaders manage and run their in-house learning programmes. You'll learn what these senior leaders say about the effectiveness of **'do it yourself' unsupported commercial skilling and development compared with outsourcing**, and the impact these methods might have on sales teams. In addition, we ask our experts about **the implications and effects of technological enhancements and developments** as we navigate changes and a more virtual world.

We also speak to our experts about **Diversity, Equity & Inclusion**, talk about capabilities, behavioural and personality traits—and share insight into the tools and techniques adopted by global leaders in commercial functions.



With commercial capability development, we should see the impact within the business. We should see our market share increase and better customer NPS scores.




Pernod Ricard

Kayla Campbell
Vice President, Total Talent,
Diversity & Enterprise Development

What you'll learn and the questions we asked



Should you let sales managers run their learning & development programmes?



Are sales leaders the best people to oversee commercial capability development within a multinational corporation?



What are the advantages of bringing in an external partner to manage the process?



Do you have the skills to deliver engaging training, generate behavioural and cultural change—and deliver ROI and impact?

We also asked:



Where and how should conversations be conducted?



How do commercial teams make online meetings engaging?

And in the midst of this:



What can be done to ensure Diversity, Equity & Inclusion across teams, to offer more outstanding capabilities and talent?

If you're responsible for commercial capability, these are the crucial areas you'll need to consider. This guide offers you expert insight from senior global leaders across some of the world's largest and industry-leading companies.

Our ten experts are grappling with the same issues as you. The result is a fascinating insight into what your peers, commercial and L&D leaders, consider the most effective and impactful ways to develop commercial capability.

Background & process

We interviewed ten senior global leaders in commercial capability functions and roles across multinational corporations.

Seven of these interviewees were happy to share their opinions and insights on the record. Three preferred to remain anonymous—both clients and non-clients were interviewed to offer you an unbiased view and extensive guide.

Backstory

We began exploring how leaders develop their teams, the effects of internal or cultural change, and the effects of outside influences on commercial and sales teams.

As we explored, we found that many commercial leaders across the globe used different techniques, frameworks and processes **but faced the same or similar challenges and pain points.**

So, we asked **three fundamental questions:**

- 1 Should sales and commercial leaders be responsible for sales L&D?
- 2 If so, what should their role be?
- 3 And, in what situations should they consider external expertise?

Kayla Campbell

Vice President, Total Talent,
Diversity & Enterprise
Development, **Pernod Ricard**



“You get phenomenal benefits from external training providers. You also get the visibility and recognition of the programme within the organisation. If done well, you can see results from the first day after training.”



Elif Canakci

Training Core Skills
Lead Europe
PepsiCo



‘The virtual meeting is not a version of a face-to-face meeting; it is something else. You need to prepare differently; demonstrate the skills differently and interact differently.’



Kevin Nolan

Global RGM Director
Karo Pharma



“If you consider the personality traits coming to the meeting, you can make it a workshop rather than a presentation. You’ll have people who won’t sit there silently and wait for you to finish, so you’ll need to be ready to interact.”



Malcolm Pickup

Director, Culture and
Change Management
AkzoNobel



“A training partner with real specialist expertise in your field also has the advantage of having worked with other organisations too, so there’s comparison, a benchmark.”



Our global experts

Marianne James

Vice President of EMEA & Asia Licensed Consumer Products, **Hasbro**



"I'm impressed by external providers who spend the time beforehand to understand my brief, my objectives, my goals. They understand where I see skill gaps and turn them into the programme I'm looking for."



Silvia Morgan

Senior Director, International Sales
Geistlich Pharma AG



"The future is that there is no separation between sales and marketing anymore. The marketing team will develop messaging and things they want to transmit, but they will not start any campaign without having the sales rep and the customer in mind."

Geistlich

Sharon Rai

Diversity & Inclusion
Partner, Commercial
Banking, **NatWest**



"Diversity in sales teams absolutely equals high performance. It enables a diversity of thought, better representation of served communities and much better innovation."



Senior Global L&D Expert

Former Global Director
P&G, Pharmaceutical



"I think the upside of commercial leaders doing it themselves is that it's authentic and real, and convincing because of that. The downside is that it might not be structured very well."

Senior Global L&D Expert

Former Global Commercial Director
Water, Utilities & Waste



Senior Global L&D Expert

Global Commercial Director
Global Film, Media & Entertainment



Part 1

Commercial team learning & development:

Do it yourself or bring in an expert?



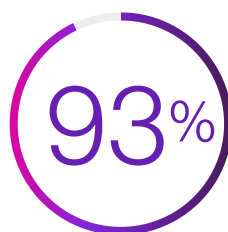
Introduction

We've seen first-hand sales teams generate brilliant opportunities as we move into new working methods. We've also been presented with real risks.

Customers have greater expectations, from interactive, collaborative virtual meetings to slick, professional presentations; and tech-savvy users. Consequently, your commercial team's Wi-Fi issues, clumsy slide decks and unengaging proposals often become a competitive disadvantage and sales constraint. **With this in mind, we posed the question to L&D leaders: how do you tackle commercial and sales capability?**

256

sales leaders agreed that high-quality coaching boosts team satisfaction[†]



of employees say bespoke training improves engagement^{††}

High quality sales coaching

A **Forbes**[†] study that surveyed 256 sales leaders and learning & development decision-makers found that 'sales team satisfaction increased when sales training is supported by **high quality sales coaching**. The satisfaction stems from the sales professional's ability to overcome obstacles and reach their next level of excellence.'

Well-planned bespoke training

When developing training programs with an external partner it's vital your relationship is a collaborative one and programmes are tailored specifically to your employee needs. '93% of employees saying that well-planned, bespoke training is **a key factor in improving levels of engagement**.'^{††}

[†]Source: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesbusinessdevelopmentcouncil/2021/01/08/what-companies-that-grew-in-2020-realize-about-sales-training/?sh=578271f83c97>

^{††}Source: <https://whatfix.com/blog/employee-training-statistics/>



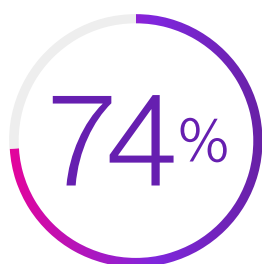
Our senior experts from global companies shared their insight and experiences in developing commercial capability.

Here's what they said.

Let's begin with the opportunities and risks created by sales and commercial leaders running unsupported learning & development commercial capability programmes.

What can sales leaders offer, and how can they drive impact, change, and enhance commercial capability skills across the function—and generate ROI?

Leveraging your sales leaders to develop commercial skills



of workers feel they're not achieving their full potential[†]

Untapped Potential

Shift Learning[†] recently reported that 'from a sample size of 4,300 workers 74% claimed that they felt that they were not achieving or working at their full potential and the most popular reason given was a lack of development opportunities.'

