



EBOOK

## WINNING 2026: 3 WAYS SALES LEADERS CAN TURN RISK INTO GROWTH

Activate your team to lift win rates, diversify growth sources, and protect key accounts.

## Note from the CEO

If you're responsible for driving revenue—whether you lead sales, sales enablement, or revenue operations—the pressure you're facing today likely feels different than expectations just a few years ago. Leadership teams, investors, and boards have always pushed for growth and discipline, but now they're asking for more of both at the same time. Targets stay ambitious even as the mandate to do more with less sharpens and budgets come under closer scrutiny. Buying groups are larger and more demanding. And the usual levers, like adding more sellers, more tech, and more pipeline, only go so far unless you change how your teams sell and lead.

The 2026 Outlook in [Gartner's Chief Sales Officer Quarterly \(3Q25\)](#) highlights three big risks for CSOs:

- Pressure to grow at low cost
- Revenue concentrated in a small set of customers, segments, or offerings
- Stakeholder turnover that puts critical opportunities and accounts at risk

If these challenges look familiar, you're not alone. In my conversations with CSOs, CROs, and sales leaders across industries, these themes surface again and again.

You can't hire your way out of these threats, and you can't just buy another tool and hope it fixes them. The leaders who pull ahead will execute better, making sharper choices about where to focus while building the capabilities to win the right deals, in the right places, in ways that can withstand change.

At RAIN Group, we see that organizations succeed when they consistently:

1. Treat win rate as a core growth lever
2. Use sales plays to turn growth priorities into clear, field-ready direction
3. Build stakeholder resilience rather than depending on a single champion

The pages that follow outline three strategic responses to the challenges confronting revenue drivers.

I encourage you to share this guide with your sales, revenue operations, and enablement leaders. Use it to anchor conversations like:

- What will we do to improve win rates in the next 12 months?
- Which sales plays will matter most for diversification and growth?
- How will we reduce our exposure to stakeholder turnover in our most important deals and accounts?

My hope is that this guide helps you answer those questions with greater clarity and turn those answers into action.

Best,

Scott McDonald  
Chief Executive Officer  
RAIN Group

## OPPORTUNITY #1

# Improve Win Rates as a Lever for Profitable Growth

For many sales leaders, win rate is reported, not managed. With constrained budgets and heightened scrutiny of every dollar of growth, passively accepting win rate is a missed opportunity. As Gartner calls out in its [Chief Sales Officer Quarterly \(3Q25\)](#), a central challenge for sales leaders in 2026 is balancing growth and cost. Too often, the focus falls on cutting expenses when the real opportunity lies in improving win rates.

For the C-suite, the question is less, “How do we get more opportunities into the pipeline?” and more, “How do we convert more of the opportunities we already have?” Every percentage-point increase in win rate delivers outsized profit growth because most sales costs stay fixed.

Consider a \$100 million organization that raises its win rate from 25% to 30%, holding lead volume and cost constant. That five-point increase in win rate produces a 20% lift in revenue—about \$20 million—while total selling expense stays roughly flat, meaning selling expense per deal actually goes down.

Here’s why that creates such dramatic margin improvement: with 20% more revenue and flat fixed costs, you’re spreading the same overhead across a larger base. For that same B2B organization with \$50 million in fixed sales and overhead costs, that 20% revenue lift translates to more than eight percentage points of margin improvement. In companies with higher fixed-cost structures, common in sales-led SaaS and services models, margin gains can reach 10 to 12 points—just through better selling.

How do they do it? In our experience, organizations that materially improve win rates:

- Treat win rate as a designed outcome, not a reporting artifact
- Focus on the specific moments in the sales process where deals are won or lost
- Equip managers to coach seller execution, not just inspect pipeline

As you look at your own organization, use win rate as both a lens on current performance and a starting point for focused leadership discussion. Ask:

- Do we truly know where and why we’re losing?
- Are our best opportunities being pursued with our strongest selling strategies?
- If we needed a three- to five-point win rate lift in the next 12 months, what would we change first?

## Why Most Sales Teams Struggle to Improve Win Rates

If improving win rates delivers such significant returns, why isn't it a top priority for more organizations? Many sales teams face deep-seated execution gaps: issues that sit below strategy and technology and show up in the moments when deals are on the line.

### The 3 Sales Execution Gaps That Limit Win Rate Performance

#### 1. Value Articulation Gap: Failing to Differentiate and Sell Business Value

Many sellers can describe what they sell, but few can articulate why it matters in a way that resonates with buyers' priorities. When every pitch sounds the same, buyers default to price.

