Administration

Overview:
Selling is a life skill that goes far beyond the business world. Building The Sales Machine is a beginner’s course in three acts. The first act focuses on teaching students the foundational basics of selling. The second act teaches higher level concept involved in managing and running sales teams. The final act closes with sales at the executive level of running a business. This course is designed to push students out of their comfort zones so that they not only learn important selling tools, but also learn how to apply these tools in the real world. Students will be taught and tested throughout the half semester with a series of guest lectures and projects that aim to immerse them in the world of selling. Outside of the curious, students interested in starting their own companies or entering fast growing businesses in sales, marketing, or customer success roles should take this course.

Students will leave the class with:
- Tools needed to become a professional seller of anything (ideas, products, services, etc.).
- Understanding of the higher-level concepts involved in selling including management, tooling, training, negotiating, and forecasting.
- Deep knowledge of how they can use what they learned to better whatever enterprise they may find themselves in in the future.
- Comfort level in approaching and qualifying potential customers that is rare to find in inexperienced sellers.
- Bravery to accept rejection and grow from handling objections so that they may continue to be fearless in approaching leads and selling their products.

Course Materials
Canvas contains everything you need for the course, including class readings, assignments, and other related materials.

Grading
This course requires mostly individual effort. You will need to complete appropriate readings and assignments before attending class. During class, you are required to participate and be engaged. We do a number of role plays throughout class and you should be prepared to participate.

- Class Attendance & Participation 40%
- Individual Assignments 30%
  - Reading Assignments
- Individual Assignments 30%
  - Non Reading Assignments

Every individual assignment will be graded with equal weight in the 30% individual grade

All students will be required to turn in all assignments, and late assignments are never permitted – NO EXCEPTIONS.
- To prosper in this class, you must attend every class physically or virtually and complete all assignments before the start of class on the due date.

Columbia Business School
A Note on Class Participation

We will be spending a considerable amount of time in class discussing theories and concepts as well as putting theory into practice via role playing and scenarios. Everyone should contribute over the course of the semester. Here are some points to keep in mind regarding classroom participation:

- **More than one unexcused absence will result in a grade decrease.**
- You cannot be shy in selling. Ask questions, participate, and most importantly, what you take from this class will be what you put into it. This will allow you to get the maximum amount out of this class and will help you in the future.
- Work together. For some of our in-class work that requires breaking up into teams and breakout rooms, get together and discuss the best course of action. It will get you used to working as a team within selling, which can be crucial for being successful.
- Be constructive about feedback. Much of selling involves getting over a fear of the discipline. Provide constructive criticism but support your classmates.
Lesson Overview & Details

**NOTE: We do not include specifics on dates and times. Lessons are meant to be high level. For a full syllabus corresponding to a specific semester with actual lesson dates please reach out to Professor Brown or Professor Kinerk.**

Lesson 1: Becoming an Individual Contributor – Course Introduction, Making A Sales Call, Sales Prospecting & Top Of Funnel Activities.

In these classes, we will learn some strategies about how to effectively make a sales call. This can help you with your sales success, as a cold calling strategy and script tailored to the customer gives a prospect a higher chance of investing in your product. Students will learn how to accept rejection properly and build a narrative for their product. We will follow most basic concepts in the consultative method of selling with these classes. Students will learn how to find qualified leads and leads that are the most interested in a certain product at a certain time. This presents a better chance for sales prosperity, and minimizes time wasted by calling people who do not need your product. Students will understand how to build an ideal customer profile, buyer personas, and sales qualification frameworks that work.

Lesson 2: Becoming an Individual Contributor – Demoing, Evaluating, Closing & Lower Funnel Activities.

Selling two different products effectively may take two completely different sales strategies. In these classes, students will learn how to differentiate their sales strategies based on the actual product they are selling, to help them be as effective as they can within their sales strategy. Students will learn how to do a proper demo, how to evaluate a prospect’s true level of interest, and the critical points of how to close a prospect using various frameworks. We will again follow most basic concepts in the consultative method of selling with these classes. Early classes taught students how to do things using minimal technology, but now we will learn how to make a business more efficient by using software developed just for that purpose. Students will learn about CRM, marketing automation software, and other types of efficiency software many businesses use.

Lesson 3: Growing into A Manager – Sales Forecasting, Pipeline Basics, & Manager Presentation Basics.