Targeted training for sales teams boosts productivity by



Targeted Training

According to **Spotio**^{††}, 'it has been shown that targeted training programmes for sales teams can boost productivity and performance by an average of 20%. Organisations performing at a high quality are twice as likely to provide on-going training programmes than low-performing organisations.'

'Your sales leaders bring with them a wealth of experience. From relationship-building to managing teams and targets, they'll certainly have a view on how to develop skills.'

[†]Source: <https://www.shiftelearning.com/blog/statistics-on-corporate-training-and-what-they-mean-for-your-companys-future>

^{††}Source: <https://spotio.com/blog/sales-statistics/#salestraining>

However, salespeople are not qualified to do the job

Let's first consider a fundamental question — what professional qualifications do salespeople need? The answer is none.

Over 100,000 global salespeople were asked “how often have you experienced a core set of behaviours to be the best buying experience” the response was only **5%**.

This means that **95% of customer experiences don't hit the mark.**

Spotio[†] stated that, ‘hiring dynamic sales reps who are passionate about your product or services is only half the battle when it comes to building and retaining a high-performing sales team.’

They went on to say that according to **Forbes**[†], ‘over half of sales reps in the US lack basic sales skills, and don't receive adequate training, and that ongoing training is the leading driver of high-performing sales organisations.’

So, what is the true consequence of doing nothing?

You may be unlikely to hit your goals or meet the businesses strategy. You may see a dip in retention, whether that be employees or clients as they will not receive a positive customer experience.

Therefore, we may want to do something about this.

In a separate study by the **American Society for Training and Development**^{††} it was found that ‘companies investing in their employees' L&D enjoyed an average 218% boost in revenue created by those employees.’

Companies investing in their employees' L&D enjoyed an average **218%** in revenue created by those employees.^{††}

[†]Source: <https://spotio.com/blog/sales-statistics/#salestraining>

^{††}Source: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Nadeem-Bashir-3/publication/274703936_Training_and_Development_Program_and_Its_Benefits_to_Employee_and_Organization_An_Conceptual_Study/links/5c650d59299bfd1d14cc4d35b/Training-and-Development-Program-and-Its-Benefits-to-Employee-and-Organization-An-Conceptual-Study.pdf



Elif Canakci, Training Core Skills Lead Europe, PepsiCo, has concerns about quality.



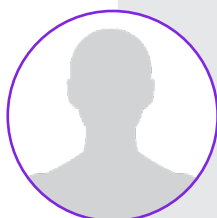
“I don’t think we could guarantee the quality of a commercial capability programme solely undertaken by sales leaders. While our managers could be brilliant at management, they need more support for commercial capability to develop these skills from internal and external experts.”



Silvia Morgan, Senior Director of International Sales, Geistlich Pharma AG, also urges caution.



“A disadvantage of letting sales leaders manage development themselves is that there is little alignment. Everyone does what they think is best for their team and that can vary a lot. In addition, sales managers have different experiences and levels, which leads to quite different skills being developed. Also, there is no common language because people tend to have their own language to train their sales reps.



One of our expert leaders from a **global film, media & entertainment company** told us: “One would expect a manager to be training up and passing their expertise on to their team. That strikes me as the organic way that training happens within any half-decent organisation anyway. But it’s limited because it’s influenced by what’s important to them as an individual, not what’s important to the person you’re training.”



So, while sales leaders play a vital role in managing their teams; and guiding and coaching individual reports, they may not have up-to-date skills to plan, create and implement an in-house training programme that benefits your organisation.

Ensuring frameworks are relevant and aligned



Expert Guidance

‘Think twice about introducing commercial capability frameworks from other companies and roles.’



Some sales leaders might want to introduce frameworks from previous companies and roles.

However, **Malcolm Pickup, Director of Culture & Change Management at AkzoNobel**, advised,



“Taking these frameworks and applying them to an organisation that it's not designed for, can actually be very damaging.”

Challenges with measuring results

Of course, any commercial capability development initiative should focus on results. And the experts we spoke to were unsure if sales managers were skilled enough in building programmes that monitor and track outcomes and measure ROI and change.



Our expert leader in **utilities commercial capability** told us:

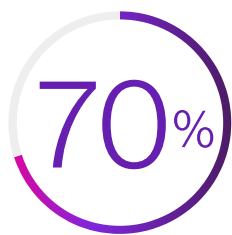
“The impact I’ve seen from managers running their own commercial development for their teams is an inconsistency in sales results. When managers do their own training, they subconsciously might focus on the people who are very good. They may also not use a framework to develop their less sales-oriented people, resulting in an increase in attrition.”



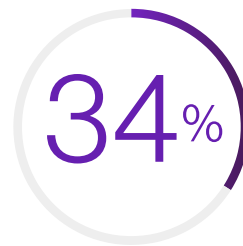
Building commercial capability programmes internally

The benefit of ownership

‘Working with a global partner to ensure a high-quality training experience for your sales teams is crucial’, according to **Lorman Education Services**[†]



of employees would consider **leaving their job for a role** with more investment in training[†]



of employees have **left their job** for a role with more career advancement potential[†]

They went on to say that ‘internal training improves employee retention, with 70% of those who agreed that they would leave their current position to seek an employer who would actively invest in employee training.’

Of the employees surveyed ‘34% left their jobs in search for a company that would help them advance their careers.’

\$70 billion

per annum spent on training in the US^{††}

Salesforce^{††} reported that ‘US-based companies are estimated to spend a total of \$70 billion on training per annum.’



So, what about using your in-house commercial expertise and allowing sales leaders to build programmes internally?

[†]Source: <https://www.lorman.com/blog/post/39-statistics-that-prove-the-value-of-employee-training#employee-training>

^{††}Source: <https://www.salesforce.com/blog/15-sales-statistics/>



Sharon Rai, Diversity & Inclusion Partner, Commercial Banking at NatWest certainly sees some advantages:



“One advantage of developing our own training programmes is owning the whole process and using our own intel and experience to develop it. But it’s also ensuring that the training is relevant and appropriate to colleagues. There’s so much knowledge and experience inside a huge workforce, so it makes sense to leverage our own expertise to build programmes for colleagues.”

But **Sharon** also acknowledges that crucial questions need to be asked before deciding on this path. Such as, “**have I got a bird’s eye view? Am I seeing things outside of my field of vision, and what are my blind spots?**”



Kevin Nolan, Global RGM Director, Karo Pharma, sees speed as an advantage of internally created programmes.



“It can happen quickly, and we feel that we own it.”

