



Selling in Uncertain Times



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Introduction

Due to the unknown nature of COVID-19 and its global economic impact, when we return to our offices and “business as usual” will be less important than what “business as usual looks like” in the future. Along with the health precautions and guidelines that companies of all vvvcomes the ripple effect of a full industry cultural shift. The internal culture at your company has surely evolved from the day you made your first sale, but it hasn’t changed quite like this.

COVID-19 has changed a lot about the way we live, some of these changes have been anticipated and others have been adopted swiftly and without warning. One change that no one could have predicted is the shift in company culture brought on by organizations being forced to adapt to the virus. How companies respond to this massive culture shift will define how they succeed in business moving forward.



How Sales Culture is Changing

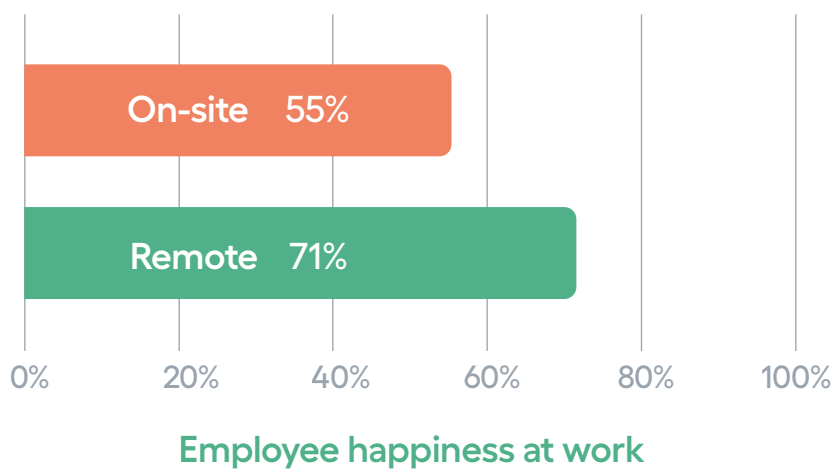
The future of sales culture is remote. Before COVID-19 touched down in our communities, the transition to fully remote sales teams had already begun across industries, and around the globe. Now, due to the wake of COVID-19, remote selling is here to stay.

Practically every aspect of your sales organization will need to become more digitally savvy in order to stay relevant (and cost-effective). Managers will need to learn how to coach and manage remotely, sales team leaders will use new software to recruit and train new team members, and sales representatives will need to adapt to innovative sales technology in order to be in a position to drive future success.



Companies are abandoning “business as usual”

Before COVID-19, did you have a culture of command and control at your office? Were you all working a classic 9-5 schedule, on-site, Monday through Friday? This rigid schedule was the norm across industries, for decades. The most visible shift in company culture is the idea of what it means to be “at work.” The work-from-home policy your company adopted at the start of state-en-



forced stay at home orders should not be tossed out the window now that states are reopening.

Instead, create a new flexible remote work policy for your employees that prioritizes not only their health,

but their productivity and happiness as well. According to [Owl Labs' State of Remote Work Report](#), remote workers say they are happy in their jobs 29% more than fully on-site workers. In the past decade, we have seen a significant increase in remote work. Now that COVID-19 has forced companies who hadn't yet adopted this growing trend to catch up, many are realizing that their employees are not only just as productive when they are able to work from home, but more at ease as well.

Sales teams have redefined what it means to collaborate

Collaboration is the lifeblood of any high-functioning organization, although it is often open to the interpretation of individual managers. Before COVID-19, managers were able to get away with promoting collaboration and “open communication” without turning those words into action. Now, due to the force of the global pandemic, those words are being put to the test. With a fully remote workforce, there is nowhere to hide. Employees used to believe that the work they did alone was more important to their personal success than the work they did as part of a team.

While working from home has made workers more physically independent, they have leaned on their team members during this time more than ever, and have realized that the work we do together is more powerful than what we accomplish alone. This forced decentralization of knowledge has placed collaboration in the forefront of managers' minds. Either the teams they are leading are rising (and surpassing!) the many challenges they have had to face, or they are sinking under the weight.

“My mindset now is that this is a great opportunity for me to not only grow as a sales professional, but as a professional. In the morning I write down three targets that I want to accomplish. Because the more wins you get as a human, the more you will appreciate that day.”

