When Sales Enablement Fails:

Discover the Pitfalls That Can Sabotage Your Program

Steve Preston | CMO | Qstream

Agenda

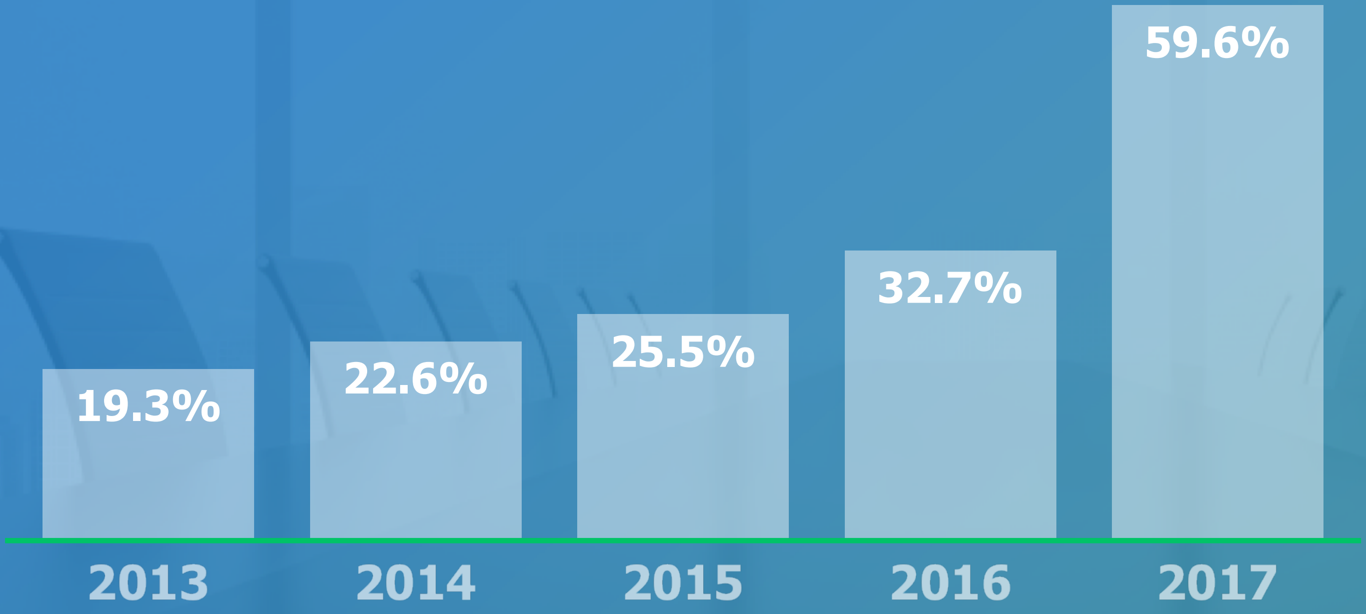
- What has changed?
- Why is this role so challenging?
- How can you gain control?
- How can you develop a strong business case?
- How do you enlist the right stakeholders?

First … A Disclaimer.

- Every company is different.
- Every sales process is different.
- The content for this presentation was developed from multiple discussions with industry analysts, customers and peers combined with my own personal experience in a variety of software companies.
- There are lots of potential "pitfalls." I'll only have time to cover a few that I've found most challenging.

A GROWING DISCIPLINE

Sales Enablement Is Going Mainstream



COMPANIES with
DEDICATED SALES ENABLEMENT
ROLE, PROGRAM or FUNCTION

Additional 8.6% plan to launch sales enablement within 12 months.

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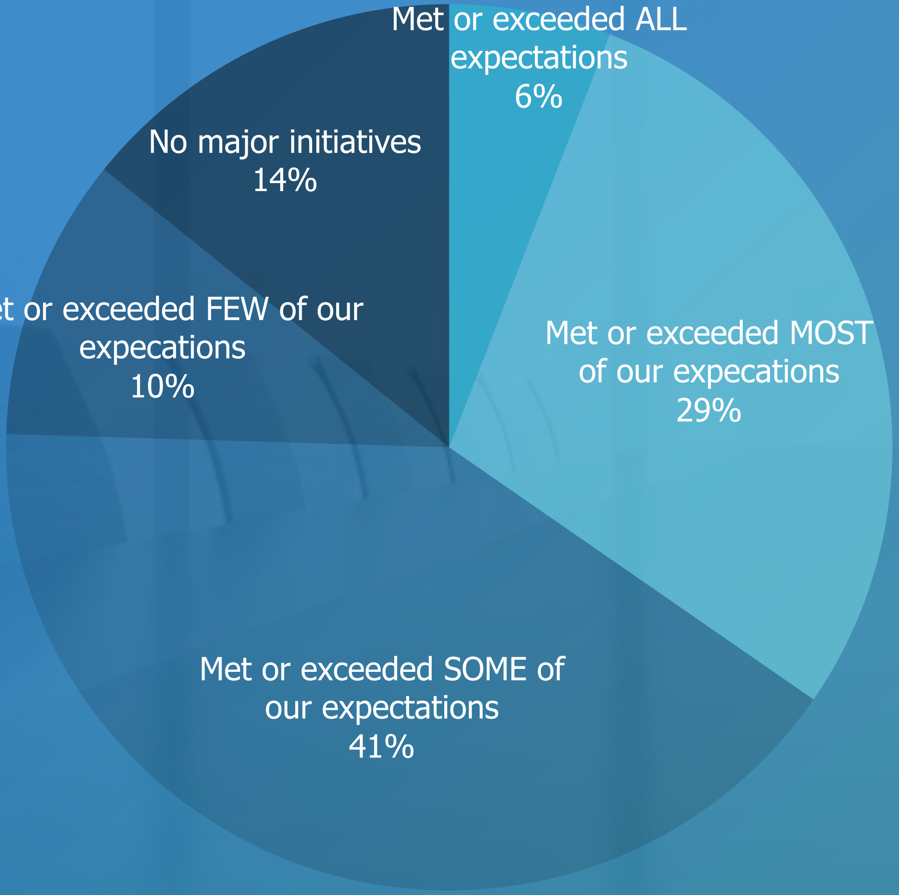
OUTCOMES OF SALES ENABLEMENT PROGRAMS OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS

More Failure Than Success



65%

fail to exceed most expectations

24%

wash out altogether

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PROJECTS OFTEN FAIL

You’re in Good Company

70%

of projects fail
(source: 4PM)

40%

of projects meet three key goals (schedule, budget, and quality)
(source: IBM)

75%

lack confidence in project success
(fuzzy business objectives, out-of-sync stakeholders and excessive rework)
(source: Geneca)

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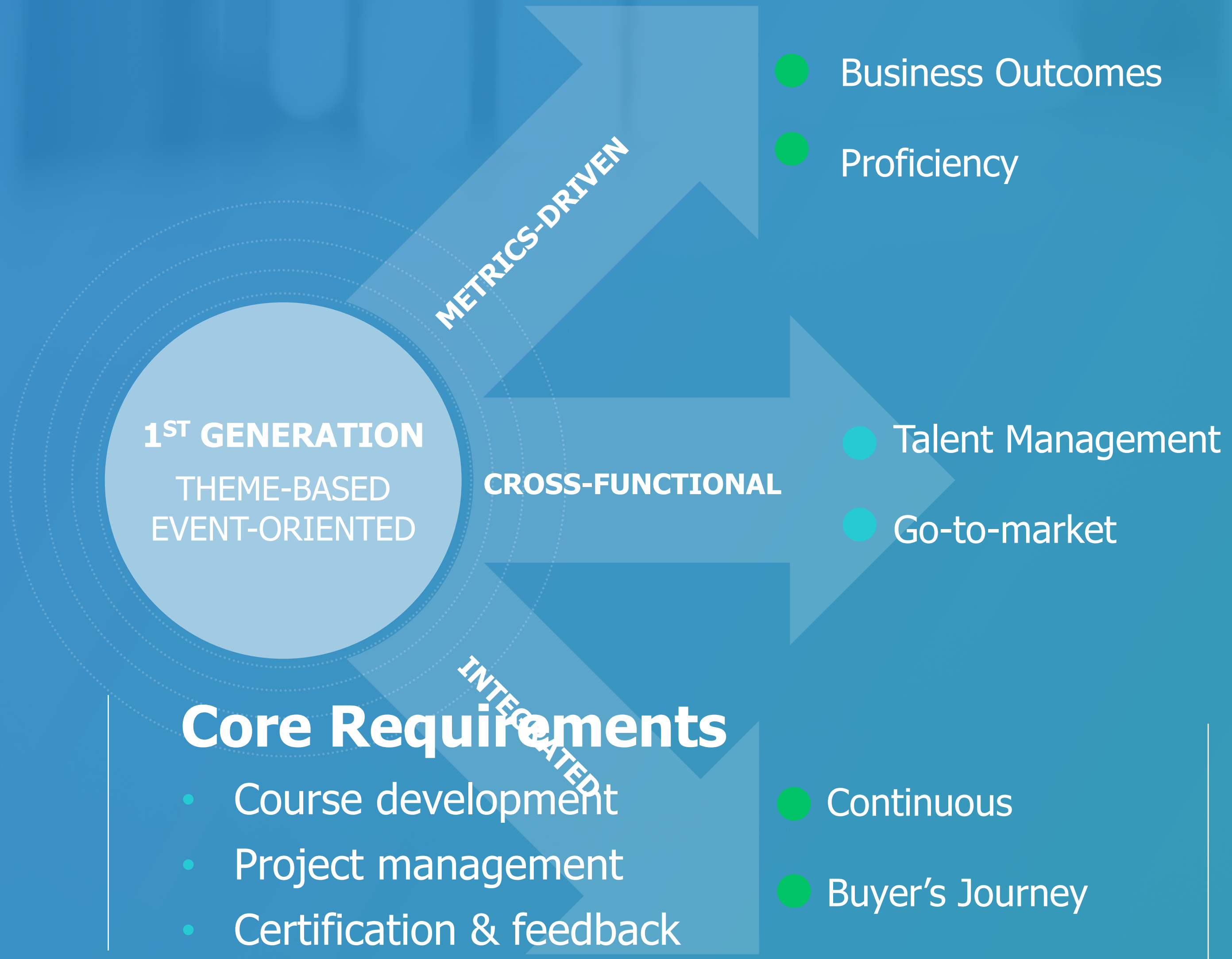