Moving beyond the individual contributor level it is important to have realistic sales expectations within a company. It gives a good estimate of where the company aims to be after a measurement period, while also setting goals for individual team members. Then, after the time is up, the company and team can evaluate their past performance to see what needs to be improved. Students will learn about inputs and outputs associated with delivering sales forecasts, what activities matter most, and how do develop a logical and effective pipeline. We close these lessons on how to present data and information effectively to superiors and subordinates and discuss conducting sales meetings.

Lesson 4: Growing into A Manager – Sales Training & Sales Hiring.

Columbia Business School
As students they move away from selling themselves, they will need to understand how to train others. Sales training can be the lifeblood of repeatable success in any company. Students will learn about sales training concepts and ideas in use at small, medium, and large companies. Hiring and managing is an important component of sales that goes hand in hand with training. In these lessons, students will learn the elements of success for hiring individuals and managers. Students will understand the process from creating a job spec to scoring candidates and picking specific elements and attributes that make a successful salesperson. In addition, students will understand how to run basic processes for hiring. The lessons will close with management, incentive structures, and terminations.

**Lesson 5: Running A Company – Organizational Design & Aligning Your Revenue Organization.**

After four lessons, students will have been immersed in becoming an individual contributor as well as a manager for their organization. We will move to the highest level of sales in this lesson and think through the various types of selling models of organizations. Students will learn about concepts like transaction, inside, outside, and channel sales organization and how to distinguish what works and does not work for companies. Students will also learn how organizations change depending on the stage of the business. In addition, key to the success of any organization is the alignment between marketing, sales, and customer success. Students will begin to learn how these organizations interact and work together. Concepts like “SLAs” and alignment documentation as well as thinking around hand offs between business units will be key to learnings in these classes.

**Lesson 6: Running A Company – The Data Driven Sales Executive, Closing Concepts, & Lessons Learned.**

As a company grows, the sales velocity equation takes shape and becomes the lifeblood of any organization. Success is quite simply measured by this set of metrics. Students will build on their forecasting classes and begin to learn the details of the sales velocity equation and becoming a data driven sales manager. They will see fast growing companies in consumer and business landscapes that are relevant to their lives and how they stack on the sales velocity equation continuum. We will then pause as class ends and walk through everything learned throughout the semester. Students will have the chance to also questions and discuss any additional concepts they would like to cover before conclusion.
Non-Reading Assignments

**NOTE: We do not include specifics on dates and times. Assignments are meant to be high level. For a full syllabus corresponding to a specific semester with correct assignments and pacing please reach to Professor Brown or Professor Kinerk.**

Formatting Guidelines

All assignments should be double spaced and written in 12-point font with one-inch margins.

Week 1 - Cold Calling Assignment.

Call businesses in the area and ask them questions about their company. You should ask about their successes, means that they use to help them sell their products, and some things that hinder their success (competition, location, etc.). Call as many as it takes until five answer the survey, and take account of their name, phone number, company name, and time you called them. Organize the information clearly and submit it in an orderly fashion. This is not a participation assignment, you will be graded based on the content of your questions, as well as your organization and script.

Week 2 - Sales Playbook Assignment Part I.

Using the learnings from our classes to date, build out a basic sales playbook for a company of your choice. Students should complete at least the modules that have been taught in class (compelling narrative, prospecting, demo, evaluate, close, sales process map, sales technology). You should submit your progress over two weeks for full credit on the assignment.

Week 3 - Sales Playbook Assignment Part II.

Using the learnings from our classes to date, build out a basic sales playbook for a company of your choice. Students should complete at least the modules that have been taught in class (compelling narrative, prospecting, demo, evaluate, close, sales process map, sales technology). You should submit your progress over two weeks for full credit on the assignment.

Week 4 - Sales Forecasting Assignment.

Using the data from class, write up three one-page summaries on the Account Executives we discussed. We are looking for your analysis and understanding of what the key issues for that particular seller were. This does not need to be exhaustive and can be one paragraph per seller. Following this, complete the fourth scenario from the “NewCo Sales Forecasting Exercise” in the Toolkit folder. The summary should be no greater than one page long and should cover the specifics laid out in the document.

Week 5 - Sales Hiring Assignment.

Using the company you chose, choose a sales role that needs to be filled at the company (can be SDR, AE, CSM, Sales Manager, or equivalent roles). Create the Ideal Hire Profile and write a
job description for the role. Then find 3 candidates on LinkedIn that would be a good fit and write 3 bullet points on why you chose them. Compile your IHP, JD and candidates with bullet points into one document.

