



# Overcoming Top Sales Challenges:

## *3 Proven Strategies for Sales Leaders*



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**Andy Springer** is Chief Client Officer for RAIN Group. He leads the global delivery team, which designs, measures, and delivers every client the results they seek when engaging RAIN Group.

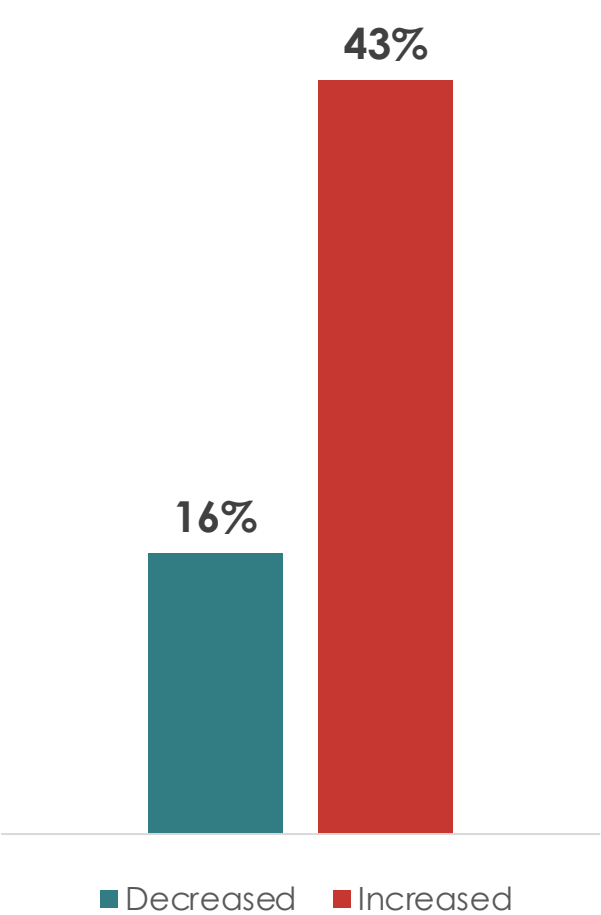
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Andy is an expert in high-performance sales and leads RAIN Group's mission to unleash sales potential for its clients. Andy has worked with thousands of sales teams to drive long-lasting sales improvement in SME, mid-market, and enterprise companies over the last 18 years. He's known for consistently supporting sales leaders in remaining focused on the proven activities that drive real sales growth in their teams.

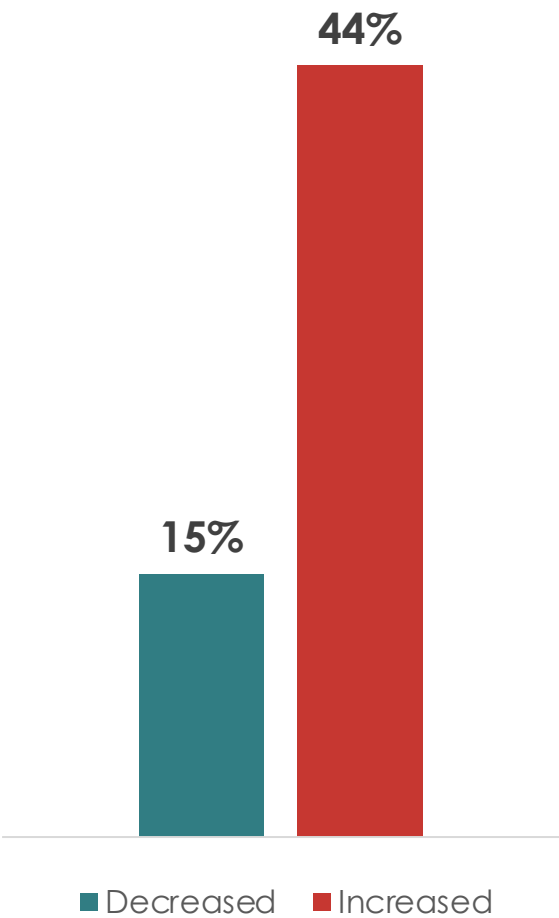
An entrepreneur at heart, Andy co-founded two successful consultancies and has been a lead advisor for thriving start-ups in the Australian business community.

# Sales Trends in 2023

Sales Cycles



Loss to “No Decision”



Selling in Uncertain Economy  
% Very Challenging



# The World of Sales Enablement



## Buying Has Changed



More choice, less time



More knowledgeable, critical of sellers



More pressure to get results with less \$



More buyers in each sale



No use for seller-as-order-taker



Less loyalty, more openness to switch

**Sellers must be better than ever to survive and thrive.**

## Sales Training and Enablement Have Changed



Build sales teams with deep, diverse skills



Develop managers to unleash seller potential



Ramp up teams with constant turnover



Deal with budget pressure



Make change durable



Show results (or else)

**You must help sellers be better, faster, and successful in the face of constant change.**



# Poll

Which do you find most challenging?

- Generating qualified leads
- Developing sales skills
- Implementing and adopting new sales technologies
- Recruiting & hiring sales talent
- Developing managers
- Dealing with increased number of decision makers
- Selling hybrid or remotely
- Onboarding/seller ramp-up

