



Aligning Sales, Marketing & Product Development Efforts for Dramatically Improved Results

by Ron Snyder

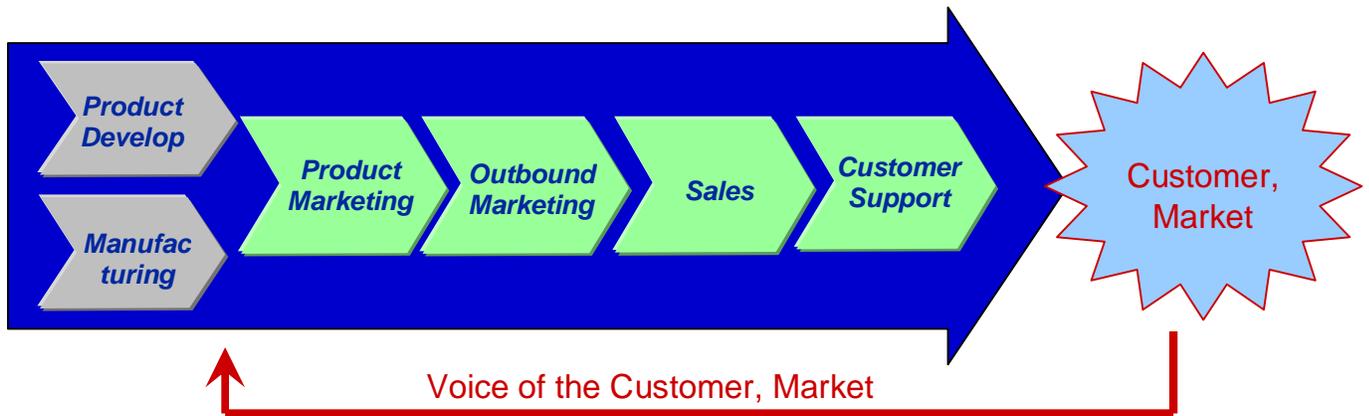
“When there is no common direction and clarity regarding how functions work together, It is virtually impossible for any organization to achieve its full potential.”

Does your organization struggle with:

- ◆ Developing and bringing the right new products to market in a timely fashion- capitalizing on a window of opportunity?
- ◆ Entering or creating a new market segment?
- ◆ Competing more effectively in a highly competitive market?

If so, this article can provide insight into the key steps to tune up your revenue-generation engine... greatly enhancing the success of the “market requirement- to - customer satisfaction” process by aligning the efforts of sales, marketing and product generation.

Aligning for Results™



Graphic #1: Aligning the functions in the Revenue-Generation Process and ensuring the “Voice of the Customer, Market” is heard.

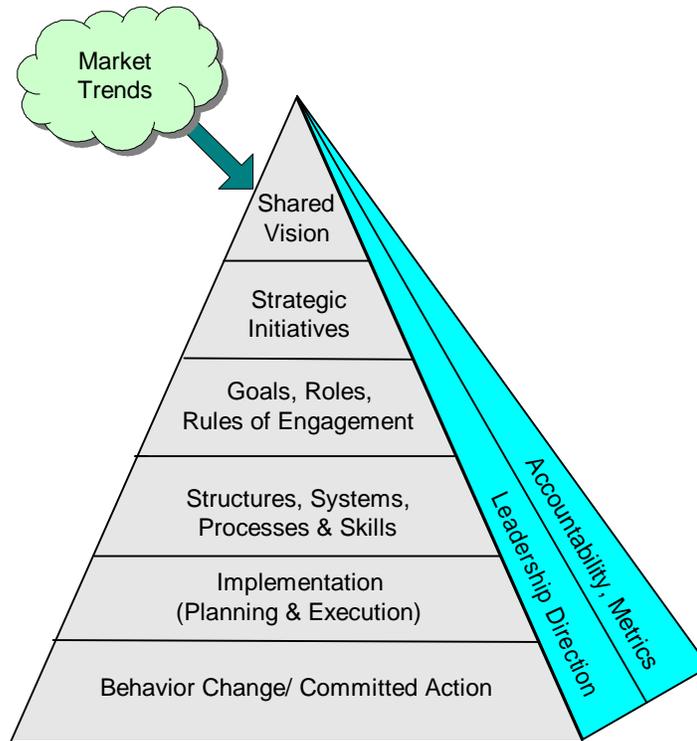
This accelerates:

Market Requirement to
Idea Generation to
Product/Service Creation to
Happier Customers... and
Better Business Results!



The Seven Key Elements of Success

Answer the questions below each Success Element and assess how well aligned your organizations is.



Graphic #2: The Pyramid of Successful Alignment

The Seven Elements that must be aligned for enhanced productivity and success

Rate your organization on the elements below on the following Scale: 1-10; 1= no/disagree strongly; 5= neutral; 10= yes/ agree strongly

1. Creating a Shared Vision

- a) *Do you have a common strategic direction that everyone involved in the “product-generation-to-sales-success” process can articulate and explain why it is important?*

Without a shared vision, each function tends to focus on performing vs. their goals and metrics- rather than the goals of the organization. This makes it more difficult to perform critical cross-functional activities, such as new product introduction, new market entry or competing in a highly competitive market. It is important that the vision drive or respond effectively to the key trends in the marketplace- i.e. emerging needs of market, new technology and new regulations.