1ST GENERATION

THEME-BASED
EVENT-ORIENTED

METRICS-DRIVEN

- Business Outcomes
- Proficiency

CROSS-FUNCTIONAL

- Talent Management
- Go-to-market

INTEGRATED

- Continuous
- Buyer's Journey

Core Requirements

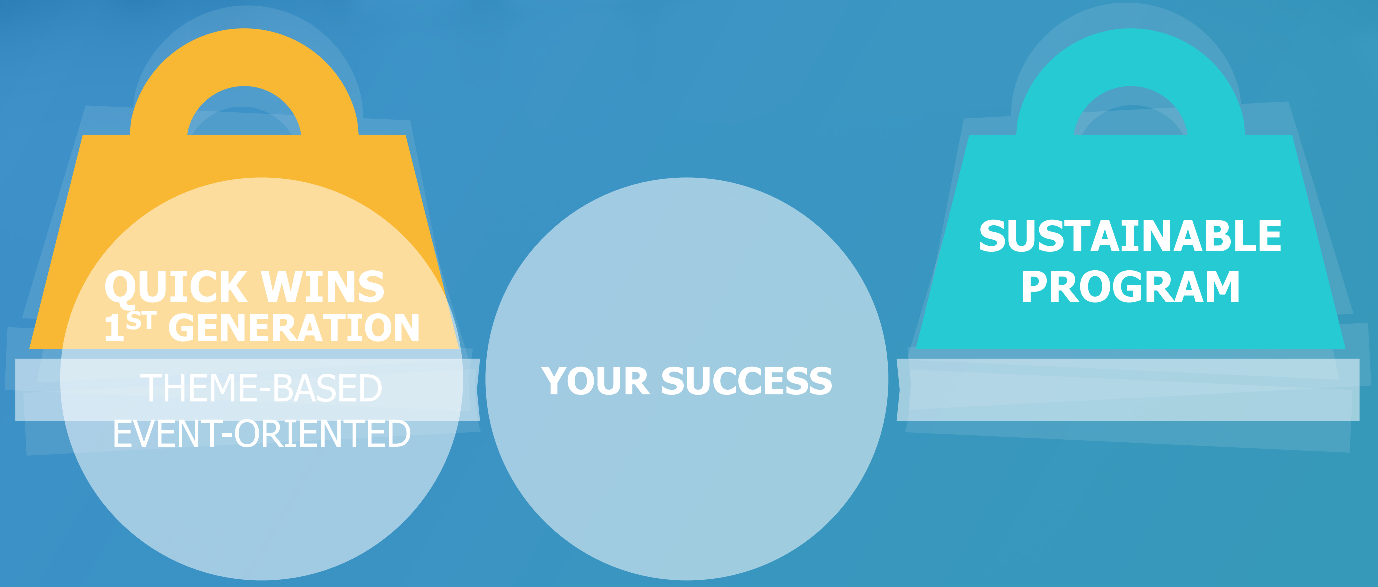
- Course development
- Project management
- Certification & feedback

New Requirements

- System and process integration
- Cross-functional influence
- Business metrics

Finding Balance

Speed versus Scale



QUICK WINS
1ST GENERATION
THEME-BASED
EVENT-ORIENTED

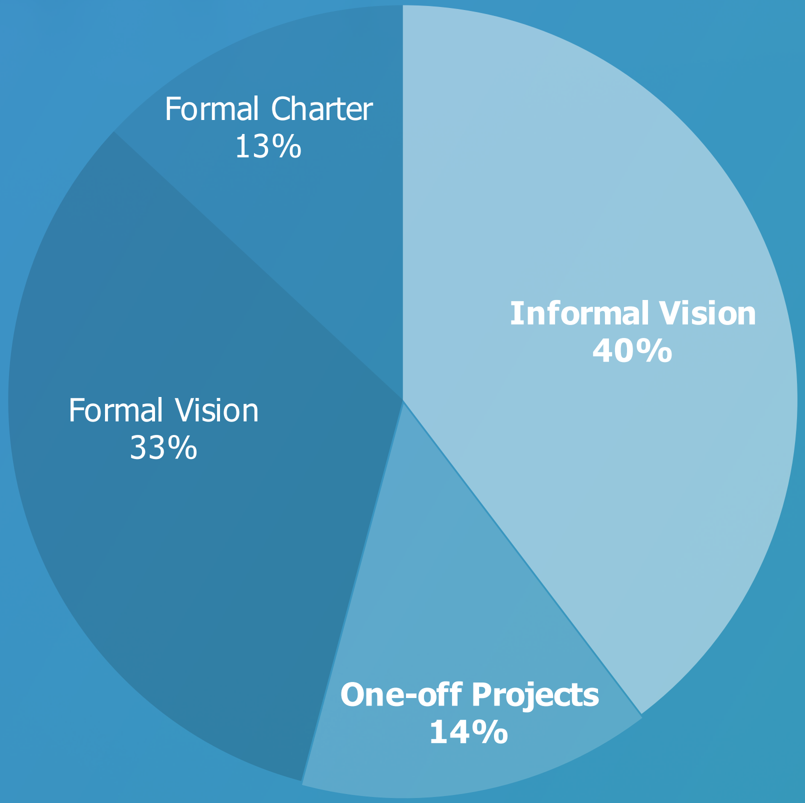
YOUR SUCCESS

SUSTAINABLE PROGRAM

Pitfall #1

Getting Sucked Into the Quick-win Vortex

How do you strike the right balance between tactics and sustainable success?



13.1%

Operate under a formal charter

54.2%

Set priorities on an ad-hoc/informal basis

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ATTENDEE POLL

How would you describe your company's current process for setting sales enablement goals and objectives?

☐ Loosely defined
Ownership and accountability are unclear

☐ Defined & documented
Approved by sales leadership

☐ Defined & documented
Developed cross-functionally
Aligned with sales objectives and corporate/strategic goals

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AVOIDING PITFALL #1

Building Your Sales Enablement Charter

WHAT

BUSINESS OUTCOMES

WHO

STAKEHOLDERS & SPONSORS

HOW

PROGRAM

WHEN/WHERE

DELIVERY

A sales enablement charter is linked to a **27.6%** quota attainment improvement.