# Top Sales Leader/Enablement Challenges & Priorities

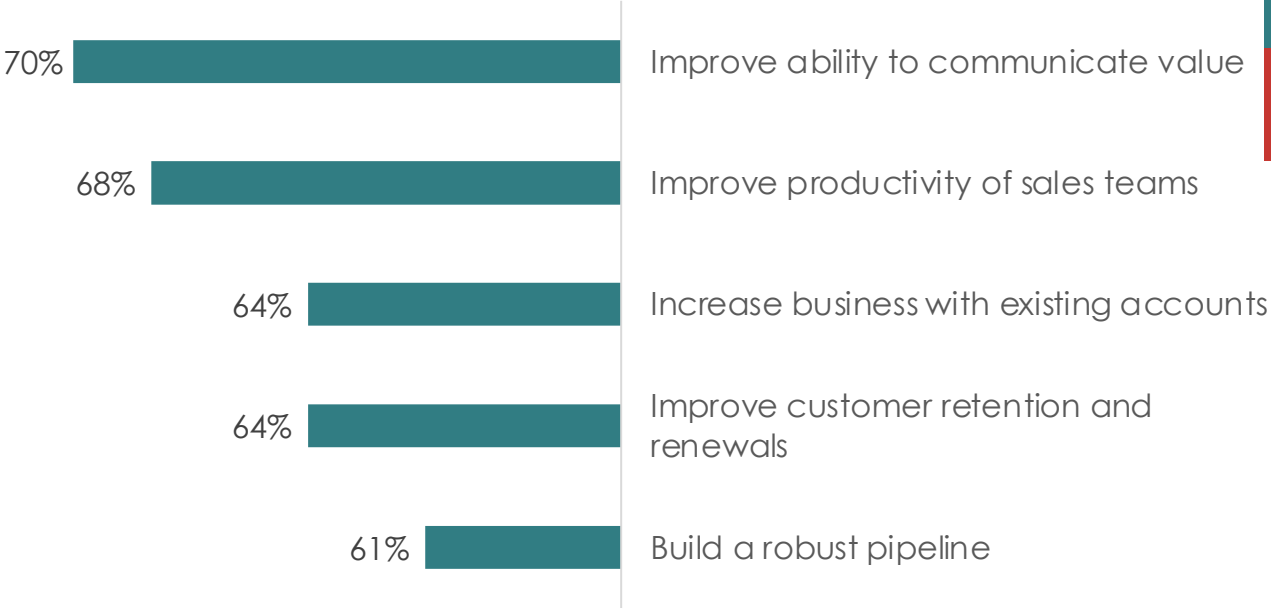
## Top 5 Challenges

% Very Challenging



## Top 5 Priorities

% Very Important



Source: RAIN Group Center for Sales Research, Top Challenges Facing Sales and Enablement Leaders.

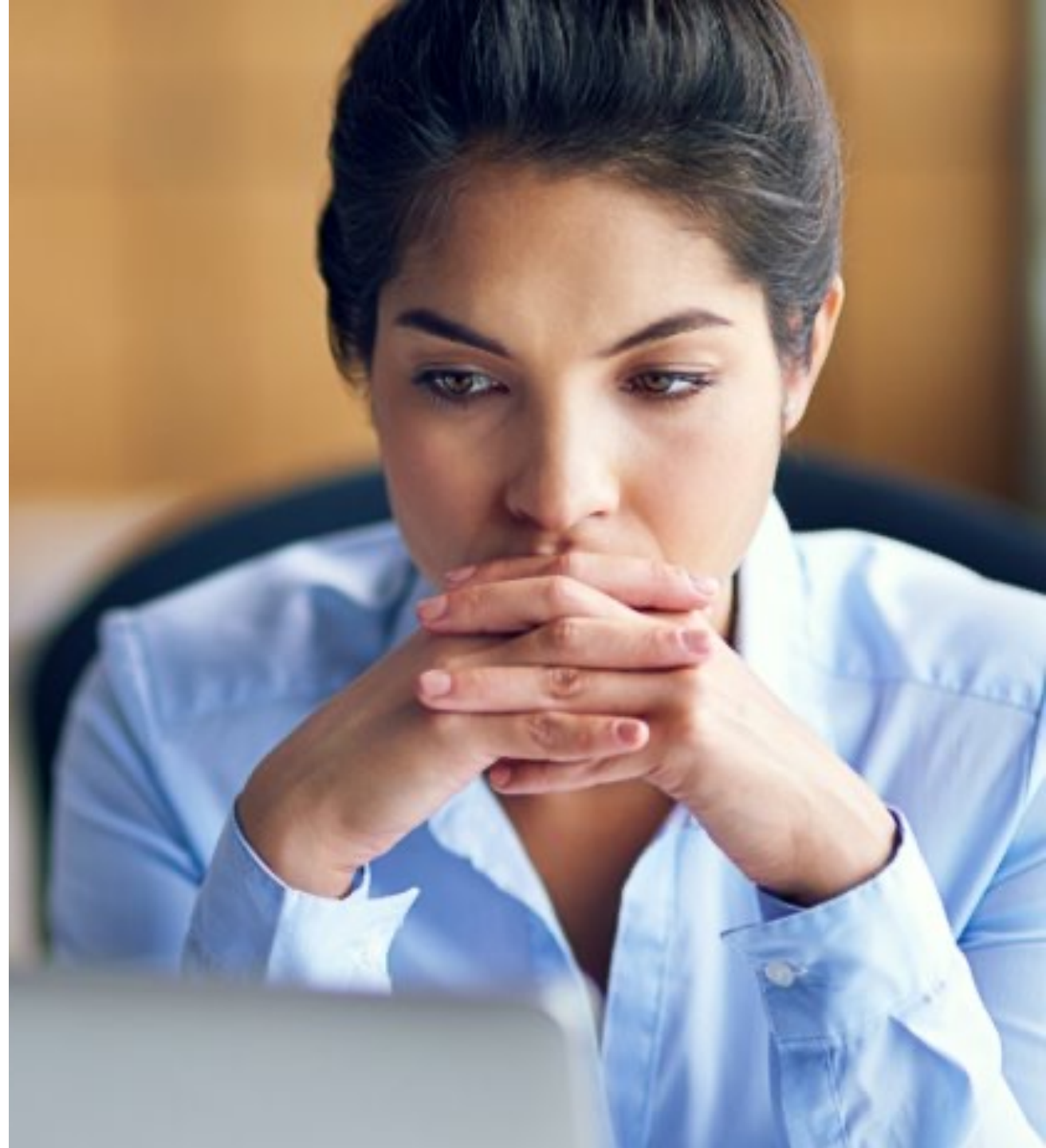
# How Do You Bridge the Gap?

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# 2019-2023: Not Much Has Changed

- Top challenges remain the same
- Hiring and recruiting strong sales talent is tough, even in the best of times
- Skill development requires ongoing effort
- Little progress made on top priorities:
  - Improve ability to communicate value
  - Improve productivity
  - Increase business with existing accounts
  - Build a robust pipeline



# 3 Sales Enablement Strategies to Employ

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# 01

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## Improve Sales Productivity



