



## CLIENT SUCCESS STORY

# SAGE Publishing

SAGE's Commercial Sales Division Overcomes Successive Years of Decline to Grow 20% YOY

SAGE Publishing is a leading international publisher of journals, books, and library products for academic, educational, and professional markets. Founded in 1965, the company publishes over 1,000 journals and more than 900 new books each year, spanning a wide range of subject areas.

After missing its annual target and on the way to an even bigger miss the following year, SAGE took action.

The publishing company had worked with RAIN Group for multiple years to deliver customized sales skills workshops. Past sales trainings had largely been focused on sales skills, and leadership was confident that wasn't the issue.

After examining CRM data, SAGE discovered that its sellers were spending too much time with each customer and that sales activity was on the decline.

"We needed to revisit the fundamentals of productivity and learn how to spend time more efficiently," shared Nicole Louderback, Director of Commercial Sales at SAGE.

## Solutions

Around the same time SAGE noticed the decrease in sales activity, RAIN Group launched its [Extreme Productivity Challenge](#) (XPC) to help sellers and sales managers maximize motivation, take control of their time, and achieve peak performance.

When SAGE shared the CRM sales activity with RAIN Group, it became clear that they were a perfect candidate for XPC.

Prior to the start of the training, each participant completed an [Extreme Productivity Assessment](#) to pinpoint the best areas for driving increased productivity and results.

A 1-day intensive workshop was delivered to sellers and sales managers covering productivity habits. Participants were

"[The Extreme Productivity Challenge] isn't something that's sales specific, but it's important to sales success. XPC was the best sales training we've ever had. You can see the team implementing it. You can see the behavior changes. The training was very out of the box. An extra bonus is that this training doesn't just impact work lives, but also personal lives."

introduced to a productivity planner outlining exactly how to set goals and action plans, stop bad habits and start good ones, utilize a proven 5-step morning routine, start each day with their greatest impact activity, and more.

To sustain the momentum from the workshop, participants were enrolled in [XPC online training](#) and registered for [RAIN Mail](#)<sup>SM</sup> scenario emails to reinforce the training content.

SAGE sales managers were trained in the proprietary XPC coaching process and worked with participants to ensure behavior change and hold sellers accountable to their plans.

## Results

Once the training concluded, leadership discovered a significant improvement in how time was managed and an uptick in sales activity. The goals—not missing target, increasing revenues, and learning to be more productive—were met. Metrics included:

- **Tracking at 5% ahead of sales target and 20% ahead of prior year.** The two previous years, SAGE averaged a decline of 10% YOY, making 20% ahead a significant achievement.
- **Customer outreach increased by 31%.**

The progress was so undeniable that SAGE requested a second XPC training for its administrative professionals.

The XPC training completed by all members of the global sales team was an important milestone. The skills and hacks to make daily habits are being implemented across the department and many of the self-reviews pinpoint the XPC training as an important growth factor.

Nicole Louderback, Director of Commercial Sales, SAGE Publishing