2. Identifying & Executing the Strategic Initiatives

- b) *Is there a clear strategy/ set of strategies driving the organization?*



Regardless of how effective the organization is, there are always a few issues that, if resolved, would have a big impact on results. Creating a cross-functional initiative provides the focus and support necessary to respond to these kinds of challenges. It is important that the involved parties have a common view of the issue, the goal and how they will work together to produce the targeted results.

3. Aligning Goals, Roles and Rules of Engagement

- c) *Does a lack of aligned goals and clear roles and rules of engagement across the functions involved in the “product-generation-to-sales-success” process cause the organization to miss important deadlines or market requirements or incur significant cost over-runs?*

Having functional goals aligned with that of the organization and reducing conflicting roles and responsibilities greatly reduces redundancy and gaps in cross-functional efforts. This eliminates a lot of waste, rework, missed opportunities and finger pointing, providing dramatic cost-savings. In addition, this can make the organization significantly more effective at executing critical strategies to; for example, increase market share, sales and/or profits.

4. Providing Structures, Systems, Processes and Skills

- d) *Is the organization’s productivity and ability to execute plans and strategies suffering due to lack of support structures, systems, processes or skills?*

Once the first three elements are in place, providing the needed support structures enables people to be significantly more effective and efficient. It also demonstrates the organization’s commitment to the vision and initiative and thus boosts morale. Further, this enables consistency and the necessary information flow across people and functions.

5. Inspiring Committed Action

- e) *Is the strategic direction translated to clear, actionable objectives for people across the organization to execute?*
- f) *Are people passionately engaged and executing their tasks as quickly and well as possible?*

Sample Results

The consulting intervention clarified roles, responsibilities and rules of engagement between internal functions and key industry partners. The work on balanced goals and metrics illuminated new metrics and processes that were needed to enhance the group’s already good results.

“The consulting provided us a context to improve the way we manage our internal and external partnerships. This experience enabled us to produce important results more efficiently.”

- Vice President,
Strategic Market
Development/
Synopsis



Ultimately, nothing happens until the people doing the work take the necessary actions to produce the intended results. The objective of the seven success elements is to provide a clear, common objective and strategic path and the necessary support for people to do what is needed to realize the objective.

6. Establishing effective Accountability, Metrics and Rewards

- g) *Are there clear metrics that support the organization's goals?*
- h) *Is there a consistent system for motivating and monitoring progress and course-correcting quickly when necessary?*

Even though we all know that 'what gets measured is what gets done', there are still many cases in which the measures at each level of the organization do not reflect the organization's goals and vision. Also, many organizations need more clear and consistent structures of accountability to encourage the appropriate actions and provide early warning to enable quick course-correction.

7. Maintaining on-going Leadership Direction

- i) *Are functional goals or political agendas getting in the way of organizational results?*

Throughout the process, leadership must be actively involved. This includes setting direction, communicating it on a regular basis, establishing the pace and being a role model. Without this, people may pursue their own or the current direction until they see proof that the organizational direction is to be taken seriously.

What can we do to dramatically improve our results?

1. Identify Areas for Improvement

It is important to take an honest look at the current situation. Identify which of the seven elements your organization is strong in and which you are weak in.

2. Get the appropriate people involved

Involve the appropriate people in the process to get the needed perspectives to create a compelling vision/direction, make the approach robust and ensure the necessary support to execute the plan and produce the intended results.

Ron Snyder

For the past 18 years, Ron has consulted with technology-based companies to accelerate business results by improving sales & marketing effectiveness and other cross-functional productivity. Companies he has worked with include large, established companies such as Hewlett-Packard, Cisco Systems, Agilent Technologies, Synopsys, Siemens, and Philips, and rapidly-growing companies including NetSuite, Exodus Communications, Adobe and others.

Prior to his current role, Ron spent 11 years at Hewlett-Packard. His responsibilities included worldwide, marketing and program management, bringing new products to market, entering new markets, and leading sales teams.





3. Take Action

To produce the best results, it is important that all seven elements are addressed. Create a plan of action and begin implementing. As you move forward, you can fine-tune the plan.

Should we use outside help?

You may feel that your organization knows your organization and market better than an outside party. This is true. However, an external process facilitator can provide the following value:

- ◆ **An Experienced Consultant/ Facilitator**
It is important to work with consultants that have experience guiding organizations in establishing the seven Elements of Success and managing the changes necessary to be successful.
- ◆ **An Unbiased Perspective**
Having no other agenda than to enable the organization to produce the best results possible enables us to give candid, impartial feedback and recommendations.
- ◆ **Leaders can put their full attention on the process**
Working with consultants who have guided many organizations through the process enables the leaders to be full participants in the process, rather than having to be both participant and facilitator.

Sample Results

The consulting team helped the client achieve significantly increased sales results from National Accounts by aligning the teams who sold to these accounts.

“They were very effective in enabling us to work through a critical stage of acquisition integration. They helped us clarify how we integrate into national teams, from two very different cultures. Ron helped us find a new business model which supported our collective best practices and produced greater alignment. The resulting effect was analogous to: $1 + 1 = 3$.”

- Vice President,
National Accounts/
Siemens

Breakthrough, Inc.

Breakthrough Inc. is a sales and marketing consulting firm focused on enabling primarily technology-based businesses to align their Sales, Marketing and Product Generation efforts for Breakthrough Results. This greatly enhances their ability to bring the right products and services to market in a timely manner and compete successfully in challenging marketplaces. See www.breakthrough-inc.com.

To contact Ron Snyder, President of Breakthrough, Inc. to discuss aligning your organization for dramatically improved results, call 650-508-0622 or send e-mail to rsnyder@breakthrough-inc.com.