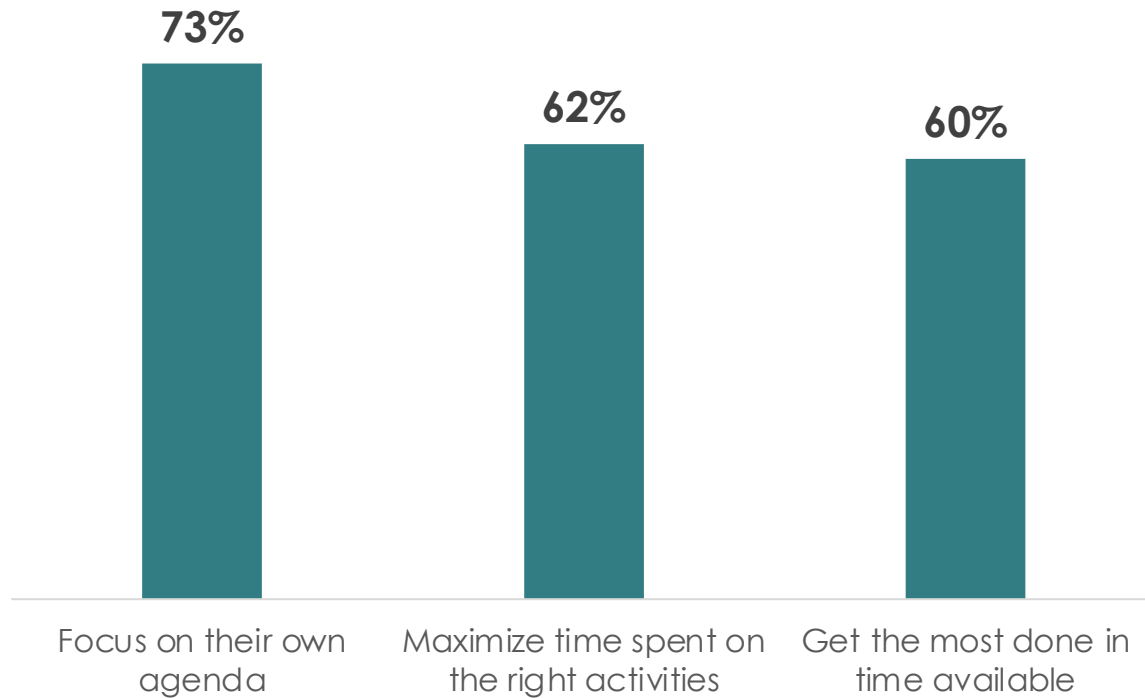
## Poll

Our sellers consistently focus on the right activities to drive the best results and execute energetically day in and day out.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

# Powerful Link between Performance and Productivity

**Top Performers are more likely than  
The Rest to...**



Source: RAIN Group Center for Sales Research, The Top-Performing Seller Benchmark Report.

# 71%

of company leaders  
don't believe sellers  
manage their time and  
day effectively



# Greatest Impact Activity (GIA)

The one activity that, should you do it consistently at high quality, will get you the greatest eventual return on your time investment

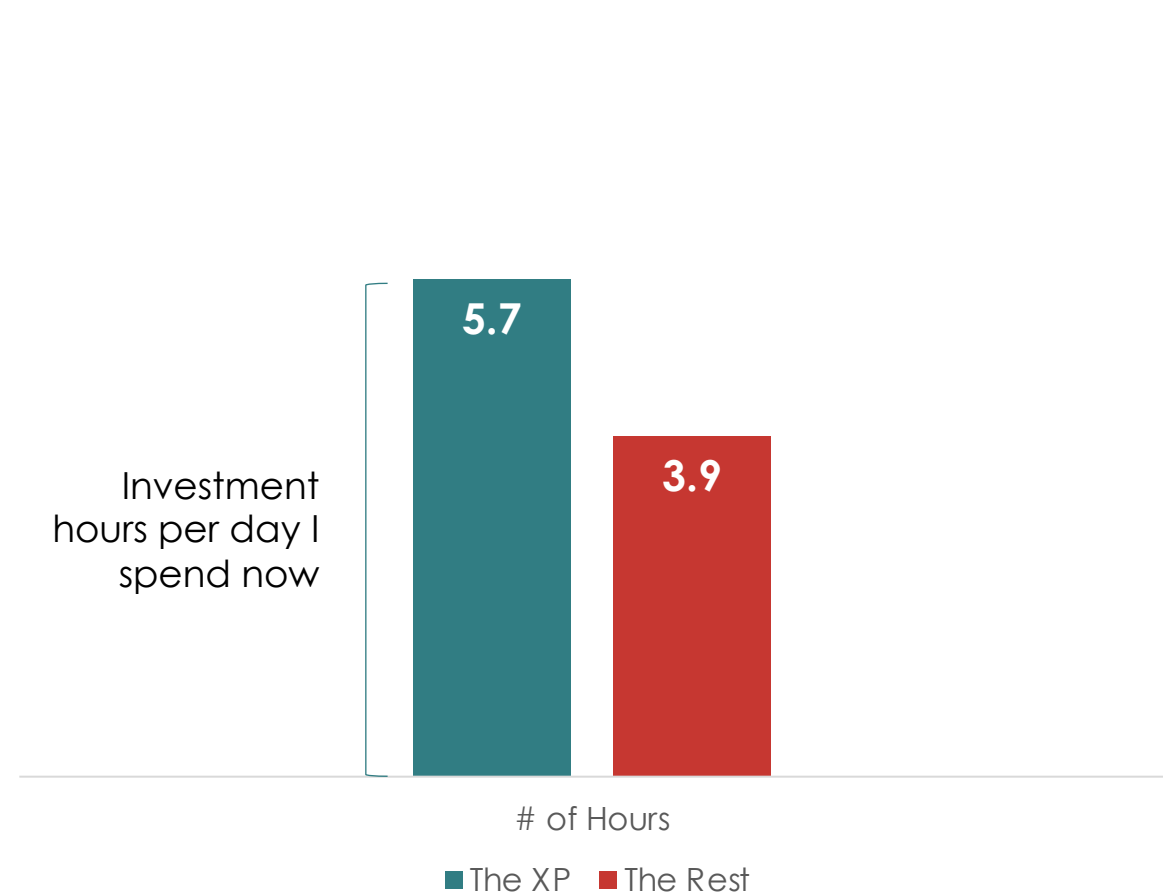
# The Power of Calendaring

▶ **Sample Calendar**

June 25 – 29

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	25	26	27	28	29
8 AM	Greatest Impact Activity Sprinting	Greatest Impact Activity Sprinting	Greatest Impact Activity Sprinting	Greatest Impact Activity Sprinting	Greatest Impact Activity Sprinting
9					
10					
11					
12 PM	Daily Huddle	Team Meeting	Daily Huddle	Daily Huddle	Daily Huddle
1					
2	Investment TIME Sprinting	Investment TIME Sprinting	Investment TIME Sprinting	Investment TIME Sprinting	
3					
4					
5	Workout		Workout		Workout