**Week 6 - Sales, Marketing, & Customer Success Alignment Assignment.**

Using the company you choose, write up an SLA using publicly available information. You can do this between any component of the organization (i.e. sales <-> marketing or sales <-> customer success). It is likely that you will need to map the organization on LinkedIn and see whether or not they have sales, marketing, business development, and customer success/customer service functions.
Reading Assignments

**NOTE: We do not include specifics on dates and times. Reading material is meant to be high level. For a full syllabus corresponding to a specific semester with correct reading and pacing please reach out to Professor Brown or Professor Kinerk.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Post-Class Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Becoming An Individual Contributor – Making A Sales Call</strong></td>
<td>Read syllabus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Becoming An Individual Contributor – Sales Prospecting**                    | Ideal Customer Profile Mapping Basics  
                             KMBS Case Study (HBS)  
                             Value Based Founder Stories                                                                 |
| **Becoming An Individual Contributor – Sales Differentiation, Methods, & Strategies** | Developing Qualification Criteria (SPC)  
                             Social Selling Case Study (HBS)  
                             Popular Sales Methodologies                                                                       |
| **Becoming An Individual Contributor – Sales Technology Stacks**              | Implementing Sales Automation (HBS)  
                             2017 Startup Sales Stack Report  
                             Pitfalls Of Sales Personalized Sales (Bain)                                                       |
| **Growing Into A Manager – Sales Forecasting & Pipeline Basics**              | Anticipating Demand & Forecasting Sales (CU GSB)  
                             Time Series Sales Forecasting (HBS)  
                             Forecasting Methodology & Basics                                                                     |
| **Growing Into A Manager – Sales Training 101**                               | Role Playing As Sales Training Tool (HBS)  
                             Sales Training Manual Outline (Brooks)  
                             Keys To Successful Coaching & Training                                                              |
| **Growing Into A Manager – Manager Presentation Basics & Sales Ethics**       | Visualizing Sales Metrics  
                             First 100 Days As A Sales Director  
                             Successful Sales Meetings (Entrepreneur)                                                            |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Growing Into A Manager – Hiring &amp; Managing A Sales Team</td>
<td>The Sales Hiring Formula (HBS / Podcast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ultimate Sales Managers Guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running A Company – Organizational Design In Sales</td>
<td>Is Your Sales Org Good Or Great?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Sales Performance Wheel (RAIN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 Models Of Effective Sales Team Org</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running A Company – Sales, Marketing, &amp; Customer Success Alignment</td>
<td>Ending The War Btwn Sales &amp; Marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 Reasons You Need A Sales &amp; Marketing SLA (Podcast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running A Company – The Sales Velocity Equation</td>
<td>Sales Velocity Equation (TAS Group)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CSO Insights Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How Fast Can Your Company Grow (HBS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running A Company – Closing Concepts &amp; Lessons Learned</td>
<td>No reading this class</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Columbia Business School
**Additional Reading Material**

Roberge, Mark. *The Sales Acceleration Formula*

Dixon, Matthew. *The Challenger Sale*

Brafman, Ori. *Sway*

Johnstone, Keith. *Impro: Improvisation and the Theatre*


Cialdini, Robert. *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion*

Cespedes, Frank. *Aligning Strategy and Sales: The Choices, Systems, and Behaviors that Drive Effective Selling*

Hughes, Tony. *The Joshua Principle*


Peterson, Erik. *Conversations That Win the Complex Sale: Using Power Messaging to Create More Opportunities, Differentiate your Solutions, and Close More Deals*

Baumgartner, Thomas. *Sales Growth: Five Proven Strategies from the World’s Sales Leaders*
Frequently Asked Questions

Can I audit the class?

Yes. We take a small number of auditors each semester. You will be required to do all of the homework and we kick people out after two weeks if we do not see them participate. Email Professor Brown or Professor Kinerk and they can get you set up.

I am a GSB alumnus can I audit the class?

Yes. MBA alumni are allowed to audit courses as long as there are open seats in the class after enrollment and you do all of the work. You will be required to join a team for the final project so only showing up to two or three classes will not work. Email us and we can get you set up.

Do you allow companies to work with the students on sales related projects throughout the semester?

Yes. We enjoy this work and have done it many times. For more information, please reach out to Professor Brown or Professor Kinerk.

I was unable to get into your class due to bidding options and it is not offered as a wait-list option. What should I do?

There are no guarantees but adding yourself in during the add/drop period has worked for some students. Email Professor Brown or Professor Kinerk for details on class location and syllabus so you can be prepared.

I am interested in speaking to your class. How do I go about making that request?

Email Professor Brown or Professor Kinerk for details. We have a number of speakers each semester and enjoy having practitioners speaking to our students.