Source: CSO Insights

GAIN CONTROL

Building Your Sales Enablement Charter

WHAT

BUSINESS OUTCOMES

WHO

STAKEHOLDERS & SPONSORS

HOW

PROGRAM

WHEN/WHERE

DELIVERY

A sales enablement charter is linked to a **27.6%** quota attainment improvement.

Source: CSO Insights

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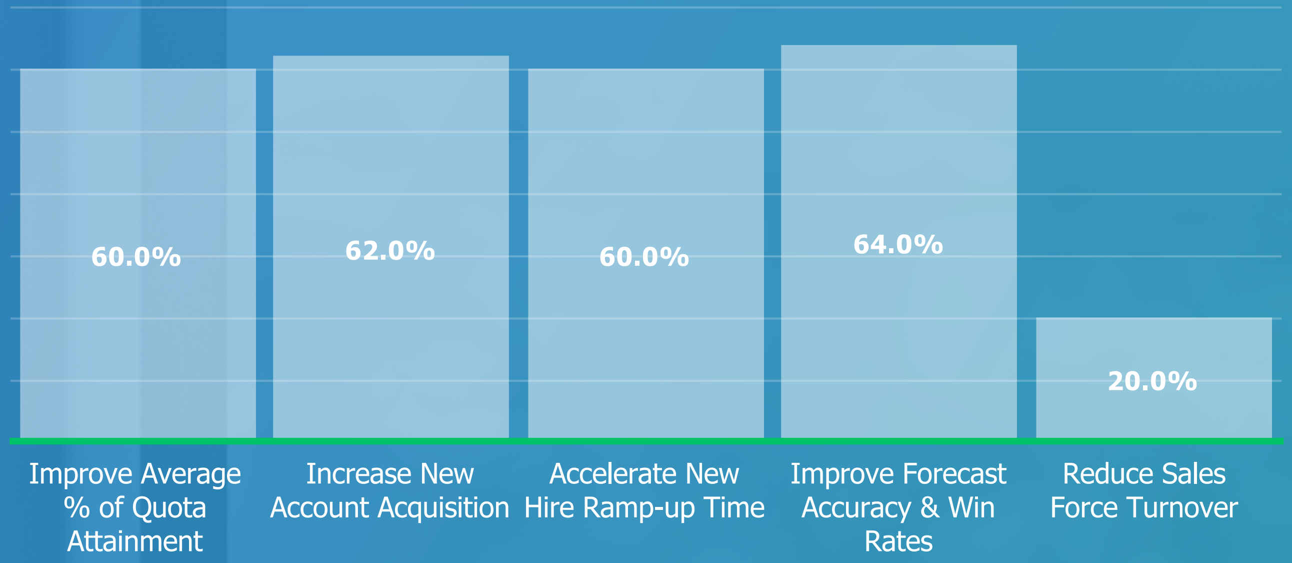
Pitfall #2

Agreeing to Metrics You Can't Prove

How do you make a direct connection between Sales Enablement & Sales Results?



Source: Qstream/CSO Insights Webinar Poll:
"Sales Enablement at the Crossroads: New Research on the Promise & the Pitfalls"

> "Many people fail to see the link between work that doesn't move business metrics and a small budget."

Ben Cotton, Sr. Manager, Sales Enablement

HubSpot

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MEASURING SALES ENABLEMENT

The Missing Link

PRODUCTIVITY → **PROFICIENCY** → **PERFORMANCE**

#

e.g., MEETINGS PER WEEK

%

e.g., DISCOVERY SKILLS

$

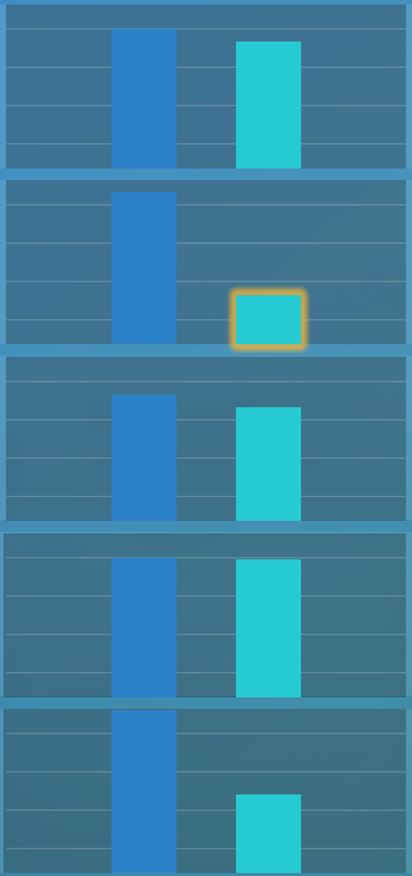
e.g., PIPELINE VALUE

INSIGHT THAT DRIVES ENABLEMENT

Sales **PROFICIENCY:** A Key Business Metric

PRODUCTIVITY X PROFICIENCY = PERFORMANCE

STAGE 1	Emails, calls, scheduled meetings, etc.	Qualify
STAGE 2	Discovery, Elevator pitch, etc.	Discover
STAGE 3	Value proposition, handle objections, etc.	Evaluate
STAGE 4	Business Case, ROI, Proposal, etc.	Negotiate
STAGE 5	T’s & C’s	Win



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INSIGHT THAT DRIVES ENABLEMENT