Developing eLearning programmes

eLearning Industry[†] stated that ‘eLearning has become one of the most popular ways employers engage with training, with 40% of Fortune 500 companies choosing online learning as a method for upskilling their workforce.’

Speed and ownership can also benefit organisations in developing their eLearning programmes, where sharing resources such as case studies and bite-sized learning videos are often practical.

Platforms such as SharePoint™ make it easier to distribute, share and store content, and allow colleagues to engage. The opportunities to learn and implement technologies to create more formalised eLearning courses are also something that L&D teams are now exploiting.



Elif Canakci, PepsiCo, is undoubtedly in favour of creating internal digital programmes:

“We do create eLearning programmes internally. We upload these to our management system and make it available for our field teams whenever and wherever they want to use it.

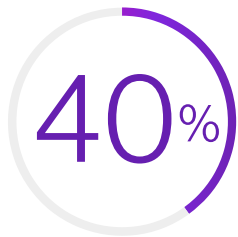
It’s important to make eLearning short but understandable and as interactive as possible. We are creating some games and some interaction for the participants because we want them to participate in the training whilst they are learning. This isn’t just one-way communication; it’s somewhere for them to play a game, answer some questions and check their knowledge. So, it should be short but informative.”

Elif goes on to say that technology for developing learning internally has become much more intuitive. “Articulate™ is eLearning software that is easy to use and I don’t need to know any programming.”

The real challenge in creating effective eLearning is in storyboarding^{††}, says **Elif**, “because you need to develop the story really nicely and ensure that you explain everything in a short time while still keeping people’s attention and making it interactive.”

[†]Source: <https://elearningindustry.com/how-custom-elearning-can-help-drive-skills-development>

^{††}Source: <https://www.ispringsolutions.com/blog/elearning-storyboard#what-is-a-storyboard-in-instructional-design>



of Fortune 500 companies
choosing online learning
as a method for upskilling
their workforce

The average cost to create one
hour of eLearning content is

\$22,431

Time and cost

The move to eLearning is not without costs, a report by **Raccoon Gang**[†] calculated that 'in 2021, 1 hour of learning content can take around 100 – 160 hours to create and can cost about \$22,431 on average.'



Malcolm Pickup, AkzoNobel, highlights the time and cost
needed to create learning programmes internally.

“

“I think the time and resources that are put into in-house courses vary but it is indeed extremely labour intensive from start to finish. This includes identifying the need to develop the right solution and then delivering that solution as well.

Sometimes that's the easy piece, too, because if we really want to reinforce learning, it's the follow up to these programmes that are critical. The resource requirement around the embedding of that learning is vast if the learning is going to be truly successful.”

[†]Source: <https://raccoongang.com/blog/how-much-does-it-cost-create-online-course/>

Getting engagement

Glint[†] recently wrote that, ‘employees are more engaged when they feel equipped and empowered to do their job, and learning is a big part of that. Make sure training is clear, well-structured, and ongoing to ensure employees have the information they need to perform at a high level. Consider offering on-demand training and continuous learning opportunities.’

Engagement in training courses has been heightened by the move to online learning. The distractions of a virtual setting make it more difficult to keep participants engaged, which can be even more challenging with the absence of subject matter experts.



Expert Guidance

Quality learning experiences—what you need to know:



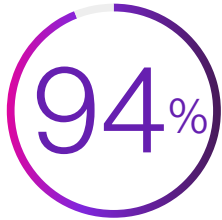
Kayla Campbell, Pernod Ricard explains,

“Internally run courses can suffer from lack of engagement and importance—delegates might perceive the value more when external experts are involved.”

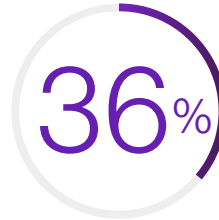
Kayla added; “It’s always a challenge in an organisation sometimes to get people to attend training. I haven’t been anywhere where classes fill up and there’s overflow, and I don’t think it’s because the training isn’t right, or the content isn’t right. People are just very busy. So, we find when we develop this in-house that people can feel it’s expendable, they tend to think we’ll run a course again.”



[†]Source: <https://www.glintinc.com/resource/employee-engagement-101/>



of employees stay in a position longer if their employer invests in learning & development[†]



of L&D professionals said increasing learner engagement is one of their biggest challenges^{††}

LinkedIn[†] stated that ‘training isn’t only a way to upskill and improve your workforce, it has also been shown to improve employee retention with 94% of employees expressing that they would be more likely to stay in a position longer if there was an active investment in their learning and development.’

In their 2020 Workplace Learning Report, LinkedIn^{††} went on to say that, ‘36% of L&D professionals said increasing learner engagement is one of their biggest challenges.’

Does running a training course without an external facilitator or provider diminish a learning experience?



Marianne James, Vice President of EMEA & Asia Licensed Consumer Products, Hasbro, believes so.



“Not having that neutral objective perspective can be a disadvantage. And without an external facilitator programme can sometimes lack structure.”



[†]Source: <https://learning.linkedin.com/content/dam/me/business/en-us/amp/learning-solutions/images/workplace-learning-report-2019/pdf/workplace-learning-report-2019.pdf>
^{††}Source: <https://learning.linkedin.com/content/dam/me/learning/resources/pdfs/LinkedIn-Learning-2020-Workplace-Learning-Report.pdf>

Challenges in measuring long-term impact and ROI

Back in 2018, **LinkedIn**[†] wrote, ‘measuring the impact of L&D programs is not an exact science, but measuring team metrics and retention rate is a great start.’

They went on to say that ‘80% of L&D pros agree that developing employees is top-of-mind for the executive team. And 90% of executives say that L&D programs would help close the gap.

But proving business value to leadership and ensuring the right metrics are being measured is challenging when “the ROI of learning” is not a simple science.’



Kayla Campbell, Pernod Ricard, highlights the challenges in measuring training outcomes.



“I’ll be honest, sometimes with in-house programmes, we don’t always take the time to look at where we can measure the impact in the long term; we’ll have already moved on to the next priority.”

Kayla shares her concerns about running commercial capability development programmes without external expertise, saying they can be insular. And goes on to explain;

“You can get a little narrow in your perspective because you are only looking in-house at what you already know.”

[†]Source: <https://learning.linkedin.com/content/dam/me/learning/en-us/pdfs/linkedin-learning-workplace-learning-report-2018.pdf>



Malcolm Pickup, AkzoNobel agrees:



‘You only know what you know. Hence, you can fall into that trap of believing that you know best, and you know everything. You’re therefore doing a mis-service to the business and to the people within it because you’re not looking outside and being as current as perhaps you could be.’



Kevin Nolan, Global RGM Director, Karo Pharma
highlighted the difference in identifying outcomes:



“Our internal programmes rarely get measured at all. This contrasts with external programmes which are built to achieve objectives such as: are we preparing for our meetings in the right way?