Teams that close at higher rates consistently connect their solutions to measurable business outcomes and tailor that message to each buyer's context. [Top performers sell value.](#)

#### 2. Qualification and Focus Gap: Wasting Time on the Wrong Deals

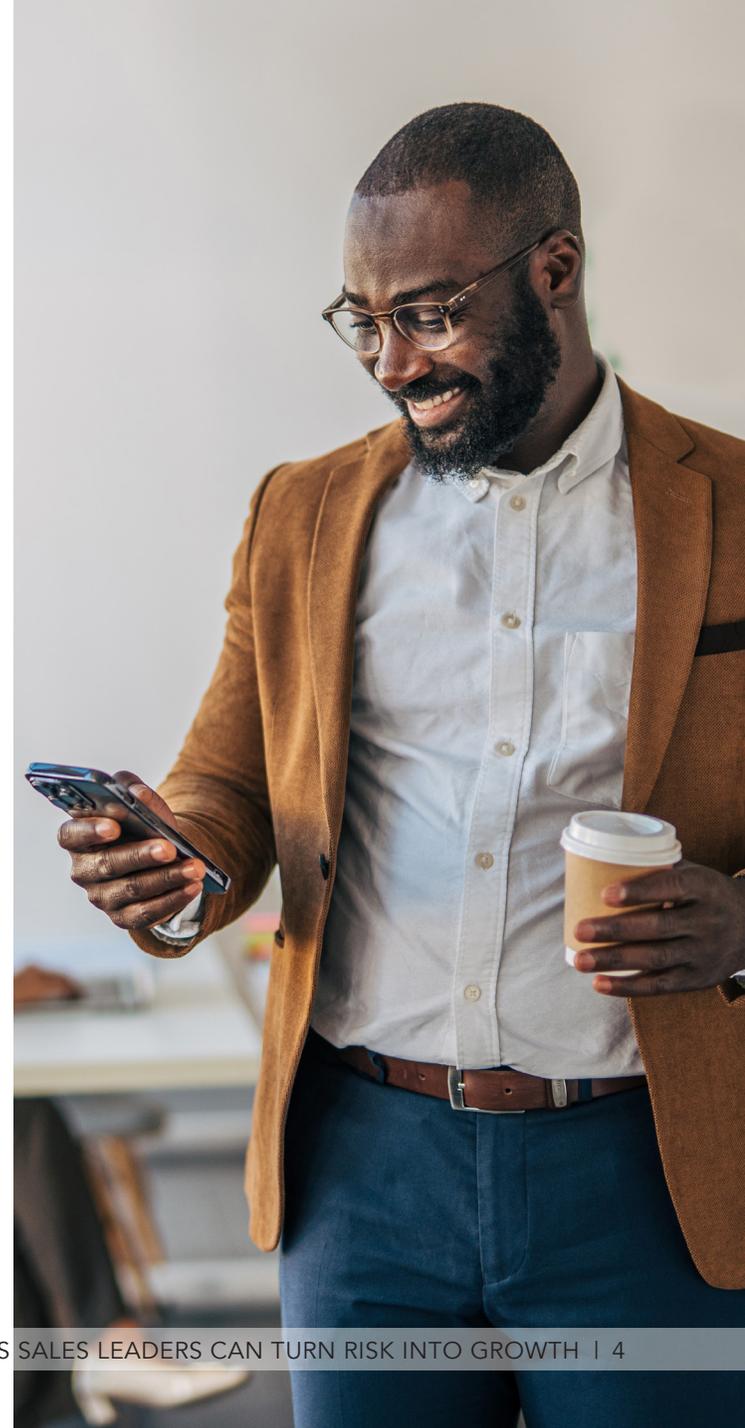
Pipeline reviews often emphasize volume over viability. Sellers chase poorly qualified opportunities, diluting effort across deals that will never close.

High-performing teams win more because they tend to disqualify faster, which frees up resources for the opportunities that truly fit. Shift the focus from more deals to better deals.

#### 3. Deal Execution Gap: Losing in the Moments That Matter Most

Even strong sellers can falter during pivotal conversations, such as discovery, proposal, and negotiation, where buyers form lasting impressions of value and confidence.

Top performers don't leave performance to chance: they plan, practice, and coach to mastery in each area.



## How Top Sales Teams Improve Win Rates

Improving win rate starts long before any negotiation. Our research and client work reveal three behaviors that consistently separate top performers from the rest. These behaviors directly address core execution gaps.

### 1. Sharpen Discovery

Go beyond surface-level needs to uncover both the rational and emotional drivers behind the buyer's decision. Selling is about change, helping buyers move from their current state to a better future.