# Time Spent on Investment Activities



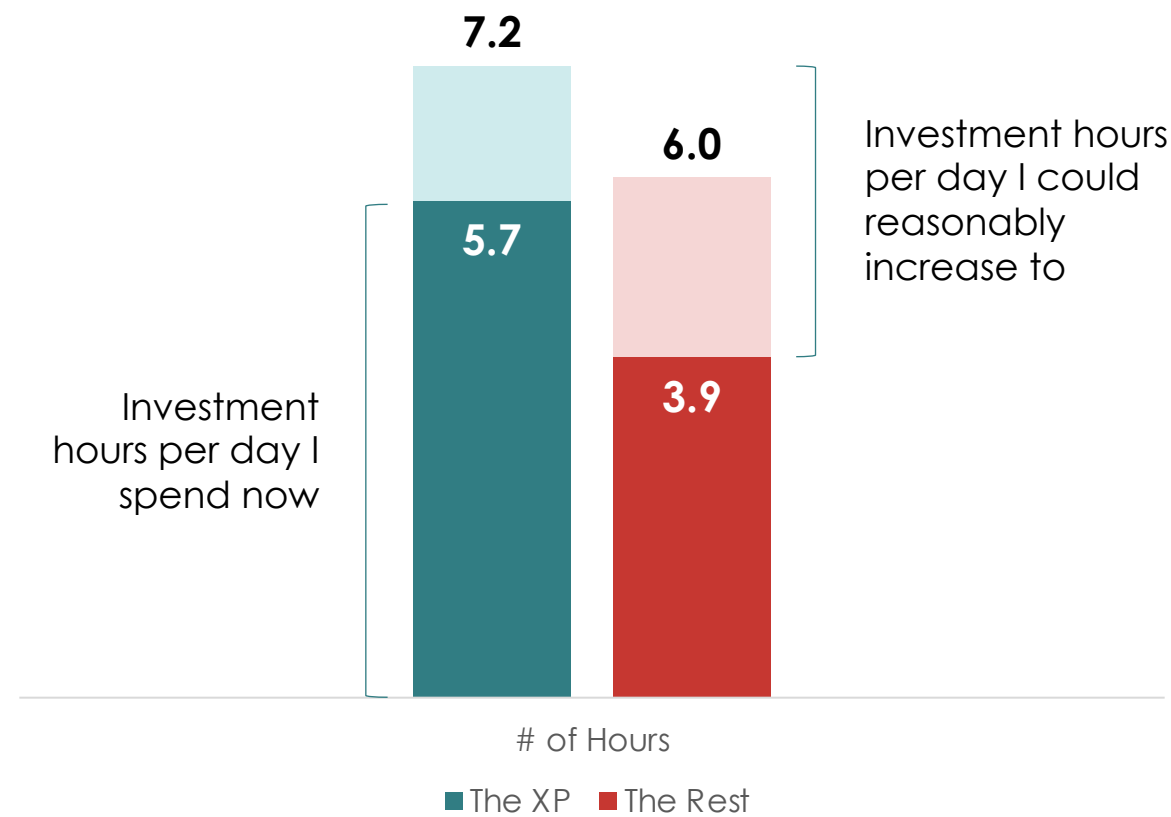
Source: RAIN Group Center for Sales Research, The Extreme Productivity Benchmark Report.

+1.8 hours

Per day Extremely Productive people spend on investment activities



# Investment Hours Available

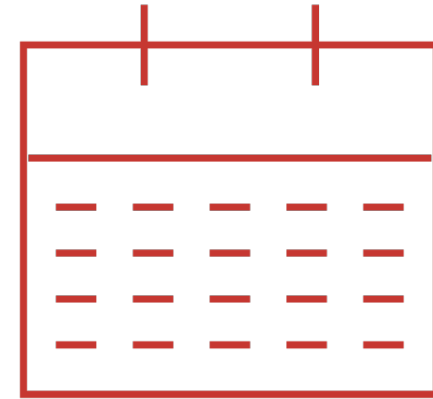
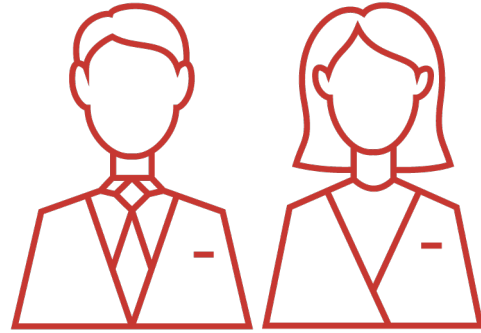
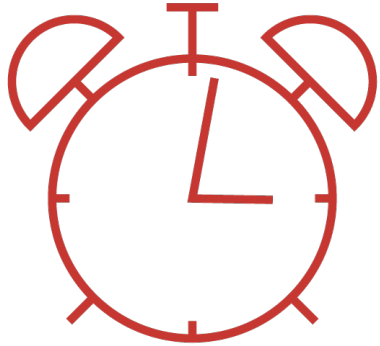


Source: RAIN Group Center for Sales Research, The Extreme Productivity Benchmark Report.

46%

more time on investment activities

# What Difference Does It Make?



+9 hours per person per week

For a team of 5, that's an extra **45 hours a week**  
and an extra **2,340 hours a year.**

# 02

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## Develop Multi-Skilled Sellers



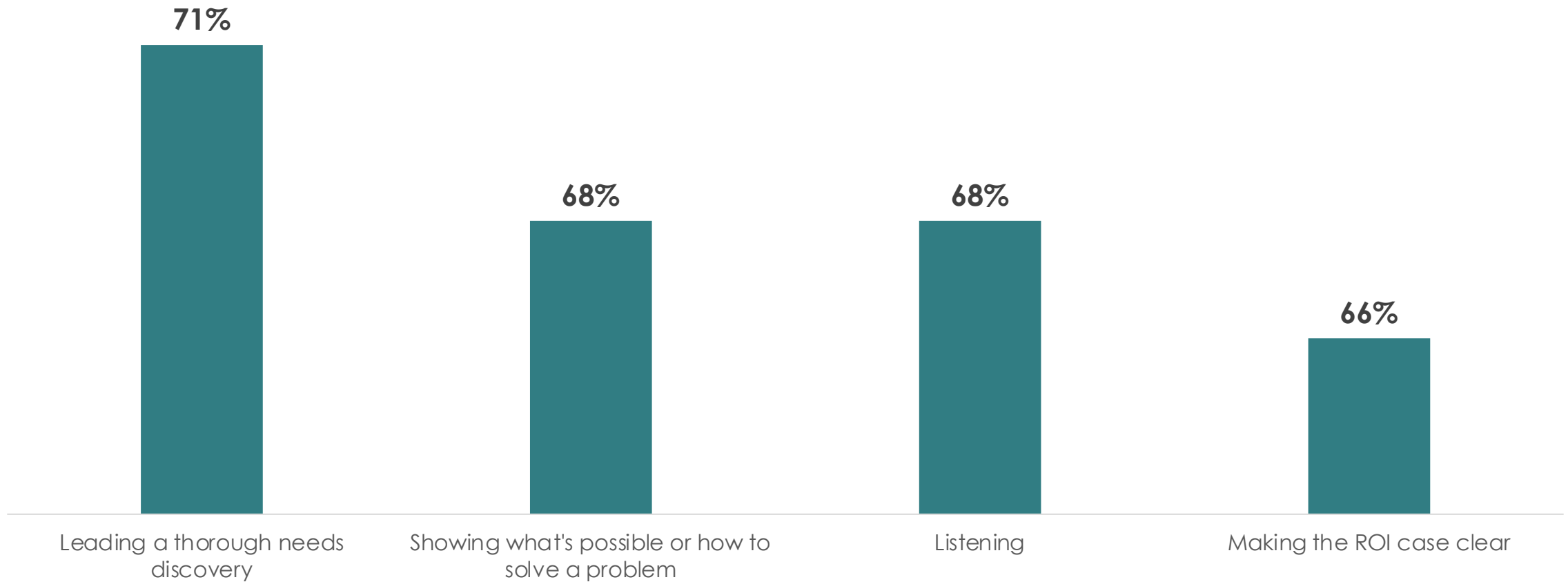
## Poll

Our sellers are effective at: (Select all that apply)