So, it becomes much more visible through all of our day-to-day interactions. In contrast, our internal programmes just become business as usual.”



Building a commercial capability programme with an external partner



What essential considerations should commercial leaders make when working with an external commercial capability training partner?

A structured approach

LinkedIn[†] reported that ‘59% of L&D professionals view upskilling and reskilling employees as a high priority for corporate training programs.’

While, **Mckinsey & Company**^{††} highlighted ‘L&D’s primary responsibilities is to manage the development of people—and to do so in a way that supports other key business priorities.

Mckinsey & Company went on to say that, ‘L&D’s strategic role spans five areas: 1) attract & retain, 2) develop people capabilities, 3) create a values-based culture, 4) build an employer brand, 5) motivate and engage employees’

Focusing on your team’s professional development through a well-planned, tailored structure is the most efficient way to upskill and reskill your workforce.

karo[®]
pharma



For **Kevin Nolan, Global RGM Director, Karo Pharma** having a structure is essential.



“The advantages of using an external training provider are that you get a framework of what you need to do at each stage of the programme. That means you have consistency and a blueprint for a way of working.

Many commercial capability leaders highlighted the importance of using external subject matter experts. They told us that the knowledge from experts who work with other organisations brings relevant, new ways of working and allows for training to be applied to their needs in a structured way.”

[†]Source: <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/people-and-organizational-performance/our-insights/the-essential-components-of-a-successful-l-and-d-strategy>

^{††}Source: https://learning.linkedin.com/content/dam/me/business/en-us/amp/learning-solutions/images/wlr21/pdf/LinkedIn-Learning_Workplace-Learning-Report-2021-EN-1.pdf

Expertise in training and change management

According to **Cronofy**[†]: 'training being provided by an external source can minimise existing workplace clashes between management and employees by having all team members placed on equal footing rather than adhering to company rank. It also innately has the advantage of being supplied by training and learning experts rather than a manager having to switch disciplines in order to participate. External training can also aid in breaking unhelpful company dogma and allow those in management positions to re-evaluate their own operating standards.'

Geistlich

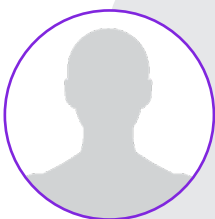


There are also practical things to consider, says
Silvia Morgan, Geistlich Pharma AG:

“

“The reality is that we have to run the business, we have lots of things on our plate that we have to do, and in fact, we are really not experts in teaching other people.

There is a big advantage in having someone external. There is a structure in the process. It has precise content, and it brings all the people together at once using a common language. Of course, those people teaching us are more professional than we could be.”



One of our experts, a **chief commercial officer** summed this up nicely:

“

“I think the upside of commercial leaders doing it themselves is that it's authentic and real, and convincing because of that. The downside is that it might not be structured very well.”

[†]Source: [https://www.cronofy.com/blog/internal-training-vs-external-training#:~:text=%E2%80%8D-,Pros,positive%20or%20a%20negative%20way\).](https://www.cronofy.com/blog/internal-training-vs-external-training#:~:text=%E2%80%8D-,Pros,positive%20or%20a%20negative%20way).)

So what about engagement when it comes to training developed with an external partner?



Kayla Campbell, Vice President, Total Talent, Diversity & Enterprise Development, Pernod Ricard, highlights:

“

“We’ve certainly seen more engagement and more attendance when we offer training that’s been facilitated or co-created with someone external.

However, **Kayla** also emphasised that sometimes it’s helpful to do both.

Using both in-house and external subject matter experts presents a great opportunity to get the best of both worlds.”



The importance of personality traits

Many commercial capability leaders we interviewed spoke of the importance of analysing personality traits. When placed together in the same room, participants demonstrate different ways of working, how they sell and interact and adapt their approach when dealing with their clients.

Forbes[†] stated ‘personality, for the purpose of the test, includes the behaviour, traits and character of an individual based on the theories developed by the psychologist Carl Jung. One of the principles of Jung’s model, “Psychological Types,” is that each of us has an innate urge to grow and part of our growth comes from understanding, individually, how we operate in the world.

They went on to say, ‘about 80% of Fortune 100 companies rely on these types of tests to build stronger, more effective teams and healthier organisations. Information from personality tests help companies better understand their employees’ strengths, weaknesses and the way they perceive and process information.’

karo[®]
pharma



Kevin Nolan, Global RGM Director, Karo Pharma confirms:

“The benefit of analysing personality traits before a learning programme is you get a mix in a room. You get a mix of styles and preferences. What it also gives the organisation is they can actually see how other people prefer to work, prefer to operate, and they can bring that into their own day-to-day working.

Understanding the motivations of different personalities helps create the right mix of people in training courses, but it’s also a vital part of the training itself.

Kevin goes on to explain its impact.

“If you consider the personality traits coming to the meeting, you can make it a workshop rather than a presentation. You’ll have people who won’t sit there silently and wait for you to finish, so you’ll need to be ready to interact.”

[†]Source: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/elenabajic/2015/09/28/how-the-mbti-can-help-you-build-a-stronger-company/?sh=27d18b5bd93c>

Collaboration leads to success



Marianne James, Hasbro, is impressed by the whole range of services offered by an external learning & development provider.

"I'm impressed by external providers who spend the time beforehand to understand my brief, my objectives, my goals. They understand where I see skill gaps and turn them into the programme I'm looking for.

This includes the planning, the role-playing, the scenario setting, the toolkits and the workbooks, which galvanise the team's thinking. It's an entirely different sophistication I've never experienced using my own HR or L&D team."



That kind of collaboration is essential in preparing a commercial capability development programme, says **Elif Canakci, PepsiCo**;

"You need to include the individual in the learning, and you need to include their line managers, so they are involved and supported."



Kayla Campbell, Pernod Ricard, is also clear that collaboration is vital,

"A good training partner lets us think about which internal subject matter experts we can leverage, allowing us to bring lots of new information we hadn't really considered."

Credibility in training programmes



Marianne James. Hasbro sees credibility in training programmes delivered by external providers:

“You get phenomenal benefits from the experience of external training providers. You also get the visibility and recognition of the programme within the organisation. If done well, you can see results from the first day after training, and we’ve had much success in that way.

For me, the external provider gives you that best-in-class view which may be more aspirational. This is how we raise the bar. It gives everyone something to aim for, as opposed to just being filtered down at a lower level.”



You get phenomenal benefits from the experience of external training providers.

Marianne James

Vice President of EMEA & Asia
Licensed Consumer Products,



Measurable impact and ROI



Kayla Campell, Pernod Ricard highlights another benefit:



“External partners really help you measure the impact of programmes. With commercial capability development, we should see the impact within the business. We should see our market share increase and better customer NPS scores.