To inspire that change, understand not only *what* buyers need, but also *why* they need it. Rational needs are explicit: financial, operational, or strategic. Emotional needs are personal: recognition, confidence, or reduced risk. Connect what you offer to both and you create motivation powerful enough to drive action.

### 2. Position Value Using Metrics Executives Care About

Translate your solution's impact into the C-suite language of margin, cash flow, and risk reduction. Move beyond features and benefits to show how your solution directly influences the [metrics that matter](#) most to executives. Use every interaction—from initial discovery to final presentation—to reinforce a clear bridge between their current performance and the improved outcomes you can deliver.

### 3. Defend Price with Outcome-Based Proof

When buyers push back on price, the best sellers don't scramble to justify it; they bring outcome-based proof they've been building throughout the sales process. Equip sellers early with quantified [value statements and impact models](#) that make the financial case undeniable. In late-stage negotiations, this shifts the conversation from defending price to confirming value, reducing discount pressure and protecting margin.

Sales managers can reinforce these behaviors through coaching and deal reviews that focus not only on pipeline volume, but also on the quality of value conversations. The goal is to make [winning without discounting](#) the norm.

The companies that master win rate improvement will do more than survive the efficiency mandate: they'll pull ahead of competitors still stuck in the cost-cutting cycle. While others trim to the bone, you'll be building a growth engine that compounds returns with every percentage point gained.

## Your Win Rate Agenda

To make win rate a managed growth lever, focus on the following three things.

### 1. Set a Clear Win Rate Ambition

Put a stake in the ground and connect it to how your sellers and managers work.

- Define the target and horizon (e.g., Increase win rate from 25% to 30% in 12 months).
- Align your team on how your losses play out. Work with your team to pinpoint:
  - Where you lose most often (by stage, segment, deal size, competitor)
  - The two to three reasons you lose (data-driven, not anecdotal)
- Identify the two to three seller and manager behavior changes that would help you realize a win rate lift, such as:
  - Sharper discovery around impact, ROI, and risk
  - Stronger value conversations that resonate, differentiate, and substantiate
  - More disciplined pursuit planning on must-win deals

Turn this into a capability plan. Make the win rate target and supporting behaviors explicit and visible. Decide where you need targeted training, tools, and coaching to build those behaviors at scale.



## 2. Put Win Rate on the Dashboard You Actually Use

Win rate needs to show up where you run the business, not buried in an ops report. Ask your sales or revenue operations team to regularly provide a snapshot that includes win rate:

- Overall, trended over the last four to eight quarters
- By segment/vertical (enterprise vs. mid-market, priority verticals vs. other)
- By deal size (strategic/must-win vs. the broader pool)
- By stage (where deals most often stall or die)
- Vs. key competitors (revealing when and to whom you consistently lose)

If you can't easily see this today, that's your first gap: you're trying to manage a core growth lever without a clear view of it.

## 3. Make Managers Accountable for Win-Rate Execution and Equip Them

Win rate improvement lives and dies with frontline leaders. You can't train sellers once and hope for the best; you have to coach the behaviors you want to see.

- Define what "good" coaching looks like:
  - Preparing sellers for live opportunities and upcoming conversations (discovery, value, proposal, negotiation)
  - Challenging qualification, the strength of the value and business case, and deal strategy (going beyond just checking dates and amounts)

- Set a rhythm:
  - Weekly: Deal reviews on top # opportunities that focus on value conversations, buyer advancement, and next steps (not just forecasts).
  - Monthly: Review win/loss patterns and identify where you want sellers to change behavior.
- Invest in manager capability, not just expectation:
  - Give managers a common [coaching framework](#), questions, and tools.
  - Provide targeted training and reinforcement that equips them to model and coach value-based selling, not just inspect pipelines.
  - Rethink how managers are managed. Make coaching quality, observed behavior change, and win-rate movement visible in how you evaluate and reward frontline leaders.

These measures signal that winning more by selling value is a leadership responsibility, not just an individual seller talent.



### How to Activate Win Rate Ownership with Your Team

Prepare a win rate snapshot for your next leadership meeting. Use the agenda to focus on the following questions:

- What's our ambition and what behaviors need to change to achieve it?
- Do we have the right views to manage win rate as a lever?
- What changes for managers, training, and coaching should start next quarter?

Close the meeting by agreeing on two to three concrete commitments for the next 90 days, including:

- Which behaviors you'll prioritize
- How you'll support them with training, tools, and coaching
- How you'll measure progress in both leading indicators and win rate

Treat win rate as a managed, value-driven growth lever to drive revenue gains without increasing overhead.

## OPPORTUNITY #2

# Use Sales Plays to Diversify and Grow

Organizations are at risk when revenue is concentrated in a small set of accounts or offerings. A lost renewal, regulatory change, or competitive move can create a gap that's hard to recover from.