- Leading a thorough needs discovery
- Showing buyers what's possible or how to solve a problem
- Listening to buyers
- Making a clear ROI case

# Factors that Highly Influence Purchase Decisions

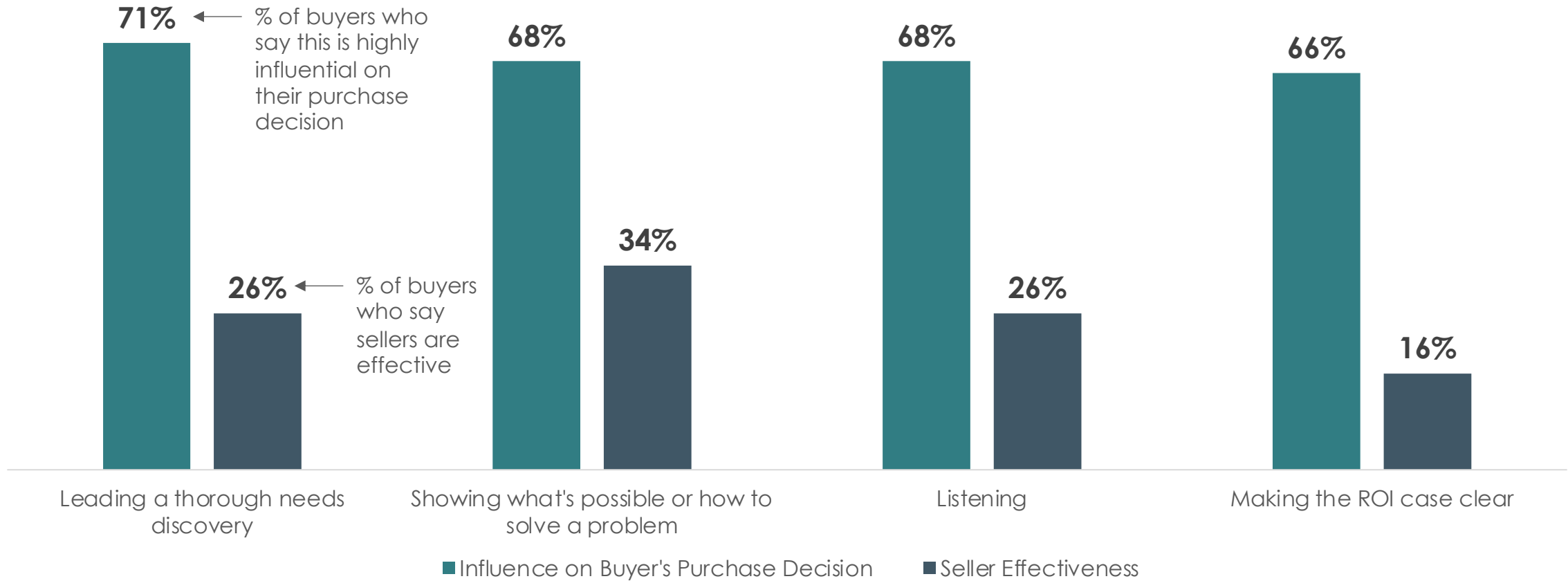
## Influence on Buyer's Purchase Decision



Source: RAIN Group Center for Sales Research, Virtual Selling Skills & Challenges.

# Buyers Report that Sellers Lack Essential Skills

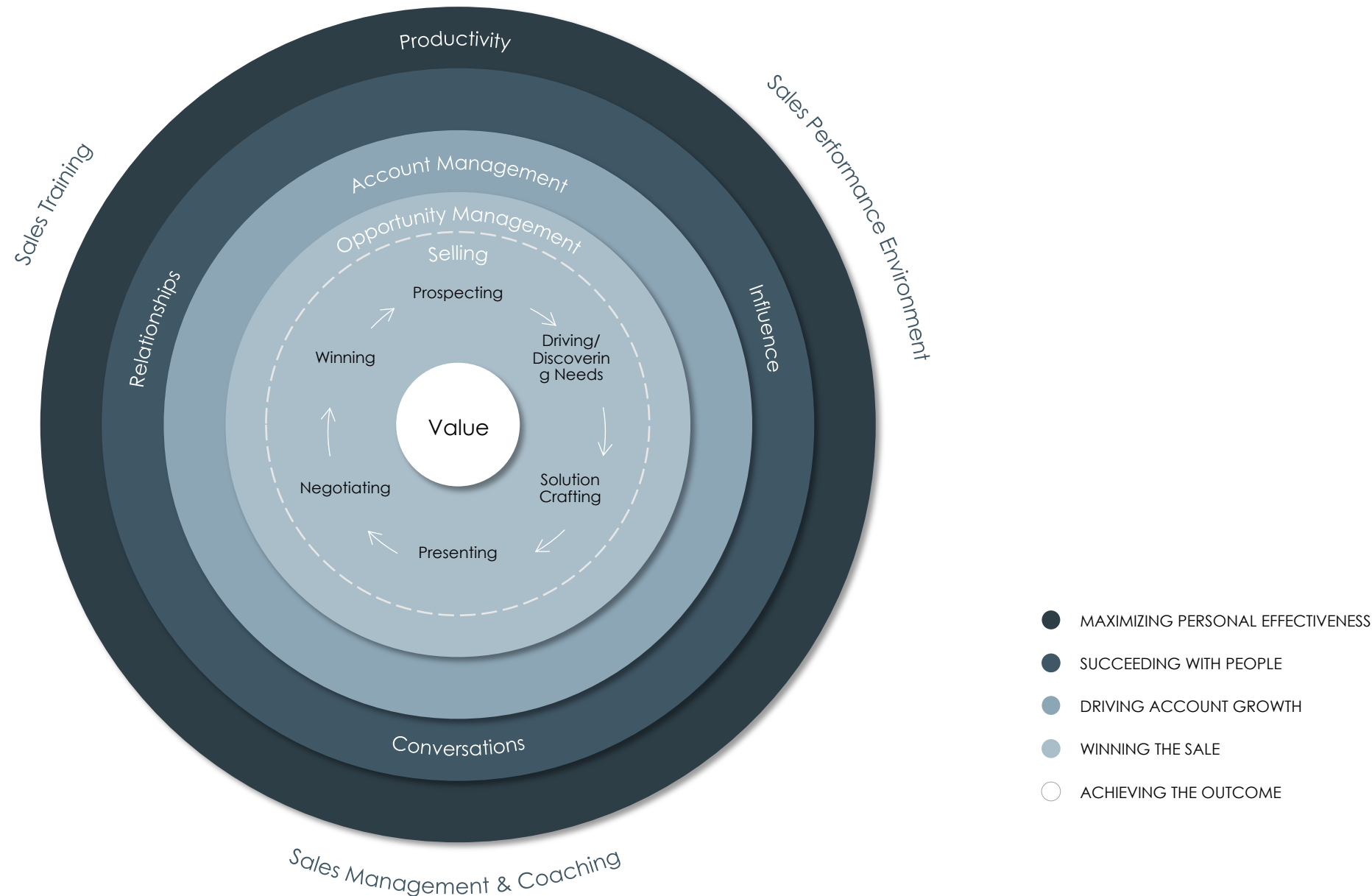
## Top Purchase Decision Factors and Seller Effectiveness