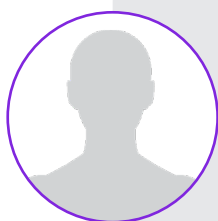
I think in the past, by doing those things in-house, we just didn't have the discipline to follow through. That's where a partner plays a key role.”



With commercial capability development, we should see the impact within the business. We should see our market share increase and better customer NPS scores.

Kayla Campbell,
Vice President, Total Talent,
Diversity & Enterprise
Development





Another expert from a **utility company with over 80,000 employees worldwide** told us:

“A training company using Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) will deliver a lasting impact on the sales team. NLP is a way of changing someone's thoughts and behaviours to help achieve desired outcomes and improve sales performance in the case of commercial capability.”

When using NLP in commercial training, this **leader** continues:

“You see immediate adoption, you start to see a change in the selling and the commercial capability approach, and then you start to see that winning culture coming into the team.”

LinkedIn's 2022 Workplace Learning Report[†] talks about how ‘strategic thinking requires strategic metrics. Even as L&D programs become more strategic and cross-functional, many L&D pros have not changed how they measure success. In 2022, the top way learning leaders are gauging the success of their potentially highly impactful upskilling and reskilling programs is the same way they've measured broader online learning programs in the past: qualitative feedback.’

LinkedIn[†] continued to say that ‘measurement methods were stagnant and that challenges like upskilling an entire workforce can't be solved with a single class — not even a really good one. This means moving beyond feedback forms and course counts. It means working collaboratively with cross-functional partners to understand the organisational impact, not just the classroom experience. And it means aligning L&D programs with business priorities — like internal mobility and employee retention.’

[†]Source: https://learning.linkedin.com/content/dam/me/learning/en-us/pdfs/workplace-learning-report/LinkedIn-Learning_Workplace-Learning-Report-2022-EN.pdf



That's ultimately what we are here to do; to build that capability and build that knowledge and commercial viewpoint for our colleagues so they can serve our customers better and further their careers."

Sharon Rai, NatWest

Diversity & Inclusion Partner,
Commercial Banking



Find your North Star

Whether you're building an L&D programme from the ground up, looking to bring in an external provider, or even adding innovation to your current program, set out a plan that's impactful for your business and employees. Identify real training needs, deliver more impressive learning experiences for today, provide real-value, deliver behavioural and cultural change that will get your leaders and employees to sit up and take notice. **'Build a culture of learning'**.[†]

The cost of replacing an employee is

50% to 250%

of their annual salary + benefits[†]



Sharon Rai, NatWest, explains that some principles remain the same whichever way you decide to run your commercial capability development programme.

"I think the starting point has to be the sense of 'what are we looking to achieve?' That may be having goals, targets, or measures in place. It means having the vision and clarity around where we want to get to and what success looks like. Having that as a North Star is important."

This embeds development plans and builds capability to enable teams to hit those goals. Measuring and reporting are then important to ensure that everything that's been put in place is working. That's ultimately what we are here to do; to build that capability and build that knowledge and commercial viewpoint for our colleagues so they can serve our customers better and further their careers."



[†]Source: https://www.elearningnews.it/_resources/images/ebook/linkedin-workplace-learning-report.pdf

Part 2

The impact of technology on sales teams



Introduction

Sales teams have faced some of the most challenging times of their careers. The global pandemic and economic shut-downs made meeting clients in person impossible.

At the same time, Zoom™, Teams™, Slack™ and other platforms have enabled new ways of working and changing how we communicate.

The way your clients communicate has also changed. As a result, expectations for virtual meetings and more innovative ways of working are increasing. At the same time, problems and patience with Wi-Fi problems, accidental mutes, and lack of expertise or how to share content virtually are wearing thin.

Not being able to use or operate a Zoom™ whiteboard or simplify a data-heavy report through visuals can hamper your sales team's reputation. Still, technology and its use is not the only challenge facing sales leaders. Society is changing too. Commercial leaders must respond to these changes and adapt before irrelevancy takes effect.

So, in this section, we look at the impact of technology and the need for greater Diversity, Equity & Inclusion.

Reputational expectations are accelerating, customer demands and a need for a greater understanding of your clients and communities.

Sales teams should represent the communities they serve—not only does this make good business sense, but after speaking to our experts we found that their clients and customers expect it too.

Commercial leaders are also voicing the need for better alignment with other cross-functional teams and organisational impact.

So, if you're responsible for commercial capability development, you've got your hands full. We asked leading peers how they were addressing these advancements to ensure their sales teams were fighting fit for years to come.

Here's what they said.

Sales techniques that are digitally fit for purpose



How are the best salespeople using technology, such as video conferencing?



For **Elif Canakci, PepsiCo**, it's clear:



“They know how to look best on the camera and how to get interaction virtually. They ask the customer questions and know how to include them.”

“

After all, **Elif** says, ‘The virtual meeting is not a version of a face-to-face meeting. You need to prepare differently and interact differently.’”



Marianne James, Hasbro, emphasises the importance of interaction:



“If you ask a lot of questions the person on the other end of the screen has to answer. So try to avoid lengthy presentations on-screen because you can't really control whether they're listening.”

“



What if there's a video call with multiple people participating?

karo[®]
pharma



“

Kevin Nolan, Global RGM Director, Karo Pharma, agrees:

“It's even more important to check in with your audience because you can't physically see them all. So, if people are zoned out you can't see unless you are prompting and constantly getting back in touch with them during calls. You need to keep your audience engaged at all times in those virtual communications because it's naturally easier for them to switch off.”

Kevin continues, “it's back to similar techniques, such as choosing an individual to respond, as long as you've tee'd them up in the right way. It's also using polls to gain interaction.

We've also focused heavily on asking people to put cameras on. We're also developing whiteboards, polls, and other collaboration techniques during their presentations to keep people engaged.”

“We enable practising in a safe environment first”, **Kevin** goes on to explain. “This could be by rehearsing it on a small call with your team before you roll it out to a customer and make a mess of it. It's also exploring how we do things differently. How do we stand apart? How can we get maximum impact for our sales team in whatever form we have?”

Developing digital skills



One global **commercial capability expert in an international water company** acknowledges that the appetite for in-person meetings has changed.

“The days have gone when I’d fly to Melbourne for one meeting. The company doesn’t want it because of the cost and environmental impact. And customers don’t want it because they don’t want to bring extra risk into the business. So now I can do it on Teams™.

They add, “having the right setup and lighting is important. For example, standing up means you’re getting the right air intake. It’s important to encourage salespeople doing a presentation to plant their feet in the right space, to not look nervous or distracted, and not to have pens in their hands.