— Morgan J Ingram, Director of Sales Execution
& Evolution, JB Sales Training

Metrics for Measuring Remote Selling

As you move through this ebook, you will be delivered the remote sales and sales management best practices to adopt as you adapt your company to life after COVID-19. Adapting to a new remote-friendly lifestyle means you will need to shift your expectations for your team. However, just because you won't be able to work right next to your team everyday, doesn't mean the sales productivity at your organization should decrease. Before we dive in, here are the new metrics your remote sales team should be monitoring:

① Call volume

As a member of a remote sales team, your call volume can be directly indicative of how much you are engaging with customers. With the face-to-face customer engagement deemed obsolete, monitoring your call volume and that of your entire team will keep you all accountable. An [integrated phone system like Aircall](#) is crucial for monitoring your sales team's call volume and performance.

“During this time, connect with everyone you ever prospected, every client you ever signed, and that will pay dividends for you your entire career.”

— Jeremy Donovan, SVP Sales Strategy
& Operations, Salesloft

② Revenue generation

Of course, there are many different avenues of revenue generation for your company. When working as a member of a larger sales team, it is important to monitor the revenue generation of each individual sales representative. By keeping an eye on this data, you will be able to monitor how well your team is thriving in a remote-based sales environment.

③ Prospecting techniques

Now that your sales team is fully remote, chances are the vast majority of your outreach activities have followed suit. Every month, check in on how well your prospecting techniques are performing. Surely there will be a learning curve in this department, as consumers learn how

to patronize your new remote sales team, but by closely monitoring your outreach efforts you will be able to anticipate tactic shifts and strategize as needed. By keeping an eye on this data, you will be able to monitor how well your team is thriving in a remote-based sales environment.

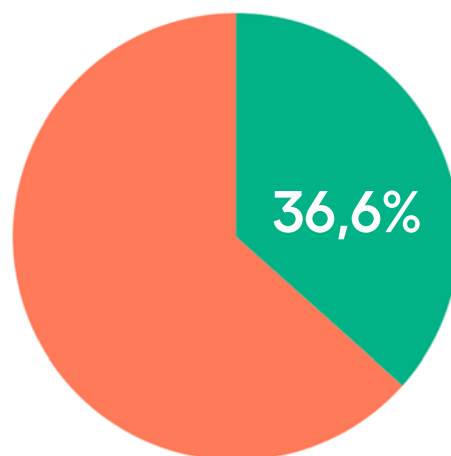
④ Lead generation

If you aren't monitoring your lead generation yet, what are you waiting for? Generating leads online is an involved process. Whether the majority of your new leads come through virtual networking, social media channels, or email campaigns, it is crucial to recognize where your leads are coming from and why. To get started monitoring your new influx of leads, [HubSpot's Lead Collection & Tracking Software](#) is here to help.

⑤ Time management

What may seem like a no-brainer for your remote sales team, especially to those who have been working remotely since long before COVID-19 was a blip on the globe's radar, is the most oft-forgotten metric to track. Stop and think, how much of your time is actually spent

selling? According to [Xant's Time Management for Sales study](#), the average sales rep only spends 36.6% of their time actively selling. Often, the other 63.4% of precious sales time is spent doing administrative tasks that can be better managed with a more streamlined process.



Average sales rep's
active selling time

By using [tools like Aircall and HubSpot together](#), your sales representatives can automatically see HubSpot contact and deal information before they answer the phone. Calls, contacts, and notes or recordings are automatically stored in a contact's timeline. By eliminating the tedious effort of tracking and searching prospects, your sales team will have more time to sell and connect with potential clients.

“ This is a financial crisis, an economical crisis, a social crisis, and a health crisis – but to keep this positivity is really important. ”

— Kata Nyitrai, Global Head of Business
Development

Best Practices for Remote Sales Team Managers

When you think of managing a team, the first things that come to mind are: collaboration and communication. As you transfer from an on-site manager to overseeing a remote sales team, you may feel some trepidation about maintaining your standard of collaboration and communication within your team. Never fear, just because you will be transitioning to a new normal doesn't mean the groundwork for your team changes. This is a tool-based shift, not a technique-based change. Many of your well-trodden managerial techniques will still produce results in a virtual environment, you may just need to test run a new approach.



These test runs come with new practices and new tools, to produce your same profitable results.

Set clear expectations

What expectations do you have for yourself, as manager of this new-age sales team? Remember, you have arrived at this place in the modern workforce alongside your team members. What is unfamiliar territory for you will be unfamiliar to them, so it is important to start by giving yourself and your team grace as you transition and shift your expectations to accommodate your new responsibilities as sales representatives in the age of COVID-19.

When you communicate your expectations to your team, they should come in the form of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to leave little room for misinterpretation. Stay transparent, and encourage transparent communication between your teammates. Keep in mind, this transition to fully remote work may be more natural for some sales reps than others. It is your job as the team leader to anticipate this learning curve and provide extra attention for those who may need it.