Source: RAIN Group Center for Sales Research, Virtual Selling Skills & Challenges.

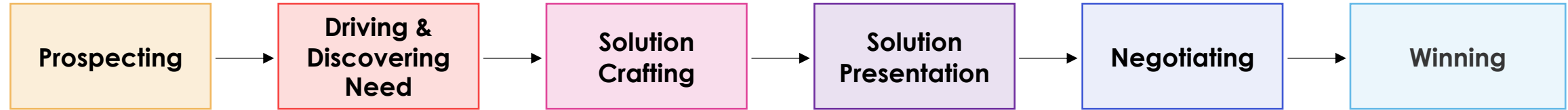
# A Roadmap for Seller Success

## The Top-Performing Seller<sup>SM</sup>



# Selling Across the Sales Cycle

Selling Process



Top Performers are more likely than The Rest to...

- Generate referrals: **63%**
- Energetically prospect over the long term: **50%**
- Implement organized prospecting campaigns: **44%**
- Devote enough time and energy to prospecting: **36%**
- Hyper-personalize prospecting communications: **32%**
- Prospect successfully through:
  - Phone: **19%**
  - Email: **57%**
  - Social media: **59%**
  - Video: **54%**
- Research buyers comprehensively: **27%**
- Lead thorough needs discoveries: **58%**
- Ask the right questions: **47%**
- Ask enough questions: **45%**
- Be patient to allow all needs to surface: **53%**
- Listen actively: **44%**
- Change buyer thinking about needs: **60%**
- Pick up on hidden needs: **36%**
- Maximize cross- and up-sells: **65%**
- Educate buyers with new ideas about what to buy: **22%**
- Display expertise about how to apply offerings: **24%**
- Collaborate with buyers deeply across the buying process: **59%**
- Craft compelling solutions: **45%**
- Influence buyer thinking about what to buy: **57%**
- Build excellent responses to RFPs: **52%**
- Make the overall value case: **60%**
- Present solutions persuasively: **51%**
- Communicate strong, defensible ROI cases: **63%**
- Inspire confidence buyers will achieve results: **51%**
- Highlight results achieved by others: **39%**
- Make effective differentiation cases: **55%**
- Lead the negotiation process: **71%**
- Understand power and leverage: **45%**
- Create value-based solutions to problems: **40%**
- Know when to walk away: **105%\***
- Manage buyer negotiation tactics: **70%**
- Manage own and buyer emotions: **105%**
- Overcome price pressure and maintain margins: **81%**
- Trade for value; not cave: **46%**
- Lead highly effective finalist presentations: **65%**
- Overcome objections: **29%**
- Outsell the competition in competitive bids: **41%**
- Build sense of urgency for action: **50%**
- Gain commitment – average win rate:
  - Top Performers: **72%**
  - The Rest: **47%**

\* Source: RAIN Group Center for Sales Research, Top Performance in Sales Negotiation.