Get your commercial teams to retain good habits like looking at the camera and making eye contact. When you’re on a video sales call, deliver your message succinctly and clearly. Practice collaborating with tools such as Zoom™ whiteboard or Mural™. You can also have some fun with a quiz app called Kahoot!™

The technology can enhance the sales process because you have extra collaborative tools that you don’t usually have in a face-to-face meeting. So, it’s obviously a different skill, it needs proper training to get people ready for it.”



It’s how to interact in that virtual way—how to position yourself, the backgrounds to use, and how to get the best experience for the people that you’re speaking to.

Malcolm Pickup,
Director, Culture and Change Management





Sharon Rai, NatWest, believes that knowing how to use new meeting technology is essential.

Understanding the functionality of Zoom™ and recognising how it can enable you to support customers better has been critical to a really good experience for customers and colleagues.

“

Zoom™ freezing and things like that can have a really negative impact. So, we've brought in the right support to make sure calls are slick and professional and we don't have technical issues.”


“It's things like looking at and speaking clearly to the camera. It's ensuring that your customer is comfortable using Zoom™. It's taking the time to get the setup right. This includes making sure you're not on mute, getting the background right, and ensuring you have good Wi-Fi. Those things are really important.”



Malcolm Pickup, AkzoNobel, agrees that running supportive programmes is important to get salespeople more comfortable with using the functionality of digital platforms, including sharing screens, presentations and videos.

“

“It's how to interact in that virtual way. For example, how to position yourself, the backgrounds to use, how to use them, and how to get the best experience for the people that you're speaking to. Next is to consider what questions to ask to really make sure that the message is landing. And make sure you're reading the body language you're seeing.”



“ Get your commercial teams to retain good habits like looking at the camera and making eye contact. When you’re on a video sales call, deliver your message succinctly and clearly.

Senior expert in learning & development

Global water company, 80,000 employees worldwide

Globally placed commercial teams

Deciding on when to go virtual and when to go in-person

Moving to video communications may be a relatively straightforward decision for some companies. For example, switching to virtual platforms can be uncomplicated if you're selling tech that can be demonstrated on a computer. But what if the products you're selling are tangible or physical, or when your product is best experienced using touch, taste, and smell—what then?



This challenge is significant for **Kayla Campbell, Vice President, Total Talent, Diversity & Enterprise Development, Pernod Ricard**.

Kayla explains why face-to-face meetings are still important and how Pernod Ricard prides itself on providing 'moments of conviviality' through its range of beverages.

"In the last couple of years, we've all had to become more adaptable to the situation" says **Kayla**. "Now that we're allowed to meet in person, how do we decide what is the right moment for face-to-face contact, and when can that happen virtually?"

We are creators of conviviality, and we believe that our mission is to unlock the magic of human connection and that's what wine and spirits are all about. That definitely means that there is a big place for in-person gatherings. But it doesn't mean getting on a plane and meeting someone for having a quick conversation, transferring knowledge, and flying back.

Surveying an account, walking into a retail store, checking out a bar or restaurant, being there for St Patrick's Day or Mardi Gras, it's in those moments that our company lives. That really can only happen in person, shoulder to shoulder with other people.

So, we've provided some guidelines to employees about when is the right time to meet with people. It should be about collaborating, brainstorming, and conviviality."

“

We've provided some guidelines to employees about when is the right time to meet with people. It should be about collaborating, brainstorming, and conviviality.

Kayla Campbell, Pernod Ricard

Vice President, Total Talent, Diversity & Enterprise Development



Smell and taste are essential senses for a beverage company. In addition, Geistlich Pharma AG's range of medical instruments makes touch and feel a critical factor when demonstrating and selling their products. Therefore, greater consideration is needed when choosing digital platforms versus face-to-face meetings.



“

It's taking the time to get the setup right. This includes making sure you're not on mute, getting the background right, and ensuring you have good Wi-Fi. Those things are really important.”

Sharon Rai, NatWest

Diversity & Inclusion Partner,
Commercial Banking



NatWest

Demonstrating physical products

'The COVID-19 pandemic has left a digital impact with **77% of sales professionals opting for video** meetings with clients and coworkers. For many products this is a worrying statistic as it is apparent that engagement must be sustained across both physical and digital platforms. An innovative blending of the two approaches is exactly the way to maximise your team's learning and earning potential.'

Geistlich



Geistlich Pharma AG's Senior Director of International Sales, Silvia Morgan explains why face-to-face meetings are still important:

"Our customers love working with their hands. So the physical part is really important. Of course, we can't do all of our contact in a physical way, but we are trying to take advantage every time we see them give to them the opportunity of using this physical product.

One of our best marketing tools is non-sterile samples. Every salesperson has non-sterile samples with them, it's the original product in a non-sterile way. Doctors can touch it, wet it, see how it performs and imagine how they would use it on a patient when they are doing their surgery.

This is really important, and we should not give up on that. We are also using those non-sterile samples at industry events. We have now started linking the virtual and physical. We provide courses, and these courses are virtual. Before the course we send them the kit to their home, so they have everything there. They have their instruments; they have our non-sterile samples, and they have a model.

They will have a virtual course and will be sitting at home at their table and using our product live in their home setting. This is an innovative way of linking virtual with physical. We will not give up on physical meetings, there are ways to use them in a mixed way."

¹Source: <https://www.lxahub.com/stories/salestech-stats-and-trends-for-2022>

But what about virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR); can these replicate the selling experience?

Geistlich



Silvia Morgan, Geistlich Pharma AG has this to say on the subject:



“I don’t really see people doing things with VR glasses yet, but maybe that is the future. I still feel at the end of the day it’s not only seeing our instruments. Touching them remains very important.”



Part 3

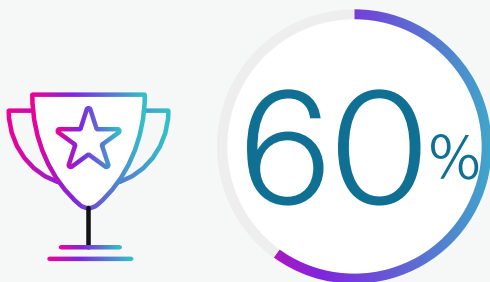
The importance of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in commercial capability teams

Diverse sales teams win more often[†]

Diversity is not a phase, and it's certainly not a buzzword. Companies with strong Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DE&I) practices have better-performing sales teams.