[Gartner's Chief Sales Officer Quarterly \(3Q25\)](#) highlights just how vulnerable many organizations are when a disproportionate share of growth comes from few sources. It's a structural risk that causes organizations to lose flexibility and resilience.

Many organizations have an industry, region, or product line where they win consistently but struggle to replicate that success elsewhere. One way out of this situation is to build and run structured sales plays that make cross-sell, upsell, and adjacent-market growth scalable and repeatable.

## The Common Mistake: Expansion Without Structure

To build diversified portfolios that expand across customers, segments, and adjacencies, the best sales organizations don't just sell more, they sell broader. They identify where their solutions solve similar problems in different contexts, then equip sellers with structured, repeatable sales plays to reach new markets, expand existing accounts, and stabilize growth across cycles. Many organizations, however, struggle to get there because they pursue expansion without structure.

Diversification efforts fade when sellers lack direction and support. We hear it often:

- **No focus:** Sellers don't know which accounts or markets hold the best expansion opportunities.
- **No message:** [Value stories](#) stay product-centric instead of buyer-centric.
- **No proof:** Buyers in new markets question whether success in one domain translates to theirs.

You can overcome this by using structured, play-based approaches tied to clear growth priorities. Structure creates clarity, and clarity fuels momentum.

How do individual plays solve concentration risk? The answer lies in systematic execution.

## Sales Plays as a Diversification Accelerator

A sales play is a planned, purposeful set of actions sellers use to advance a sale or account relationship. Plays drive consistent progress, from discovery and pursuit to expansion and renewal.

A play includes five components:

- **Trigger:** The event or signal (a renewal, new stakeholder, or market trend) that opens an opportunity.
- **Target:** The accounts, segments, or regions where the play applies.
- **Message:** The tailored value story that connects buyer challenges to your broader portfolio.
- **Value Proof:** Quantified evidence and client outcomes that make the message credible.
- **Offer:** A clear next step that drives buyer action.

When well-designed and deployed systematically, sales plays open new pockets of growth potential. And when an opportunity calls for more creativity, intensity, and impact, Big Plays take center stage. Big Plays create breakthroughs, especially in the most important diversification initiatives.

## Big Plays: Bold Moves That Inspire and Differentiate

While sales plays are the engine of consistent progress, [Big Plays](#) are the sparks that ignite major wins. They are:

1. **Bold and atypical**, breaking from the norm to capture attention
2. **Inspiring**, moving the buyer to act and choose you
3. **Differentiating**, designed to create a memorable edge over competitors
4. **Signals of investment**, demonstrating [commitment to a long-term partnership](#)

Used selectively—when the stakes are high and winning requires an extra push—Big Plays amplify momentum and emotional impact. Together, sales plays and Big Plays form a complementary system: one builds structure and consistency, and the other drives differentiation and decisive movement.

## The Method: Building Sales Plays That Drive Diversified Growth

In our client work at RAIN Group, we help sales teams identify, plan, and execute sales plays from prospecting through account development so every encounter is intentional.

The most effective plays follow three core principles:

### 1. Identify Natural Adjacencies

Analyze where your ideal customer profile (ICP) overlaps with adjacent markets or divisions. Look for industries or business units that share similar needs, buying groups, or value drivers. For example, a firm succeeding in financial services might expand into insurance or fintech, where compliance and risk-reduction challenges are similar.

### 2. Reframe Value for New Buyers

Tailor your message so it resonates with each new audience, differentiates your solution, and substantiates results with evidence. These three pillars—[Resonate, Differentiate, Substantiate](#)—form the foundation of value-based selling and make your success in one domain believable in another.

### 3. Equip and Enable Sellers

Provide sellers with proof points, collateral, conversational tools, and coaching so they can engage confidently in new segments. Structured plays give direction, support, and confidence, directly solving the “no focus, no message, no proof” challenges that typically derail expansion efforts.



## Example #1: A “Protect & Expand Adjacency” Play

A technology provider is heavily dependent on a few North American enterprise clients. To reduce concentration risk and unlock new growth, they build an adjacency play to expand into mid-market segments in Western Europe.

- **Trigger:** Strong success stories and quantified outcomes from North American enterprise clients with similar operational challenges
- **Target:** Mid-market firms in Western Europe with comparable pain points and buying groups
- **Message:** “Achieve enterprise-level performance without enterprise-level cost”
- **Proof:** ROI benchmarks, performance metrics, and case studies from existing enterprise implementations
- **Offer:** A low-risk pilot designed to deliver measurable value within 90 days

Structured plays like this create qualified opportunities and net-new pipeline by focusing existing strengths on adjacent segments, without reinventing the go-to-market model.