For a jumping off point, check out [HubSpot's Ultimate Guide to Setting & Hitting Sales Goals](#).

Maintain the environment

Whether a post-COVID-19 work environment looks fully-remote or hybrid for your sales team, as they transition to this new world there will naturally be some things that they miss from their old work environment. Be sensitive to these feelings, and try to adapt the old work environment into your team's new work space. Take the time to reach out to your team and gather their feedback, and then do your best to replicate this environment remotely. A trust-based and camaraderie-fueled work place is not reserved for face-to-face interactions alone.

“Take pride in being a salesperson. I know we get yelled at, I know we get rejected, but take pride in what we do. And the only way to take pride in it is to be good at what you do.”

— Kevin Dorsey, VP Inside Sales, PatientPop

Share accountability

Without being able to physically pop-in on one another naturally throughout the work day, those sales reps who are hesitant to embrace the remote work lifestyle may need to be checked in on more frequently than others. This all comes down to shared accountability. When team members can directly see how their efforts affect the team as a whole, they are more likely to perform at a higher rate than employees who feel disconnected from the grander goals of your organization.



To establish an environment of shared accountability when managing her remote teams, [HubSpot Senior Sales Manager Alison Bridgman](#) relies on data to drive development conversations. She says: “Lean into trust and data. Just because you can’t walk by someone’s desk doesn’t mean they aren’t working. Use data and report-

ing to track how reps are progressing towards their goals and help them set themselves up for success.”

Establish clear channels of communication

When managing a remote team, communication should be a top priority. According to [HubSpot's 2019 Remote Work Report](#), 29% of remote workers say communicating with coworkers is one of the biggest challenges they face when working remotely. For team members who would ideally communicate primarily face-to-face, this remote work change has the potential to be a complete shock to the system. However, with the right tools and clear expectations, remote team communication doesn't have to suffer. Instead, it can help your team to thrive and grow in new and unexpected ways.

Working remotely doesn't mean you need to be available to your coworkers 100% of the time, instead one way to establish clear channels of communication within your remote team members is to lean into asynchronous communication. Of course, there is a very necessary time and place for synchronous, virtual meetings among

team members. But, for those moments when instant response is not necessary, choose instead to use asynchronous communication methods such as through email, in a Google Doc, on Slack, or your other preferred messaging system. Some benefits of asynchronous communication are:

- Deeper, more involved and productive conversations.
- The time to thoughtfully respond to a query, instead of feeling rushed.
- Takes the place of note-keeping by naturally providing a record of conversations.

Create a consistent schedule

Once your sales team has adapted to their new personal routines, check in on your current meeting schedule. Have your virtual check-ins felt underwhelming and like they could have been an email? Or maybe your team meetings are crammed to the brim with information, with little time to connect on a personal level. If either of these scenarios have happened more than once, it is time for you to reevaluate your meeting schedule.

According to [HubSpot Senior Sales Manager Tiki Biswal](#) consistent schedules and routines are essential for managing effective remote sales reps. He says, “If you don’t have regularly scheduled one-on-one’s, deal reviews, and coffee chats, it will be hard to ensure that your remote reps are getting the time and attention they need. I recommend setting a regular schedule for these events to keep in communication. One hack that I used with one of my remote reps—I would let him know whenever I was commuting to and from work, and make myself available for a phone call. That created an additional hour and a half per day that my remote rep had my undivided attention.”

“Keep trudging forward and follow leaders who are also doing this as well. That is not only how you win today, but that’s how you win when this time does get better.”

— Michael Tusso, Director of Revenue
Performance, Chili Piper

For even more productivity tips and tricks for managing remote teams: [Aircall’s Remote Work Toolkit](#).