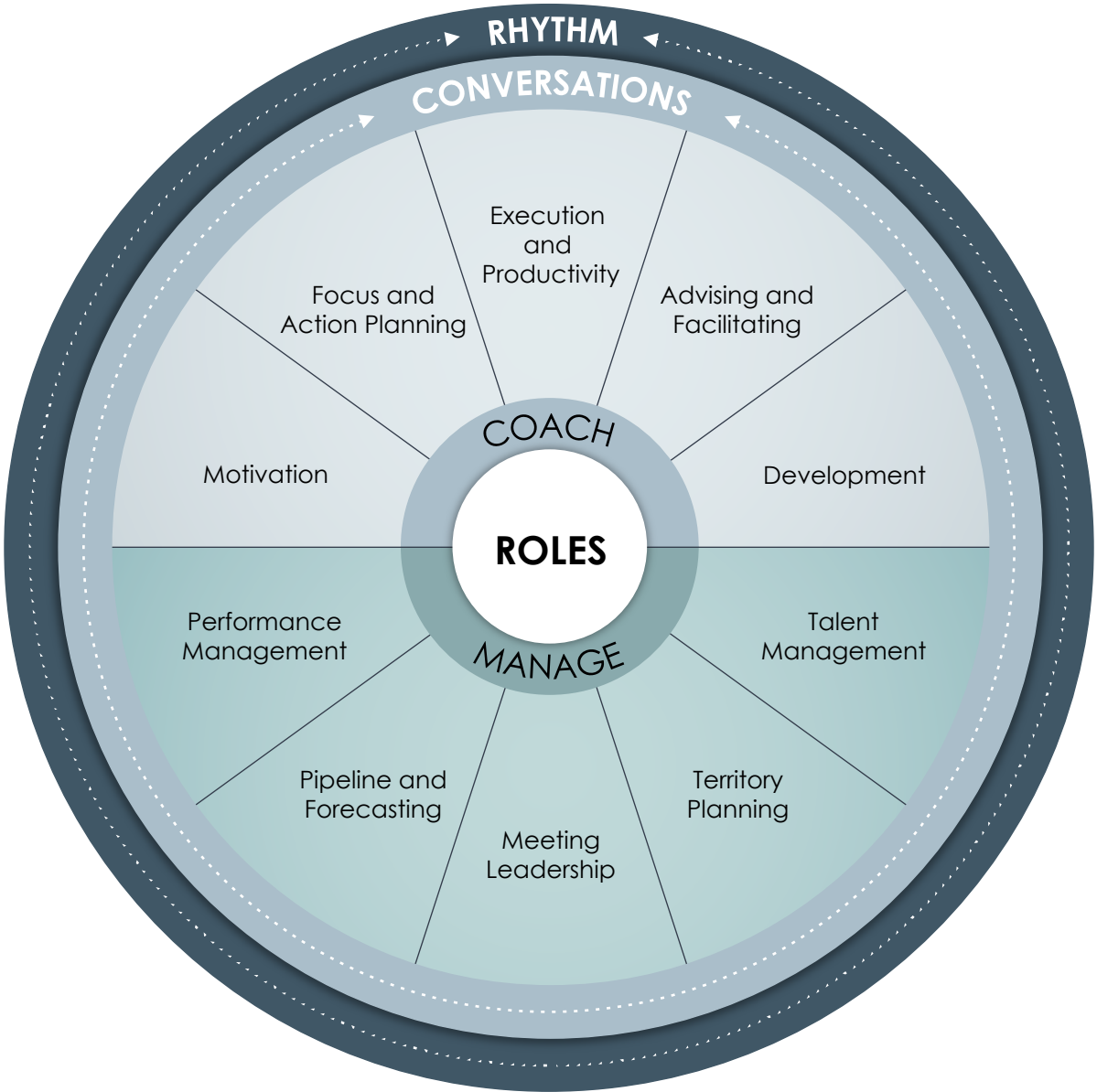
# 03

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## Leverage Sales Managers

# A Roadmap for Sales Manager Success

The Top-Performing  
Sales Manager<sup>SM</sup>



# Formula for Success



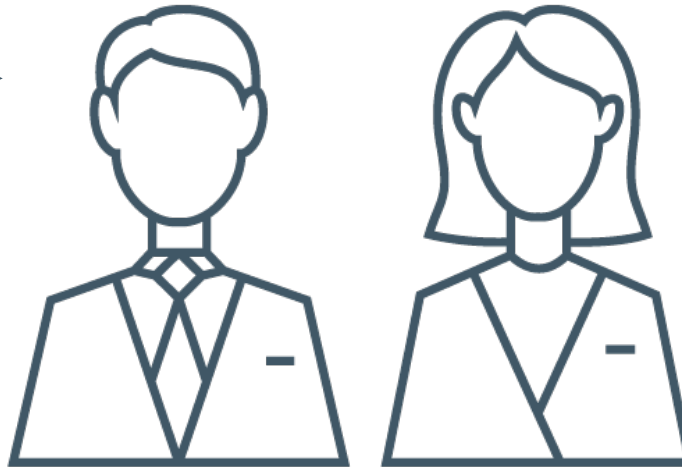
**Effective Training**  
+  
**Effective Manager**  
+  
**Regular Coaching**

# Most Sales Managers Don't Make Time for Coaching

**“My people  
are all capable!”**

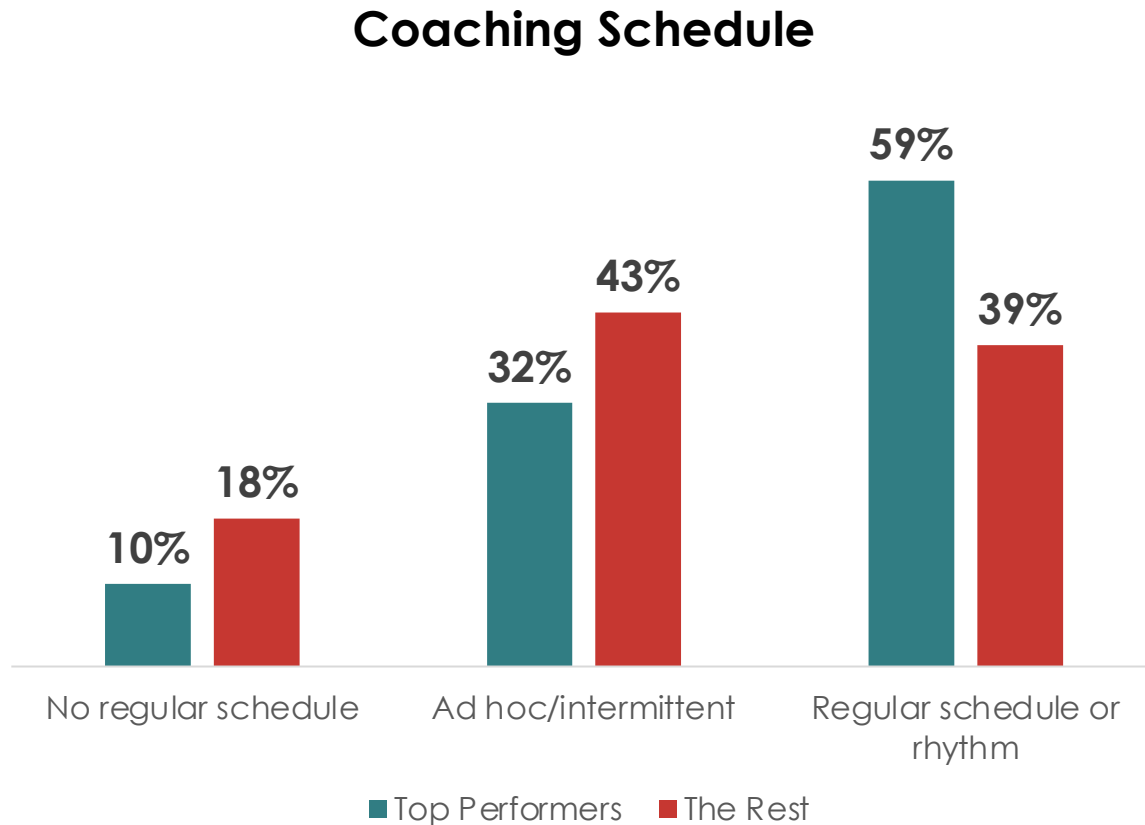
**“They’ve been in  
their roles for years!”**

**“They know where  
to find me if  
they need help!”**



**“I’m too busy with  
other priorities to fill  
my calendar with  
coaching sessions!”**

# Frequency of Coaching Received



Source: RAIN Group Center for Sales Research, The Top-Performing Sales Manager.