## Example #2: A “De-Risk Core Accounts” Play

An industrial services provider gets 40% of annual revenue from a handful of global manufacturers. To reduce dependence on a few plants and sponsors, they develop a play to de-risk their core accounts.

- **Trigger:** Contract renewals, major plant upgrade programs, or corporate-wide reliability initiatives in top strategic accounts
- **Target:** Additional plants, production lines, and regional facilities within those same accounts
- **Message:** “Standardize your reliability and maintenance program across sites to reduce unplanned downtime, lower total cost of ownership, and improve safety performance”
- **Proof:** Internal benchmarks show better outcomes when multiple plants adopt the same program; case studies of scaling from one pilot site to a broader network
- **Offer:** A structured “Network Reliability Assessment” to identify cross-site opportunities and build a phased rollout plan

Plays like this protect and diversify revenue inside existing key accounts by expanding reach across sites and sponsors, reducing dependence on a single relationship without betting on an entirely new industry or customer profile.

## Your Sales Play Agenda

To turn sales plays into a real engine for diversification and growth, focus on three moves.

### 1. Name the Concentration Problem (and the Plays That Will Fix It)

In your next leadership meeting, ask your sales and revenue operations leaders:

- Where are we most exposed today by account, segment/industry, and offering?
- Which strategic “growth priorities” are supported by real plays (targets, messaging, proof, offers), and which are just aspirations?

From there, name two to three flagship plays for the next 12 to 18 months, focusing on the ones that, if successful, would truly de-risk concentration and unlock new growth. Then, translate those plays into a focused enablement plan, accounting for where sellers and managers need training, tools, and coaching to execute them consistently.

### 2. Put Plays and Concentration on One Simple Dashboard

Ask your sales or revenue operations team for a simple monthly view that includes:

- **Revenue concentration:** % of revenue from top 10 or top 25 accounts by key segments/industries and by key offerings/solutions
- **Pipeline by play:** Volume of opportunities tagged to each flagship play and where they stall
- **Performance by play:** Win rate and cycle time by play and which plays generate activity but not wins
- **Adoption signals:** Which reps are using each play and what enablement or coaching is in motion

The goal isn't complexity; it's knowing which plays are driving diversified, repeatable growth and where you need to strengthen skills, messaging, or coaching support.

### 3. Make Plays Part of How You Run the Business

Treat plays as a core part of how you manage the business instead of a one-time campaign.

- **Clarify ownership:** Decide who's responsible for defining the plays, equipping sellers, and coordinating with marketing and customer success. Set quarterly review points to refine or retire plays.
- **Embed plays in cadence:** Ensure flagship plays show up in pipeline reviews, QBRs, and coaching conversations (e.g., "Which plays are you running with your team this month?").
- **Invest in manager capability:** Give frontline leaders a clear coaching approach so they can plan and debrief play-related calls, coach the value story, and spot opportunities for Big Plays on strategic pursuits.

#### ✓ How to Activate Sales Plays and Big Play Plays with Your Team

Work with your sales or revenue ops team to create a concentration snapshot and pipeline-by-play view and refine tagging over time.

Share this with your sales and marketing leadership ahead of a working session. Meet to decide:

- Where your org is most at risk due to concentration
- Which two to three plays you'll prioritize to diversify and grow
- What you need in the next two to three months to put those plays in the field

Combine these findings, your win rate goals, and your stakeholder resilience tactics to round out your 90-day action plan.



## OPPORTUNITY #3

# Build Stakeholder Resilience Before Turnover Hits

In complex deals today, you're selling into a moving system of stakeholders, not a single buyer. Buying groups are expanding while executive and stakeholder turnover rises. Major decisions often involve double-digit stakeholders across functions, regions, and levels. Unfortunately, many commercial models still behave as if one advocate is enough.

In must-win deals and strategic accounts, a familiar pattern shows up:

- One senior [champion](#) carries most of the relationship weight
- One or two day-to-day contacts control access and information
- A broader stakeholder group exists in theory, but only a few are actively engaged

When that champion leaves, gets reassigned, or loses influence, deals stall or die. Even when opportunities survive, the sales cycle resets and the business case is reopened. Over time, that fragility threatens your broader revenue, not just individual pursuits.

The [2026 Outlook in Gartner's Chief Sales Officer Quarterly \(3Q25\)](#) points to what sales leaders already see every quarter: C-suite churn and stakeholder turnover are major revenue threats.

Your best defense is to intentionally expand your stakeholder footprint early, long before turnover hits.

Many teams talk about [multi-threading](#)—building and sustaining meaningful relationships with multiple stakeholders in the account—but few treat it as a standard, measurable discipline.

