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**7 STEPS TO SALES FORCE TRANSFORMATION
Driving Sustainable Change in Your Organization**

By Warren Shiver and Michael Perla

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OVERCOME RESISTANCE AND TRANSFORM YOUR SALES FORCE

**In 7 STEPS TO SALES FORCE TRANSFORMATION, Experts Shiver and Perla
Provide Essential Guidelines That Will Make The Difference
Between Success and Failure**

A successful sales force transformation can mean increased revenue, increased sales productivity, and reduced cost of sales. But up to seventy-five percent of attempted transformations fail. According to sales experts Warren Shiver and Michael Perla, the root of the problem is two-fold: salespeople are notoriously reluctant to change, and all too often, even when the sales department transforms successfully, the rest of the organization fails to keep up. In their new book, **7 STEPS TO SALES FORCE TRANSFORMATION: Driving Sustainable Change in Your Organization** (Palgrave MacMillan/January 2016), Shiver and Perla provide their proven strategy for achieving holistic, sustainable change by overcoming resistance and incorporating all parts of the organization. They include examples from many well-known companies such as Coca-Cola, Amazon, and Thomson Reuters.

“Salespeople, by and large, are independent and entrepreneurial. If you try to change them, you will likely learn that most are intrinsically resistant,” write Shiver and Perla. But this does not mean successful transformation is out of reach. The authors have decades of experience helping companies transform their sales teams. Based on their own work, as well as on original quantitative research and interviews with dozens of

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sales leaders, their seven-step method enables organizations to assess needs and readiness for change, and to design a winning program. The steps are:

- Understand What is Motivating the Need for Change - Without powerful motivation, change is impossible.
- Develop Your Sales Transformation Vision - The more clearly you articulate your vision of success at the start, the less time you will spend fixing miscommunication, misalignment, and employee disengagement later on.
- Develop Your Case for Change – You must articulate the value proposition, develop executive sponsorship, gain buy-in from the sales team, and equip sales managers to lead the change.
- Build Internal Support - Engage the support of relevant departments from human resources to IT to marketing.
- Design Your Roadmap - Carefully assess current gaps and make sure that you develop appropriate metrics and measurement.
- Implement Your Transformation - Successful implementation lies in updating the sales strategy and structure; placing the right people in the right roles; deploying processes and tools to prepare the team; and measuring and communicating results.
- Sustain the Transformation – To avoid reverting to the status quo, implement ongoing development via short videos or one-page checklists; maintain the measurement and metrics used during the transformation; and continue open and ongoing communication.

At the heart of the authors' approach is overcoming salespeople's natural resistance. "You must handle a sales transformation effort just as you would a hard-fought sales campaign – but, in this case, the campaign is focused internally," Shiver and Perla explain. Gaining buy-in from the sales team is critical. "They will look to top performers and opinion leaders as models. Not everyone will be open to a new way of thinking, though, and even top sales performers may need to be let go if they fight the change," assert the authors.

It is also critical to recognize that salespeople will resist an effort that gets in the way of making their numbers. "Salespeople won't devote hours out of the field or away from

their customers to training, self-paced learning, or change workshops,” the authors explain. Therefore, any change effort must acknowledge the necessity for the sales organization to continue to close business.

Buy-in from senior leadership is another essential. Sales can’t be an island when it comes to successful transformation. “You can’t be successful selling if you can’t keep the promises you made to customers,” the authors maintain. For example, when Coca-Cola wanted to transform its sales force, the entire distribution system needed to change as well to support the transformation.

7 STEPS TO SALES FORCE TRANSFORMATION includes powerful insights from many of the sales leaders the authors interviewed, along with examples from transformations the authors helped execute. Change is always challenging. But when it comes to sales force transformation, the obstacles can be enormous. **7 STEPS TO SALES FORCE TRANSFORMATION** is a must read for sales and business leaders who want to modernize their sales force and achieve optimal results.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Warren Shiver is Managing Partner and founder of Symmetrics Group. His passion is helping companies and individuals improve their sales performance and capabilities. He has led sales transformations for organizations such as: Savvis, JDSU, Intercontinental Hotels, Central Garden and Pet, Thomson Reuters, Choice Hotels, Precision Aviation Group, and many others.

Michael Perla specializes in providing actionable insights to marketing and sales organizations to help them increase pipelines, win ratios, and productivity. He has sold and led projects with the Global 50 to Fortune 1000 companies including: Hewlett Packard, IBM, Avaya, Qwest, Express Scripts and IMS Health, among many others.