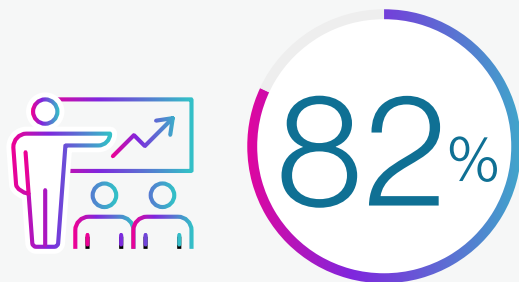
LinkedIn[†] commissioned **Forrester^{††}** to provide an independent and objective analysis on the topic of DEI in sales. Here are a few key findings from Forrester's October 2021 study[†]

A higher rate of success



of respondents stated that diversity within their sales team has contributed to their teams' success

A high level of Importance



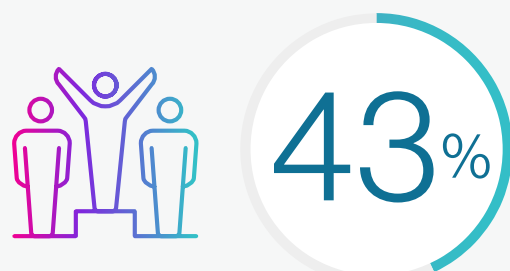
predict that the racial or ethnic diversity of their sales team will be equally or more important in the next two years.

Higher lead to opportunity rate



sales teams with leading DE&I practices have an average lead-to-opportunity conversion rate of 54%, whereas sales teams with lagging DE&I practices are at 26%.

Higher sales attainment



leading sales teams have reached 43% sales attainment for the 2021 calendar year, whereas lagging sales teams have reached 31%.

[†]Source: <https://www.linkedin.com/business/sales/blog/diversity-inclusion-belonging/how-to-hire-a-diverse-sales-team-best-practices>

^{††}Source: <https://business.linkedin.com/content/dam/me/business/en-us/amp/sales-solutions/pdf/forrester-diversity-report-2021.pdf>

The importance of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in commercial capability



“

Sharon Rai, NatWest, doesn't mince her words when it comes to diversity in commercial capability teams:

“The importance of having a diverse sales team is going to be the difference between having a high performing team and not. Diversity in a sales team will enable a diversity of thought, better representation of communities that are served and much better innovation around problem-solving, decision making and sharing best practices.

Diversity in sales teams absolutely equals high performance. Having sales teams that reflect their communities and understand the challenges of those communities is so important to us in understanding how we can serve those customers better. So, diversity to me is crucial for high performance as well as providing service to our customers in the best way possible, also being as innovative as we can be by bringing a group of diverse people together.

People often talk about Diversity, Equity & Inclusion as if it's a lot of different things, and they do mean different things. For me Inclusion is that sense of belonging, being able to be your true self at work.

Sharon continues,

“It's not having to hide parts of who you are to fit in but being able to bring your authentic-self and have a sense of belonging, have a sense of being valued, recognised, and seen. That's so important because when people feel that way, they are more comfortable with sharing their views and questioning things that they're not sure about.

In their **Diversity Drives Success report**, **Forrester**[†] reported that 'Diversity is no longer solely a compliance initiative. 2020 was a watershed moment in the USA, as consumer demand for diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I) skyrocketed. Now, US consumers are asking companies what they're doing to improve their DE&I practices, and organisations that fall short are losing business.'



I've seen this work best in the accelerator that I ran in Milton Keynes. The diversity in that accelerator was incredible, what that enabled was a really curious and engaged group of people who were keen to learn from one another.



For the entrepreneurs themselves that sense of belonging allowed them to feel empowered and to share and be open. When Inclusion is done right, and colleagues have that sense of belonging they will bring the best of themselves to work and therefore everybody benefits."



"One of the benefits of technology is that we can leverage more Diversity & Inclusion for commercial teams. I'm actually seeing that even on my own team when we recently hired our Director of Commercial Capabilities. They do not live near our Headquarters, but because of technology, that person doesn't necessarily need to live in New York."

Kayla Campbell,
Vice President, Total Talent,
Diversity & Enterprise
Development



[†]Source: <https://business.linkedin.com/content/dam/me/business/en-us/amp/sales-solutions/pdf/forrester-diversity-report-2021.pdf>



“The importance of having a diverse sales team is going to be the difference between having a high performing team and not. Diversity in a sales team will enable a diversity of thought, better representation of communities that are served and much better innovation around problem-solving, decision making and sharing best practices.”

Sharon Rai, NatWest

Diversity & Inclusion Partner,
Commercial Banking



†Source: <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/diversity-and-inclusion/diversity-wins-how-inclusion-matters>

††Source: <https://www.edume.com/blog/workplace-diversity-statistics>

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion: how have things changed since the pandemic?



Kayla Campbell, Pernod Ricard feels technology opens up opportunities for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion:

'One of the benefits of technology is that we can leverage more Diversity & Inclusion for commercial teams. I'm actually seeing that even in my own team when we recently hired our Director of Commercial Capabilities. They do not live near our Headquarters, but because of technology, that person doesn't necessarily need to live in New York.

That means we can attract greater diversity into these roles, both on the commercial team and the commercial L&D team to really make sure we are getting the right talent for Pernod Ricard. I think this idea that people need to live close to the office is dying away and as we have commercial offices across the US and Canada they can still be attached to an office. So they'll have that sense of community and can still be convivial with their co-workers, but not necessarily be attached to our HQ in New York.

Pernod Ricard has a global Diversity & Inclusion strategy and then we have an even more localised D&I strategy for North America, and even specific to Canada and the US. We have done several studies over the years, and we are proud to say we have no gender pay discrepancy within the organisation, we even have a 50/50 c-suite of male to female ratio, and we've hired more women within the commercial teams than we've ever seen before."

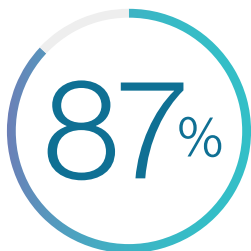


Kayla continues...

“We are certainly hiring more diverse talent too, so I think that’s one of the benefits again of being a little more open with flexibility, where people can be located, offering more hybrid opportunities, and working from home.



I think it all helps to not only bring in more diversity in terms of representation, but what we also want is a diversity of thought. So, we’ve also seen we are bringing people in from more CPG companies, from tech start-ups and all different sorts of backgrounds, and that’s only going to make us better in the future as we have that diverse thinking, especially when we apply it to the pain points and problems that we need to solve in the future.”



of the time, diverse and inclusive teams make more efficient decisions^{††}

McKinsey[†] reported that ‘analysis of data from a group of 366 companies revealed a statistically significant connection between diversity and financial performance. The companies in the top quartile for gender diversity were 15 percent more likely to have financial returns that were above their national industry median.

And the companies in the top quartile for racial/ethnic diversity were 35 percent more likely to have financial returns above their national industry median, indicating that companies that commit to diverse leadership are more successful.’