Three questions bring the real risk into focus:

- How many of your must-win opportunities are effectively single-threaded today?
- If your top sponsor in each of your three largest deals left tomorrow, how confident would you feel that you could keep those deals on track?
- Where do your teams have a clear approach to mapping, engaging, and aligning a full buying group versus relying on a few strong relationships?

These questions shift the conversation from, "Do we have a good champion?" to, "Do we have a resilient coalition that can withstand change?"

## The Revenue Risk of Single-Thread Dependence

Single-relationship dependence in key pursuits creates real revenue risk. [Forrester's State of Business Buying 2024 research](#) shows that B2B purchases involve around 13 stakeholders, and nearly nine in 10 deals stretch across multiple departments. Yet, sellers often:

- Focus outreach narrowly on one champion
- Tailor messages to a single persona instead of the group's shared priorities
- Miss opportunities to align value narratives across functions

Winning in 2026 and beyond means treating stakeholder breadth as a core sales discipline from day one.

## Multi-Threading: Your Defense Against Volatility

Reducing stakeholder risk requires multi-threading. The best sellers use individual champions as entry points into the broader buying group, orchestrating alignment among diverse stakeholders. They build coalitions that withstand personnel changes, keep deals moving through transitions, and preserve outcomes even when key sponsors move on.

### 3 Strategies to Expand and Protect Your Stakeholder Footprint

#### 1. Map Your Buying Group Before Changes Hit

Start by mapping the account early. Identify decision-makers, influencers, and gatekeepers at every level: executive, functional, and operational. Visualize their priorities and relationships to spot gaps in your coverage.

Build a stakeholder map showing alignment, influence, and advocacy levels for each contact. Update it regularly as personnel and power structures evolve.

A living stakeholder map is your insurance against turnover.

## 2. Tailor Value to Three Critical Levels

Winning sellers tailor value narratives to Resonate, Differentiate, and Substantiate, and they do it at every level of the buying ecosystem.

- **Individual level:** Address personal motivations and success measures. What does this mean for their role, their team, their career?
- **Buying group level:** Align value around shared business challenges to create cross-functional consensus. What unites finance, operations, and IT?
- **Organization level:** Connect outcomes to enterprise-wide goals and strategic priorities. How does this advance the company's broader mission?

This three-level approach transforms stakeholder engagement, turning fragmented conversations into aligned, value-reinforcing narratives across the organization.

## 3. Build Sponsorship Depth and Breadth

Strong deals have both horizontal and vertical alignment. Engage frontline advocates, mid-level operators, and senior decision-makers simultaneously. Map relationships across departments to eliminate single points of failure.

Sellers who tailor their approach to each stakeholder, from CFOs seeking ROI to COOs seeking efficiency, evolve to enterprise [value selling](#).

Depth protects deal continuity when sponsors change. Breadth protects the account.

## Example: Multi-Threading in Action

A global consulting firm was pursuing a strategic transformation deal with a large manufacturing client. The relationship centered on one senior sponsor, the COO. When that executive left mid-cycle, the deal froze.

Instead of starting over, the pursuit team got deliberate about expanding their stakeholder base by:

- Mapping the buying group across finance, operations, and HR
- Reframing value messages to each function's priorities
- Reactivating conversations using proof points tied to shared business outcomes

Within weeks, they reengaged two additional executive sponsors and built a coalition of mid-level supporters who maintained momentum through the transition.

The team closed the deal a few months later with a different executive sponsor than the one who initiated it. Stakeholder breadth turned a potential loss into a strategic win.

## Protecting Your Most Important Opportunities

Your largest pursuits and most [strategic accounts](#) can't afford single-thread vulnerability. These opportunities demand deliberate, multi-threaded stakeholder engagement from the first conversation through long-term account expansion. Resilient growth depends on how well you connect.

### Your Stakeholder Resilience Agenda

To integrate stakeholder resilience into your business, start with these three steps:

#### 1. Make Exposure Visible

Start by naming where you're most at risk.

In your next account, deal, or leadership review, ask your sales and account leaders:

- **How single-threaded are our most important opportunities?**
  - For top deals and key accounts, how many stakeholders do we have meaningful relationships with?
  - How many are economic buyers, business sponsors, technical evaluators, end users, or influencers?

- **What happens when a key sponsor leaves today?**
  - Do we have a clear playbook to re-anchor the opportunity?
  - How often do we see deals stall, shrink, or disappear after a leadership change?
- **Do our account plans include real stakeholder maps or just org charts?**
  - Do sellers understand who supports the initiative, who is neutral, and who may oppose it?
  - Are there clear next actions to move stakeholders from awareness to advocacy?
  - Are we clear on what value looks like for each stakeholder group and how we'll connect our message to those priorities?
- **Where are we most exposed right now?**
  - Which top accounts or must-win deals would be most vulnerable if one or two people changed roles?