Proficiency Connects Activities to Outcomes

	ACTIVITIES	**PROFICIENCY** Scores		Key **PERFORMANCE** Indicators
EARLY	• Call/email prospects • Opening conversations • Discover buyer/influencer	• Buyer persona • Industry trends • Discovery	**30%**	• Lead conversion (#, %) • Opportunity conversion (#, %, $$)
		• Elevator pitch	**50%**	
MIDDLE	• Discover pain • Build business case • Differentiate solution • Address objections	• Discovery • Value proposition • Features and functions	**80%**	• Product win/ Vendor of choice (%, $$)
		• Competition	**80%**	
LATE	• Propose solution • Negotiate price • Manage T's & C's • Get the PO	• Pricing • Packaging/bundling	**70%**	• Close rate (%, $$) • Average Price/Deal Size ($$) • Time-to-close (◷)
		• Negotiating	**70%**	

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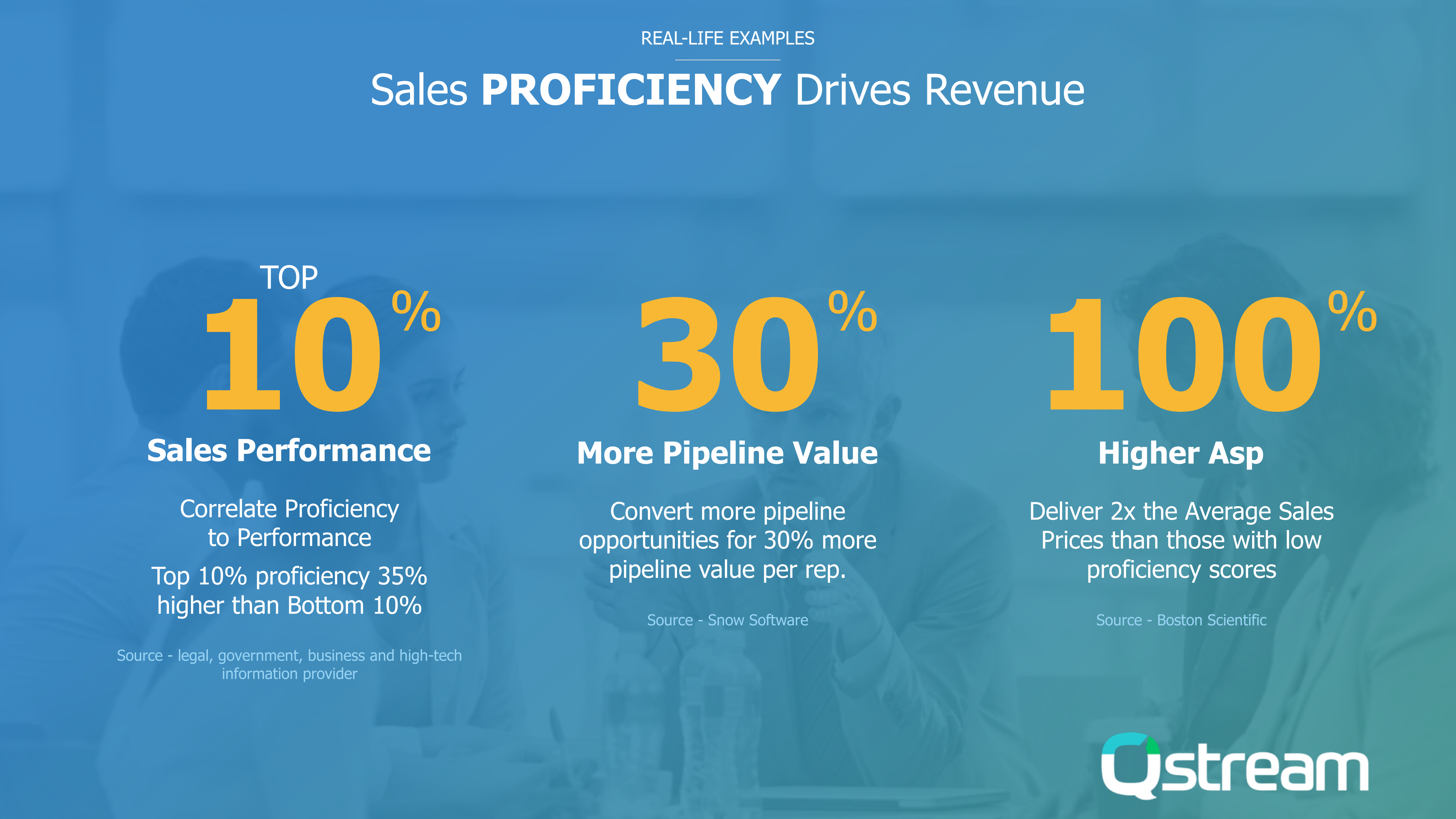


REAL-LIFE EXAMPLES

Sales **PROFICIENCY** Drives Revenue

TOP

10%

Sales Performance

Correlate Proficiency
to Performance

Top 10% proficiency 35%
higher than Bottom 10%

Source - legal, government, business and high-tech information provider

30%

More Pipeline Value

Convert more pipeline opportunities for 30% more pipeline value per rep.

Source - Snow Software

100%

Higher Asp

Deliver 2x the Average Sales Prices than those with low proficiency scores

Source - Boston Scientific

AVOIDING PITFALL #2

Best Practices

Build on the Metrics that Matter Most

- Understand your sales process - Identify choke points that generate risk
- Develop strategic and collaborative relationships with Sales Operations and Sales Leadership

Secure Buy-in and Commit to Success Metrics

- Tie PROFICIENCY to specific activities and performance metrics
- Get agreement on Correlation versus Causation
- Include Proficiency measurement in your executive dashboards
- Commit to proficiency gains with estimated performance gain

Balance Quick Wins with Long Term Gains

- Avoid “Science Experiments”
- Mix-in quick wins
- Over Communicate and Manage Expectations

GAIN CONTROL

Building Your Sales Enablement Charter

WHAT
BUSINESS OUTCOMES

WHO
STAKEHOLDERS & SPONSORS

HOW
PROGRAM

WHEN/WHERE
DELIVERY

33% of project failure
is primarily due to ineffective communication.