[†]Source: <https://www.mckinsey.com/-/media/mckinsey/business%20functions/people%20and%20organizational%20performance/our%20insights/why%20diversity%20matters/diversity%20matters.pdf>

^{††}<https://www.forbes.com/sites/eniklarson/2017/09/21/new-research-diversity-inclusion-better-decision-making-at-work/?sh=1dcc0fd94cbf>



I think it all helps to not only bring in more diversity in terms of representation, but what we also want is a diversity of thought.

Kayla Campbell,

Vice President, Total Talent,
Diversity & Enterprise
Development



Pernod Ricard

Key takeaways

In this white paper, we've sought to help you navigate the future of commercial capability.

How can you influence the ability of sales teams to improve performance? How can you ensure they make the most of technology? And how can Diversity, Equity & Inclusion be embraced?

We believe that raising the bar in each of these areas will ultimately improve the profitability of your business.

What are the key takeaways and lessons you can learn from this research and the insight gathered?

Commercial capability shouldn't be left to sales managers alone

Our experts saw advantages in sales managers getting on with leading and coaching their teams. But overall, they highlighted significant potential downsides:

Skills

As **Elif Canakci**, Training Core Skills Lead Europe, PepsiCo puts it, **“while our managers could be brilliant at management, they need more support for commercial capability.”**

Adaptability

Outdated sales techniques could be damaging if applied to modern buying behaviours.

Relevance

Programmes or frameworks that were previously successful may be irrelevant or unsuitable for the buying behaviours or needs of your clients and teams in your current company.

ROI & Impact

Internally created programmes often face challenges around real value, ROI and impact measures.

Focus

Sales leaders often focus development efforts on individuals, rather than on team performance.

Want to develop programmes yourself?

Ask yourself these four questions

There were mixed feelings about programmes developed without external support. Our experts advised asking questions. **Here's our pick of the best:**



1 Do you have the time?

As **Malcolm Pickup** warned, developing programmes is “**extremely labour intensive from start to finish.**” So consider the opportunity cost if you're thinking about a programme without external support.



2 Can you develop a framework?

Kevin Nolan emphasised the importance of having a “**framework of what you need to do at each stage of the programme.**” Can you ensure there's consistency and a blueprint for ways of working throughout your learning programme?



3 Can you effectively measure outcomes & ROI?

Kayla Campbell summed up concerns about measurement, telling us. “**we don't always take the time to look at where we can measure the impact in the long term.**” Without measurable impacts, you may struggle to demonstrate the effectiveness of training and justify your next programme to senior stakeholders.



4 Do you have the skills?

Developing and delivering commercial capability programmes requires specialist skills. Do you have these skills at your disposal? **Silvia Morgan** told us, “**the reality is we have lots of things on our plate and we are really not experts in teaching other people.**”

Why bring in outside experts?



Ability to train and apply personality traits

Our experts agreed that taking into account personality traits was a big factor towards successful training.

Kevin Nolan states, “if you consider the personality traits coming to the meeting, you can make it a workshop rather than a presentation.”



Get results

Marianne James told us she appreciates, “external providers who spend the time beforehand to understand my brief, my objectives, my goals. They understand where I see skill gaps and turn them into the programme I’m looking for. Done well, you can see results from the first day after training.”



Measure impact

Kayla Campbell told us, “we should see our market share increase and better customer NPS scores. That’s where a partner plays a key role.” We agree - the best way to preserve your budget and enhance your reputation is to be able to demonstrate efficacy.



Get credibility, engagement & Impact

Time and time again we were told by our experts that the presence of external experts lent **credibility to programmes**, created interest and achieved active participation and engagement by participants.



Find your North Star

We like **Sharon Rai’s** ‘North Star’ principle to understand what you want to achieve, having a goal and purpose, and ultimately outlining success measures. Sharon says, “**having a vision and clarity of what success looks like, having that as a North Star is important.**”

How do you develop your sales teams to make the most of tech?

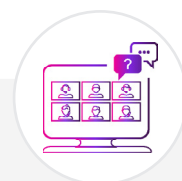
We asked our expert leaders about the impact of technology on sales and commercial teams. We talked about the rise of video conferencing, one of the significant shifts in how sales and commercial teams conduct meetings. **Here are our top four tips from these discussions with our experts:**

Engage, engage, engage



Buyers are more likely to get distracted online than in person. So develop techniques that salespeople can apply at each turn, such as asking questions frequently during meetings, shortening presentations, and making decks visually impactful, also encourage attendees to turn on cameras when possible.

Become an online collaboration expert



Collaboration tools such as Zoom™ whiteboard are becoming increasingly important for client participation and engagement during meetings. Avoid lacklustre client meetings by getting teams skilled and fighting fit for online collaboration.

Get the basics right



Strong Wi-Fi, clear audio, good lighting and excellent eye contact on a video call could be a competitive advantage when meeting with clients while working remotely. Avoid the exhausted “you’re on mute” by getting a great meeting set up ahead of calls.

Make good choices



Face-to-face or Virtual meetings? Although we’ve seen changes in how meetings are conducted, choosing between face-to-face or virtual should be carefully considered. Think about your product, what you want the client to do, the expected outcome and how you wish the client to interact with products.

What's the importance of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion?

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DE&I) are vital for sales. **Sharon Rai's** assertion struck us, “**the importance of having a diverse sales team is going to be the difference between having a high performing team.**”

Our leaders saw technology as a means to support DE&I. Leaders and teams are no longer tied to physical locations, creating more significant opportunities to attract greater diversity to roles.

However, we didn't conclude from our experts a widespread, provable shift in sales and business success due to sales and commercial teams working from home (WFH) or employing hybrid work patterns. More so, they told us there'd been a greater need for DE&I—and a sense of community.

Some stated that the effectiveness of 'working from home' (WFH) had mixed results. For example, in some cases resulting in pay cuts and widening pay gaps, some of our leaders said that 'diversity' was often

anecdotal rather than statistical or measured.

It was clear across our panel of experts, however—developing teams with 'diverse thought' and teams that represent the communities they serve needs much more work.

Overall, we've learnt that commercial capability plays a vital role in shaping sales and commercial teams' ability to perform.

Commercial capability leaders must carefully consider who conducts and supports development programmes, how technology can impact and improve performance, and how sales and commercial teams can and should represent the communities they serve.

We hope this guide has helped you further down your commercial capability journey.



Expression
for Growth

Expression for Growth is a values led organisation that is purpose driven with a core specialism to develop knowledge, skills and behaviours in commercial capability through our globally recognised award-winning Precision solutions.

We help people enjoy performing at their best.

www.expressionforgrowth.com
marketing@expressionforgrowth.com