How to Keep your Sales Team Connected from Anywhere

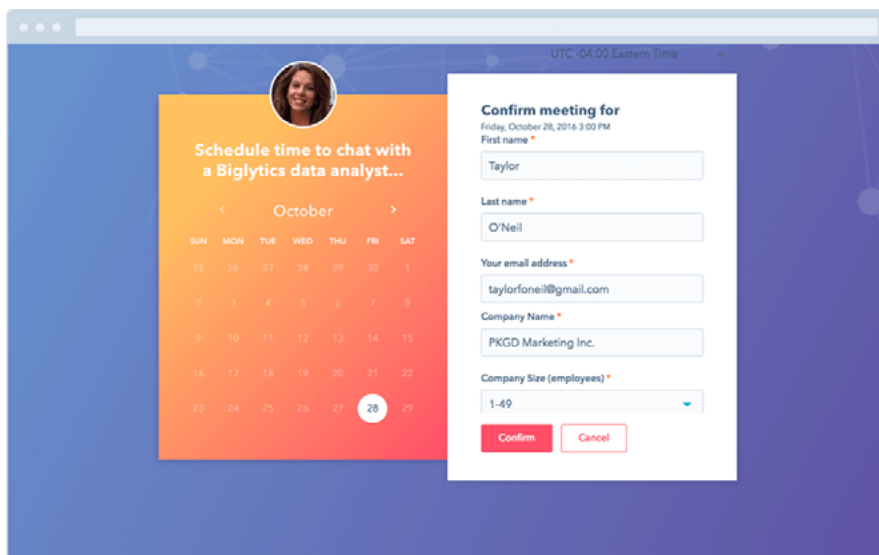
Your sales team works best when they are just that: a team. And teams need consistent collaboration in order to succeed to their full potential. Now that you've established how you will be managing your remote sales team, how will you ensure they stay connected with one another? When it comes to fostering a strong camaraderie-fueled team environment, your connection will only be as strong as the tools you use. In addition to your primary communication and virtual meeting tools of choice, the main tools your remote team will need to stay connected are a group scheduling tool, a collaboration tool, and a project management tool.

Group Scheduling Tools

Before choosing the group scheduling tool for your remote sales team, be sure you are picking the one that is best for you. Group scheduling tools have evolved past a

simple shared calendar, the best ones have a high-functioning sales integration feature. When choosing your ideal group scheduling tool, be on the lookout for one that integrates calendar sharing, sales automation, privacy, speed, and a powerful mobile feature.

A group scheduling tool like [HubSpot Meetings](#) (which fully integrates with [HubSpot's free CRM!](#)) is a stream-



HubSpot Meetings

lined tool that will keep you and your sales team on top of their game. When you use a tool like HubSpot Meetings you can cut out the redundancy of back-and-forth scheduling emails, instead once a client inputs their information to create a new meeting, their data is collected into a database, which you can use for future contact

with them and to grow your clientele as you get more connections.

Other group scheduling tools, such as [Calendar](#) and [Doodle](#), are known for their intuition and compatibility—two must-have features to optimize collaboration within remote teams. With Calendar, you only see the times when everyone on your team is available, so you can reschedule meetings in one-click, instead of spending all afternoon bogged down in a scheduling email chain. And with Doodle, you can use the poll feature to have teammates vote on which meeting times work best for them, and then schedule accordingly.

Don't let your remote sales team get bogged down by unnecessary scheduling snafus. Instead, stay ahead of the curve by choosing a group scheduling tool that does the work for you.

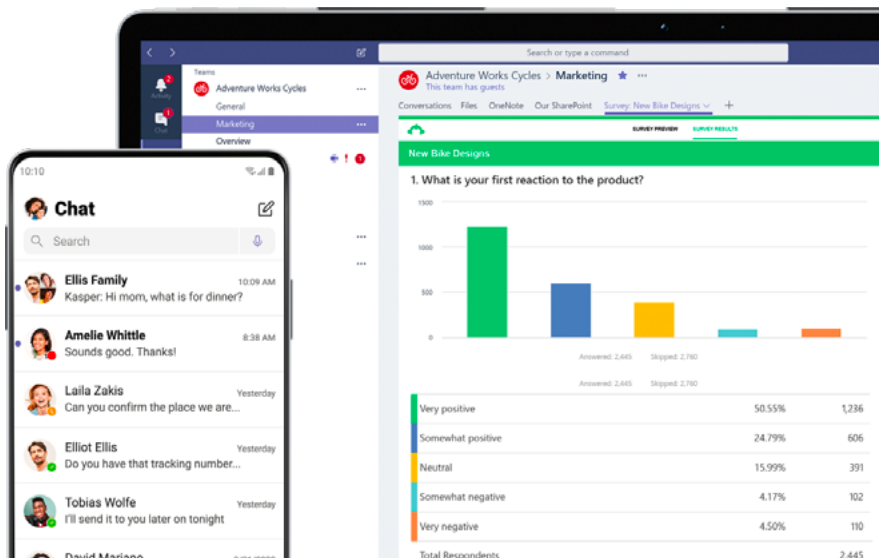
Collaboration Tools

The backbone of any remote team is the marriage between communication and collaboration. As new tasks are delineated and new remote work obstacles arise, it is up to your team to communicate your expectations

to one another to collaborate on a plan of action. When it comes to cross-team collaboration from any distance, things can get lost in the shuffle. To avoid any miscommunication between your sales teams, invest in the best collaboration tools.