(Source: Project Mgmt. Institute)

Pitfall #3

Failing to Lead Cross-functional Teams

How do you secure and maintain buy-in with resources you don’t control?

SUCCESS

Who will create your content? What’s in it for them?

Who will block you?

Who’s toes are you stepping on?

Who will feel excluded?

Who are your most powerful sponsors?

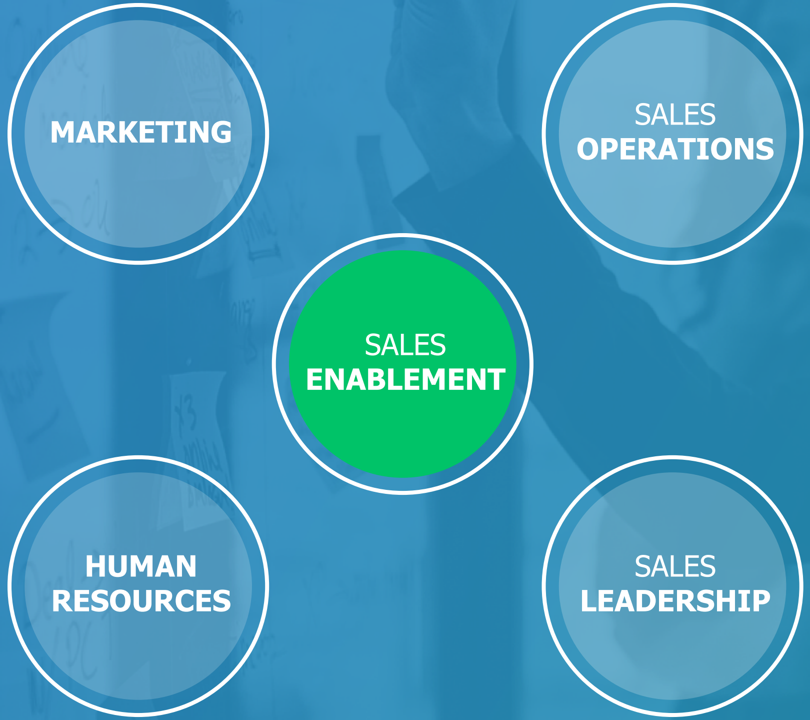
Who will break the tie?

Common Mistakes

- Poor communication
- Ignoring unofficial power
- Failure to recognize influence
- Dictating options
- Overlooking local stakeholders

AVOIDING PITFALL #3

Planning for Success

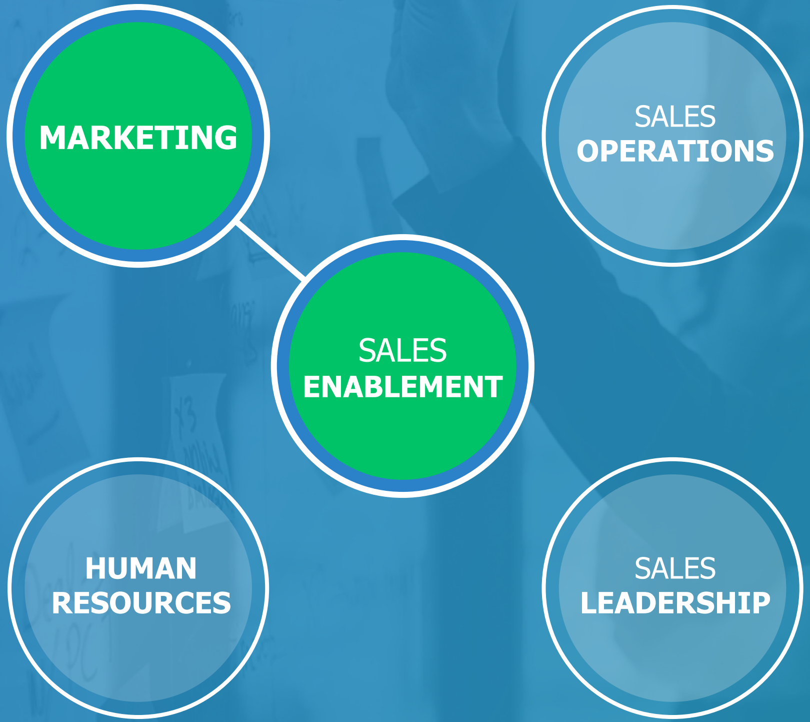

MARKETING
SALES OPERATIONS
SALES ENABLEMENT
HUMAN RESOURCES
SALES LEADERSHIP

You’ve identified your metrics and quick wins.
What Role Will **Your Stakeholders** Play?

- Human Resources – personnel supplier
- Marketing – content supplier
- Sales Operations – integrator
- Sales Leadership – legitimacy

AVOIDING PITFALL #3

What’s In It For Marketing?


MARKETING
SALES **OPERATIONS**
SALES **ENABLEMENT**
HUMAN RESOURCES
SALES **LEADERSHIP**

- Reports to head of product or marketing
- Centered on launches, strategy and enablement
- Focused on GLOBAL product revenue
- Spearhead marketing campaigns
- Compete for sale ‘mindshare’
- Have a stake in pipeline conversion
- Invested in creating tools that help sales win
- Frustrated by lack of adoption
- Overwhelmed by field requests for tools, analysis and support

ATTENDEE POLL

Which statement best describes your relationship with Marketing?