Top Performers are

**51%**

**more likely** to receive a regular schedule of coaching

# Example of Coaching Rhythm

<b>MY SALES COACHING RHYTHM</b> Develop or refine your sales meeting coaching rhythm.	<b>Hours Per Week</b>
<b>Daily Meetings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Quick checks and huddles: 10 minutes per day</li></ul>	1
<b>Weekly Meetings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Accountability checks (individual): 10 mins per wk</li><li>Win Lab deal reviews (individual): 1-2 per wk/avg 30 mins each</li><li>Sales meeting (team): 1 per week/60 minutes</li></ul>	2.5
<b>Bi-Weekly Meetings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Pipeline review (individual): 1 hour</li><li>Core coaching (individual): 1-on-1 check in/30 minutes</li></ul>	.75
<b>Monthly Meetings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Review plans, results, accountabilities (individual): 1 hour</li></ul>	.25
<b>Quarterly Meetings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Quarterly summary and strategy (team): 1.5 hours</li><li>Team building meeting/training: 1.5 hours</li></ul>	< .25
<b>Average time in meetings per week per seller</b>	<b>Approx. 5 hours</b>

# Set the Table for Sales Manager Success



Attend seller training



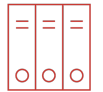
Attend sales manager specific training



Drive accountability through managers



Focus on coaching skills



Provide coaching guides



Drive productivity through managers



Offer grading rubrics for managers



Provide simulations for managers



Use AI and virtual coach feedback



Develop a meeting and coaching cadence for managers



Ask managers to run a 90-Day Sales Achievement Challenge with their teams

# 3 Areas of Focus for Sales Enablement



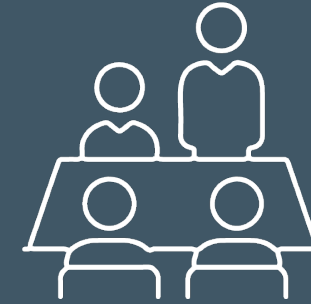
## 1. Improve Sales Productivity

- When sellers are productive, they perform better.
- Coach sellers to manage their time and invest it in their GIAs
- Positive changes in seller productivity have an outsize impact on results



## 2. Develop Multi-Skilled Sellers

- Buyers report that many sellers lack the skills to influence purchasing decisions
- To develop stronger sellers, start with the value they provide
- The best sellers are skilled across the sales cycle



## 3. Leverage Sales Managers

- Sales managers must play 10 key roles to be successful
- Sellers are more likely to be Top Performers with the combination of an effective manager, effective training, and regular coaching
- Many sales managers don't make time for coaching



# Top Sales Leader/Enablement Challenges & Priorities

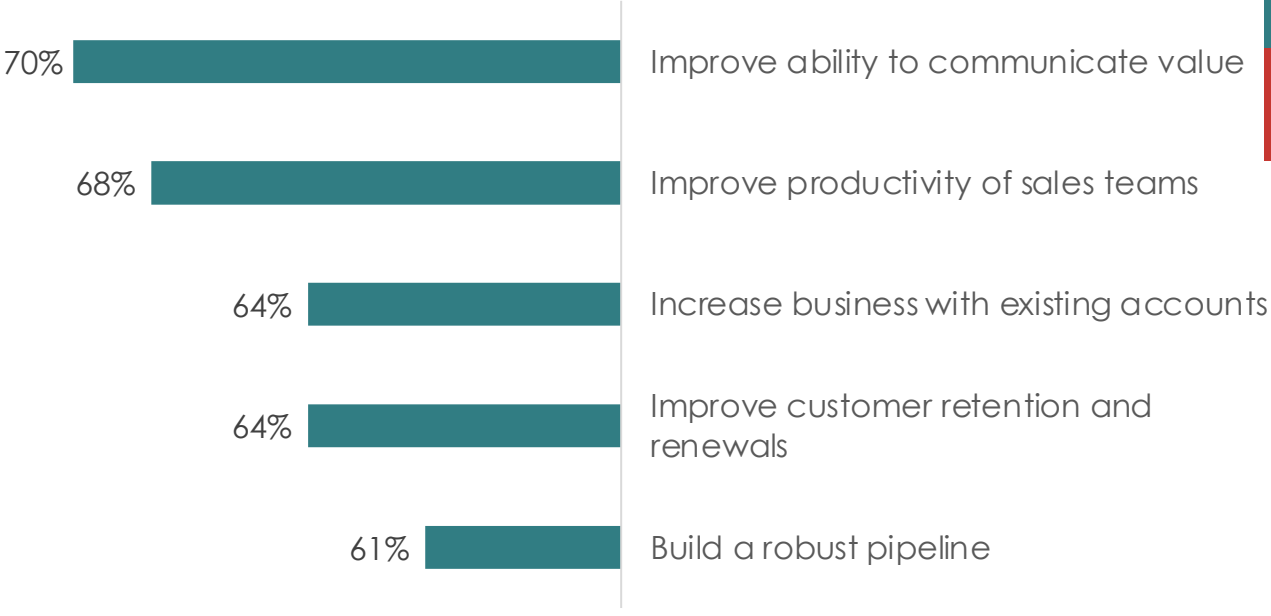
## Top 5 Challenges

% Very Challenging



## Top 5 Priorities

% Very Important



Source: RAIN Group Center for Sales Research, Top Challenges Facing Sales and Enablement Leaders.



# Poll

Which of the following are high priorities for your organization?

- Improve ability to create value
- Improve productivity of sellers and sales teams
- Increase business with existing accounts
- Improve customer retention, repeat business, and renewals
- Build a robust pipeline
- Improve sales opportunity approach and planning
- Improve sellers' ability to inspire with ideas
- Improve sales managers' effectiveness
- Retain top sales talent
- Drive new logos/accounts won

# RAIN Group Can Help



# RAIN Group Total Access<sup>®</sup>

Subscription-based sales training for your team.

- **Complete access** to world-class, award-winning sales training
- **77 modules** covering the complete sales cycle and sales management, organized across 11 programs
- **4 delivery modalities:** Instructor-led (ILT), Virtual ILT (VILT), hybrid, and self-study
- **Manager coaching discussion guides** and application assignments for each module
- **Core sales planners** for conversations, opportunity management, account management, prospecting, and more.
- **90-Day Sales Achievement Challenge** implementation and coaching guide
- **Just-in-time learning** with bite-sized videos, job-aids, and tools quickly accessible when sellers need it
- **Training implementation** best practices, checklists, and tools for success
- **Train-the-Trainer and Coach Certification** processes
- **Facilitator walkthroughs** of all modules and programs

Low Per-Person Subscription

Develop **Top Performers**.  
Drive Business **Results**.

# RAIN Group Can Help

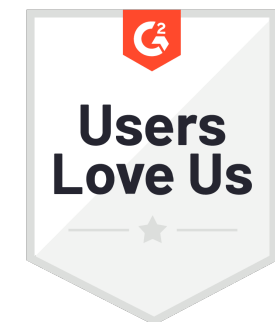
We help organizations:

- Enhance sales capability with award-winning sales training
- Design and execute strategic account management initiatives
- Increase effectiveness of sales management and coaching

**Best IP:** We study buying and selling relentlessly through the RAIN Group Center for Sales Research. Our research and field work allows us to create industry-leading intellectual property to help our clients achieve the greatest success.

**Best Education System:** We use the best education approaches, methods, and technologies to make training work, stick, and transfer to the job.

**Best Results:** We make it our mission to drive value and achieve the highest client satisfaction through excellence in quality and producing transformational results for our clients.



# Thank You

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