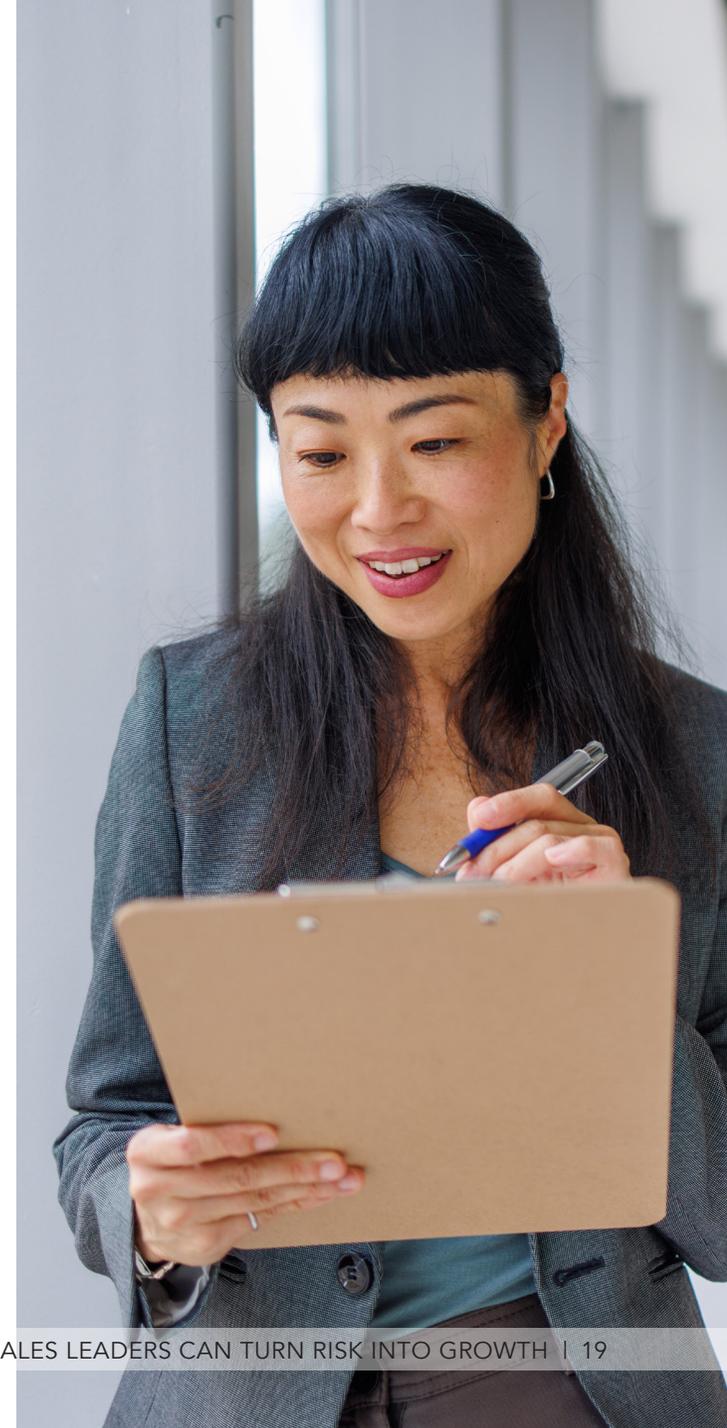
These questions turn stakeholder risk from a vague concern into a concrete list of accounts and opportunities you can act on.

## 2. Build a Simple Stakeholder Resilience Snapshot

You don't need perfect data; you need enough data to see patterns. Ask your sales operations or regional leaders for a quarterly view that includes:

- **Coverage on must-win deals:**
  - Average number of engaged stakeholders per opportunity above a certain size/strategic threshold
  - % of those deals with at least one economic buyer, one operational owner, and one technical influencer actively engaged
- **Coverage in strategic accounts:**
  - Number of meaningful relationships in each key account across levels (C-suite, VP, director, manager)
  - Number of functions engaged (business, finance, IT, operations)
- **Turnover impact indicators:**
  - # of key contacts who changed roles or companies in the last quarter
  - Pipeline and revenue at risk tied to those changes
- **Account plan quality:**
  - % of strategic accounts with a documented, current stakeholder map
  - % of those plans reviewed in the last quarter

Even a manually updated view for your top deals and accounts will surface risk you can act on in account planning, pursuit strategy, and coaching.