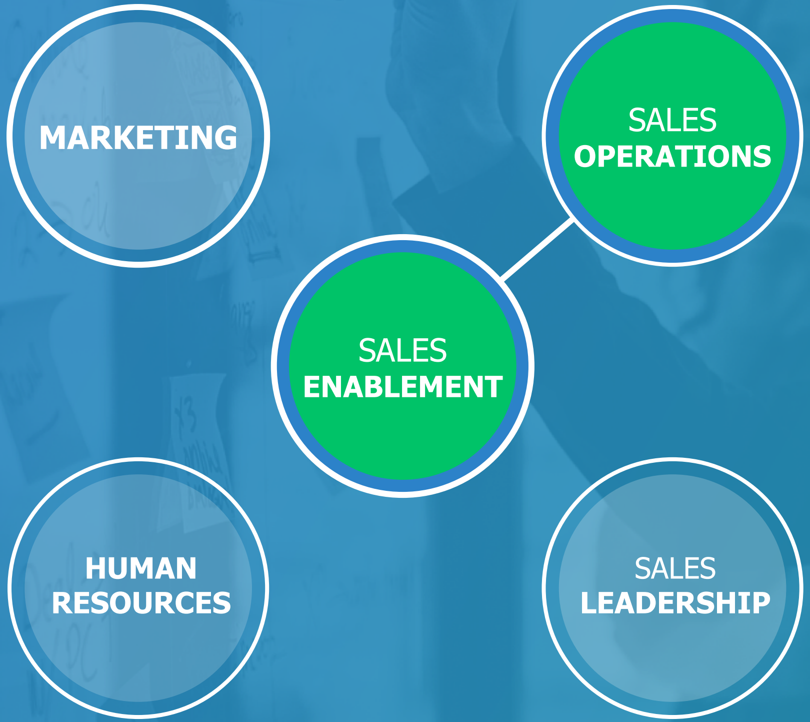
☐ Responsibilities are unclear or redundant. Unclear which function is responsible for developing, delivering and managing sales assets.

☐ Some interlock in place - accountabilities followed at least half of the time. A few initiatives established between the two functions.

☐ Interlocked from the earliest stages of planning throughout the execution of the go-to-market strategy, including sales asset management (SAM).

AVOIDING PITFALL #3

What's In It for Sales Operations?


MARKETING
SALES OPERATIONS
SALES ENABLEMENT
HUMAN RESOURCES
SALES LEADERSHIP

- Focused on forecast, funnel, territories and compensation
- Responsible for technology stack
- Deep into CRM
- Frustrated by data quality
- Frustrated by sales behavior
- Needs insight to drive better performance

ATTENDEE POLL

Which statement best describes your relationship with Sales Operations?

☐ Responsibilities for both functions unclear or redundant.
Unclear how programs are executed between the organizations.
No metrics required to track sales enablement efforts.

☐ Interlock in place - accountabilities followed some of the time.
A few initiatives established between the two functions.
Sales Ops data is leveraged to direct enablement efforts.

☐ Interlock in place - accountabilities are followed all of the time.
Interlocked throughout go-to-market planning and execution.

AVOIDING PITFALL #3

Best Practices

Plan For Your Plan

- Once you've agreed on success metrics and drafted a plan – identify your stakeholders
- Create a list of sponsors, suppliers, advocates and blockers with desired outcomes for each group
- For change management - factor in fear of change
- Develop a communication plan for each stakeholder group

Be Proactive, Inclusive & Transparent

- Meet with your stakeholder groups early – have the difficult conversations up-front
- Look for win/win scenarios

Communicate Your Plan

- Set expectations early
- Document processes, policies, etc. and over communicate
- Celebrate wins – prove that you can deliver on promises

KNOWLEDGE RETENTION
COGNITIVE (HARD) SKILLS
PREFRONTAL CORTEX

“WHAT”
Product Specs., Pricing, Elevator Pitch, etc.
Learn by observing, watching, repeating

+

BEHAVIOR CHANGE
BEHAVIORAL (SOFT) SKILLS
BASAL GANGLIA

“HOW”
Active listening, discovery, handling objections, etc.
Learn through short sessions with real-time feedback

Our software uses science and data to help sales reps get better, faster.

Based on Harvard University research. Proven in more than 20 clinical trials.