If your team is a fan of Google tools, [Google Suite](#) (sometimes referred to as G Suite) may be the tool for you. Google Suite works with any budget, and is flexible enough to work with teams of any size. Built for the active remote team, G Suite is the place for your sales reps to collaborate on Google Docs, Google Sheets, Google Slides, Google Calendar, and any other Google Drive tool you might need. G Suite is compatible with any mobile device, so your active sales reps never need to fear being disconnected from their team.

If you are more of a Microsoft family, [Microsoft Office Teams](#) could be the tool for you. Just like Google Suite, Microsoft Office Teams is a general collaboration suite that is user-friendly and built for remote teams. Whereas G Suite uses strictly Google apps, Microsoft Office Suite allows you to download your favorite apps like Excel, Outlook, Word, and Powerpoint to customize your experience. These tools will exist in team folders to be



Microsoft Office Teams

shared and edited by any combination of team members, for the ideal collaborative remote environment. Additionally, you can use the Microsoft Teams video call, email, and chat features to keep all of your communication and collaboration in the same place.

When you prioritize collaboration within your sales team, you are prioritizing their success. Show your team how well invested you are in them by choosing a top collaboration tool.

Project Management Tools

In order to streamline scheduling and project planning within your remote sales team, you will need the help

of a project management tool. Besides helping to keep your remote sales team members organized by being a central location for all documents, notes, and progress updates, the top-tier project management software also excels at keeping team members accountable for their work. With features like deadline sharing and task distribution, your remote team will stay up to date on what is getting accomplished and who may need a helping hand.

For organizations that often work with outside vendors or clients, you may want to choose software like [Trello](#). Trello is a user-friendly system that is ideal for small teams who are new to the remote world and are looking to get acclimated to the lifestyle alongside a straightforward project management software. Trello is widely-used and offers the option to share boards internally and externally, so you can bring your clients right into the meetings with you without moving to a third-party platform.

For larger teams with a bit more experience working remotely, you may want to turn to [Basecamp](#) for your project management software needs. By organizing all of your team calendars, meetings, assignments, messag-

ing, storage tools and documents on one dashboard, Basecamp is an attainable and easy-to-use system. The best part is, Basecamp has perfected the web, desktop, and mobile versions of their software so your remote team can stay on top of their tasks and projects from anywhere.

Project management tools are the secret weapon of high-performing sales teams. As your organization navigates the age of COVID-19, you'll want to stick with software you can rely on.

“ Invest in yourself. Take care of yourself. And no matter what happens, don't let times like this get in your way. You're going to get through this, we all will. ”

**— Bryan Elsesser, Senior Director Sales
Development, Aircall**

What Managers Should Know About the Future of Sales

As managers look forward to the future of sales, it is important for them to remember that this is not a technological change—it is a cultural one.

As you move forward and navigate the ever changing local, state, and national mandates regarding COVID-19 the goal should not simply be to welcome remote work, but actively embrace the shift by enacting policies that introduce entry level employees to the lifestyle as well as expand the knowledge of seasoned employees. The future of your sales department may depend on how well you adapt.

It is understandably difficult for organizations to balance the pressure of a global pandemic with the expectations of their employees, but with the right mindset most companies will rebound. And the most well equipped of those companies will thrive under their new remote work policies.

Ultimately, what it comes down to is leaning in to what works at your organization and listening to your sales teams. They are on the front lines of the cultural change at your company, which makes them your greatest resource.

[See our offers on the next page ↓](#)

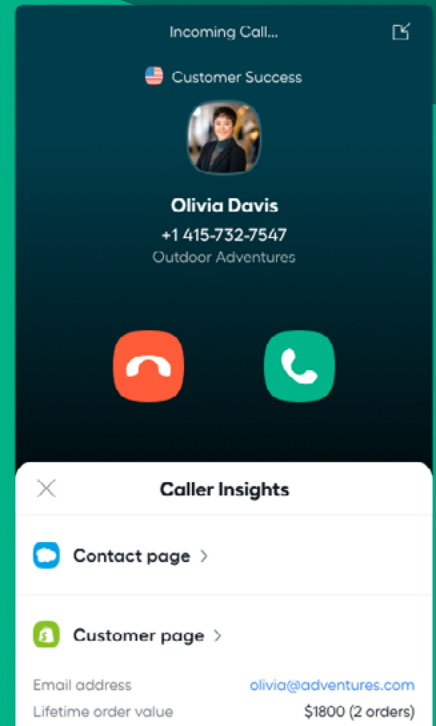




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