### 3. Set Standards and Embed Them in Your Cadence

Stakeholder resilience becomes real when you define what “good” looks like and manage to it.

- **Set minimum coverage standards.** For example:
  - “For all opportunities above \$X, we expect meaningful relationships with at least three stakeholders, including an economic buyer.”
  - “For our top # accounts, we expect relationships across at least three functions and two levels of seniority.”
- **Decide where stakeholder mapping and expansion live.** Make it a standing topic in:
  - Strategic account reviews
  - Quarterly business reviews
  - Deal reviews for late-stage pursuits

- **Support sellers with specific multi-threading plays and the skills to run them.** For example:

- Plays for [introducing additional executives](#) into the conversation
- Plays for engaging finance or procurement earlier in the sales process
- Plays for re-establishing sponsorship after a leadership change

Ensure managers are equipped to model and coach these conversations, not just ask if they’ve happened.

### ✓ How to Activate Relationship Resilience-Building with Your Team

Ask sales operations or regional leaders to identify your top 20 to 50 must-win opportunities and top strategic accounts.

For each, capture a simple view of key stakeholders, their roles, their level of engagement, and any recent or anticipated changes.

Share these pages with your account and regional leaders ahead of a working session.

In that session, answer together:

- Where are we most at risk due to single-threading or recent turnover?
- What specific actions will we take in the next 30 to 60 days to expand our stakeholder footprint in those accounts?
- What standard and cadence will we adopt to keep this from slipping back into “nice to have”?

Capture specific stakeholder moves, value messages, and executive-to-executive connections by account, not just generic action items. Fold those answers into your 90-day action plan alongside your win-rate and sales-play decisions.



## Win More, Diversify, Multi-Thread: Your Formula for Beating 2026's Risks

If you lead revenue today, you're being asked to grow, cut, and still hit the number. You can't hire your way out of it, and another tool won't change the story on its own. The leaders who pull ahead will be the ones who run a sharper commercial engine; three strategies to put your org on top are:

- Make win rate a lever you actively manage
- Use sales plays to aim growth where it matters
- Build stakeholder resilience so one departure doesn't derail a deal or an account

From here, it's about choices: what you'll measure, where you'll equip sellers and managers, and which deals and accounts you'll protect first.

Get those choices right and the risks everyone sees in 2026 become the reasons you win.



# RAIN Group Total Access

## Win 2026 by Building Resilience and Value Across Your Entire Sales Cycle

Top-performing sales leaders lay out a clear process for creating, reinforcing, and expanding the value case at every stage of the sale.

Equip your sellers with the skills and knowledge they need to focus on their best opportunities, make the right plays to win them, and strengthen their position by expanding their stakeholder relationship networks.

RAIN Group Total Access gives you access to our entire suite of training modules, videos, tools and assets, Train the Trainer and Train the Coach, learning journeys, and implementation support across sales skill, productivity, management, and coaching areas.

Train cohorts concurrently, assign different curricula per role, and launch on-site and virtual instructor-led, self-study, and hybrid training on your schedule for a low per-person subscription.

- **Complete access** to world-class, award-winning sales training
- **86 modules** covering the sales cycle and sales management, organized across 12 programs
- **4 delivery modalities**, including 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
- **Just-in-time learning** with videos, job-aids, and tools that are quickly accessible when sellers need them
- **Training implementation** best practices, checklists, and tools for success
- **Train-the-Trainer and Coach Certification** processes

[Click here to request a complimentary consultation](#) →



## RAIN Group Delivers World-Class Sales Training

- Modular, multi-modal, and purpose-built for the **modern learner**.
- Unique approach to driving **behavior change** through training we call Execution Assurance.
- Focused on driving the **business results** important to you.
- A **transformational experience** that ensures the development, adoption, and implementation of new skills.
- Action-oriented **coaching** prepares sellers for real situations and provides direct feedback.

# About RAIN Group

## Drive Transformational Change through Award-Winning Sales Training

RAIN Group is an award-winning leader in sales transformation, with over 20 years of researching and enabling top sales performance. Recognized by Selling Power, Training Industry, and Brandon Hall, the company's modular, multi-modal approach to sales training provides flexible and customizable solutions for complex global teams.

Organizations worldwide turn to RAIN Group to:

- Identify capability gaps and uncover growth opportunities for sellers and sales managers.
- Optimize sales strategies and processes to drive measurable improvements and business impact.
- Build elite sales teams with research-backed training proven to drive success in competitive markets.
- Equip sales leaders and managers with coaching and management skills to maximize team performance.

RAIN Group partners with clients to ensure learning is adopted, drives lasting behavior change, and delivers measurable results.



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