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USER SUCCESS

Market Share & Profitability

ALLIED
BARTON®
SECURITY SERVICES

↑ **30%**
Quota Attainment

↑ **3%**
Gross Profit

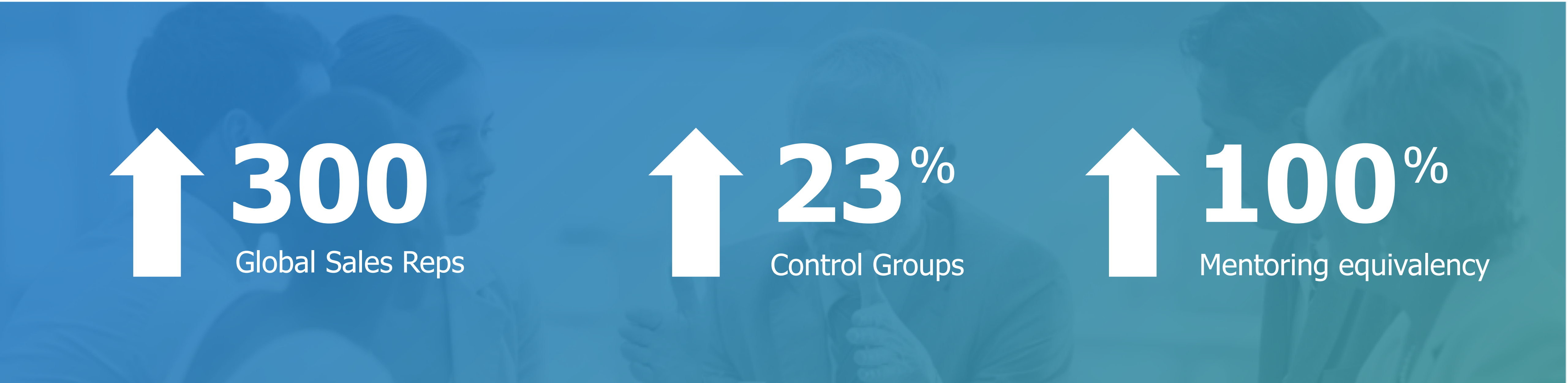
↓ **12%**
Reduced Turnover

USER SUCCESS

Messaging Alignment

"Using Qstream to embed the new messaging techniques, our reps have increased their fluency around key technical issues and overall messaging about Snow Software's benefits, ***enabling them to double the number of 'first meeting' prospects that take a second meeting.****"*

Clark Green, Senior Director, Global Partner & Sales Enablement, Snow Software



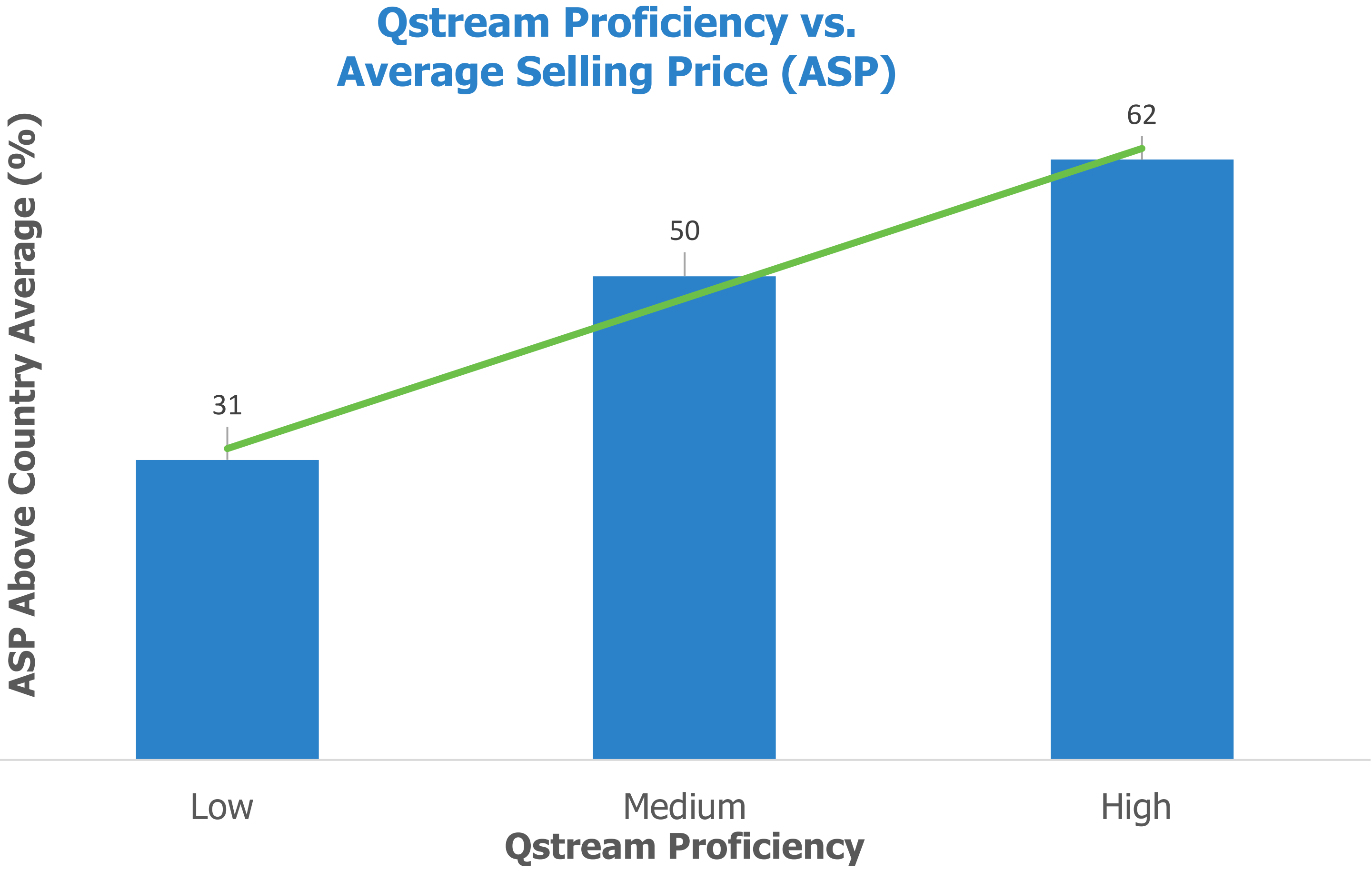
↑ **300**
Global Sales Reps

↑ **23%**
Control Groups

↑ **100%**
Mentoring equivalency

USER SUCCESS

Proficiency for Medical Device Supplier



Sales reps with high Qstream proficiency scores have twice the Average Selling Price (ASP) than those with low Qstream proficiency scores.

Boston Scientific

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Questions?

Thank You!

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