ARTICLE

How to Implement *Hybrid Sales Training*

Many organizations today are shifting to a hybrid sales training approach by adding a virtual wrap-around to their in-person training events. It's a powerful one-two punch that harnesses the best of both the in-person and hybrid worlds.

When you host an in-person training event—be it an SKO, one- or two-day training, or other in-person sales meeting—you need to guarantee the time, budget, and effort are worth pulling sellers out of the field.

Follow this process to make a hybrid event successful for you:

1. Before the Hybrid Sales Training Event

Learners complete critical knowledge transfer of new concepts, ideas, and definitions before the in-person training event. This gives sellers plenty of time to complete self-directed lessons, microlearning, and other activities on their own.

Sellers are also encouraged to begin using tools and implementing their learning before the event starts. This allows sellers to share the challenges of implementing the new learning in their sales situations, leading to much richer discussions.

Ensuring your hybrid event is successful starts with selecting an LMS or sales enablement platform that meets your needs before, during, and after the event.

Elements to consider:

- Learners can work independently or as part of a cohort
- Connects asynchronous online learning, group virtual instructor-led training, and small group coaching to maximize knowledge transfer
- Time and trigger-based notifications
- Easy access to the material at any time, place, and on any device
- A clean and easy user experience
- Native hosting for videos, exercises, readings, and tools
- Simple and inclusive reporting
- Flexible system to create custom, varied learning paths

2. During the Hybrid Training Event

In-person time is reserved for high-impact activities. When you take the lecture out of the training with microlearning prior to the event, it opens time together to focus on practice and practical application, such as:

- Role plays
- Workshopping
- Practice
- Coaching
- Feedback
- Peer-to-peer learning and discussion
- Collaboration
- Brainstorming

The more in-person time can be used for activity versus lecture, the greater impact the hybrid training will have.

3. Reinforcement of the Training

After the in-person training event, core ideas and learning need to be reinforced for weeks and months through recurring virtual training sessions, a regular rhythm of coaching, self-directed online learning, and application assignments.

Benefits of ongoing support and coaching are tremendous and include:

- **Increased knowledge retention:** The use of spaced repetition boosts retention to 80% after 60 days
- **Improved adoption:** Assignments allow learners to apply what they've learned, receive immediate feedback for improvement, and be held accountable for applying the skills
- **Stronger skills:** An ongoing schedule of coaching correlates with higher skill ratings
- **Increased likelihood of top performance:** Sellers who have an effective sales manager, ongoing coaching, and effective sales training are 63% more likely to be a Top Performer

Sales training reinforcement, along with regular accountability checks, supports sellers to put the new learning into action, resulting in more effective training that changes sellers' behaviors and impacts sales results.

© RAIN Group

Sample Hybrid Sales Training Curriculum - Sales Conversations

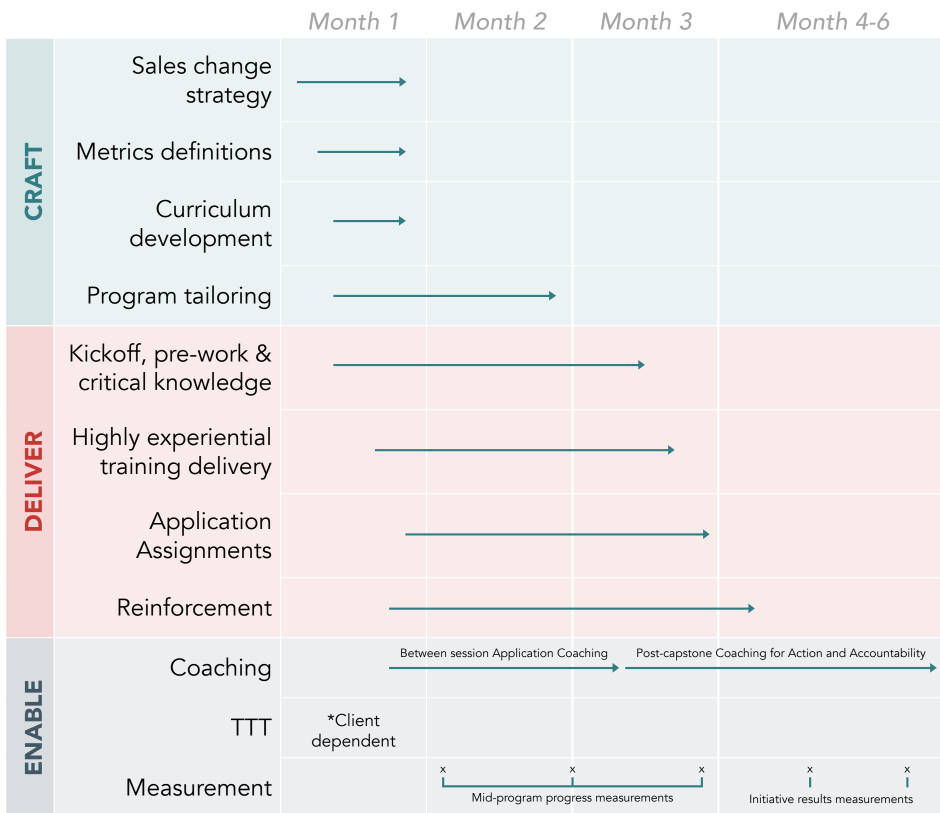
The hybrid sales training model wraps virtual activities around the in-person training event before and after the fact. Here's an example of what that might look like if you engaged with RAIN Group.

- **Module 1:** Introduction to Consultative Selling
- **Module 2:** Building Rapport
- **Module 3:** Leading a Thorough and Impressive Needs Discovery
- **Module 4:** Making the Impact and ROI Case
- **Module 5:** Overcoming Objections
- **Module 6:** Inspiring Buyer Action and Change: New Reality and the Buyer Change Blueprint

A hybrid approach to delivering these modules, including both virtual instructor-led training (VILT) and live, in-person instructor-led training (ILT), and assignments and coaching related to each module might look like this:

- **Week 1:** VILT of module 1 delivered before the event, including Application Coaching
- **Week 2:** 1 day in-person ILT covering modules 2-5
- **Week 3-6:** Application Assignments and Coaching for modules 2-5
- **Week 7:** VILT of module 6, including Application Coaching
- **Week 8+:** 90-days coaching

SAMPLE SALES TRAINING DELIVERY RHYTHM



To learn more about how to design a sales training initiative that drives change and results, download The Complete Guide to Sales Training Success.

HYBRID MODULE EXAMPLE: LEADING A THOROUGH AND IMPRESSIVE NEEDS DISCOVERY

Pre-Session Action

Prior to the in-person training, the learner watches the following videos:

- **Video:** The Power of Aspirations and Afflictions
- **Video:** Questions for Sales Meetings and Needs Discovery
- **Video:** Creating Shared Understanding of Needs
- **Video:** The Power of Why

Instructor-led Training

During the in-person training, the team completes a needs discovery case study and practice together. Additionally, the instructor introduces the Sales Conversation Planner and demonstrates how to use it.

Post-Session Action

In the days and weeks following the in-person training session, the learner completes the following activities:

- **Video:** Types of Needs Buyers Have
- **Video:** The Key to Leading a Thorough Needs Discovery
- **Video:** Tactical Tips for Leading a Thorough Needs Discovery
- **Application Assignment:** Plan questions for an upcoming needs discovery using the Sales Conversation Planner and share with your coach
- **Action:** Plan and record a needs discovery meeting; share this recording with your application coach

Bring ***hybrid sales training*** to your organization.

© RAIN Group