INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Congratulations!
If you're reading this handout, you've either purchased one of STAR's Sales Meeting Kits or you are evaluating whether or not to buy one. We commend you for being pro-active about taking direct action to improve the selling skills of your sales team.

Based on over twenty years as a sales training provider, we've developed this 6-page handout to provide you with practical advice on how to teach sales professionals so that your sales meeting is as successful as possible.

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TEACHING ADULTS IS DIFFERENT THAN TEACHING AT SCHOOL

How Do Salespeople Learn the Best?

Sales training is distinctly different from the type of teaching done in schools. Do not mimic what is done in school: long lectures by the teacher, one-way information flow from the teacher to the students, a lot of reading, tests, and memorization.

That is not the best way to teach adults. It is especially ineffective to use these methods with sales professionals. **What should you do instead?** As the leader of the sales meeting, you will be more effective if you match your teaching style to the learning styles of the salespeople. For that reason, let's begin with an overview of Learning Styles and what this means to you.

Four Learning Styles

Peter Honey and Alan Mumford identified four distinct learning styles.* In essence, you want to match your teaching approach to the learning style of the participants.

Theorists	Reflectors	Activists	Pragmatists
They want to understand the theory and enjoy learning a lot of facts , models and concepts.	They prefer to learn by observing and thinking (reflecting) rather than doing activities.	They prefer to learn by doing and discussing. "Experiential learning" is often cited.	They want to see how and if the learning will help them in their job. Willing to try out new ideas.
In a word: **LECTURE**	In a word: **READER**	In a word: **ACTIVITIES**	In a word: **PRACTICAL**

*Honey, Peter and Alan Mumford. *The Manual of Learning Styles*, Peter Honey Publications, 1992.

THE LINK BETWEEN THE “LEARNING STYLES” AND SALES MEETING KITS

How Does This Apply to Salespeople and the Design of the Sales Meeting Kits?

1. **Most salespeople are a blend of Activists and Pragmatists.** This means that your sales meeting should consist mostly of activities rather than lectures. We’ve designed these sales meeting kits to have a lot of *relevant* activities. The next page of this handout will summarize the main types of activities used throughout the various sales meeting kits, and includes tips so that you can effectively lead these activities.

2. **The activities have to be relevant.** Otherwise, the Pragmatists will feel that the sales meeting was fun but not beneficial. You’ll see that the sales meeting kits use practical, real-world activities and tools. For example, each sales meeting kit includes a planning form so that each salesperson can apply the skills and concepts to real life sales situations.

3. **This doesn’t mean that you should eliminate lectures, which appeal to Theorists, or readings, which appeal to Reflectors.** Instead, we’ve designed the sales meetings to have short lectures and short readings. Most lectures are provided in the Videos, during which a STAR consultant does two to three short teaching segments. Readings, when applicable, are in the Participant Handouts.

What is Your Role During the Sales Meeting?

To appeal to the Activists, **you will spend much of your time in the sales meeting using activities** such as role plays, demonstrations, and brainstorming. Each Sales Meeting Kit contains detailed Manager’s Notes about the purpose of the activities, how to introduce them to the sales team, and how to run and debrief them effectively.

To appeal to the Pragmatists, you will be encouraged in the Manager’s Notes to **provide real-world examples** to your sales team and to ask them to provide examples as well. The sales meeting kits also include **planning forms** to make it easy for your sales team to apply the skills and concepts to real life sales situations.

Occasionally, there are some lectures but **you are not expected to spend much time lecturing**. Most of the time, you can use the STAR Video as the lecture segment.

TIPS FOR USING AND DEBRIEFING ACTIVITIES

Overview

Most of the time spent in each sales meeting session will be on performing the same activities STAR has used with thousands of sales professionals. These activities are practical in order to appeal to the Pragmatists. Whenever possible, you should provide real life examples that support the teaching points in the Participant Handout and the teaching segments in the Video.

Activities Used Throughout the Various Sales Meeting Kits

Name of Activity	STAR's Advice
Brainstorm (as one large group or in small groups)	• Gather ideas from everyone; a good technique is what we call the ***circle response,*** allowing everyone to share at least one idea. • Don't criticize an idea; instead, praise-and-modify.
Discussion (large group discussions about the key teaching points in the Participant Handout or from the Teaching Video)	• Use open-ended questions (many suggested questions are listed in the Manager Notes, and we encourage you to add others). • Don't let one person dominate (including you!). • Do a circle response so that everyone shares at least one idea
Role Play (in pairs or groups of three)	• Be clear about the purpose and give everyone time to prepare. • Debrief it! The circle response works well OR a discussion in small groups, after which each group has a spokesperson do a report-out.
Demonstration (also called Fishbowls)	• Same advice as Role Play. • In addition, you can assign the roles OR do the demo yourself.
Application Activities	• Usually these are planning forms. Have each person share his/her completed plan with a colleague or discuss as a large group. • This is a good follow up activity for you to do 1-on-1.

PLANNING AND PREPARING FOR THE SALES MEETING

Three Planning Steps to a Successful Meeting

When you purchase a Sales Meeting Kit, you receive the following resources that are unique to that kit:

Manager's Notes – The cover page is a 1-page Outline that provides a "big picture" overview of the purpose, timing, and main teaching points. The remaining pages are detailed notes to help you teach each page of the Participant Handout. The Manager's Notes are for you only and are not intended to be given to the salespeople.

Participant Handout - Each attendee, including you, should have a Participant Handout, which consists of practical skill-based informative content, readings, planning forms, and notes for various activities.

STAR Teaching Video– Each Sales Meeting Kit has a Video of a STAR consultant doing two to three short lecture segments that range in duration from two to four minutes each.

Step 1: Print and read the Manager's Notes and Participant Handout.
• Read everything so that you have a general idea about the main teaching points, suggested activities, and the overall flow of the session. • Highlight in the Manager's Notes any examples and key points that you want to emphasize for that specific page in the Participant Handout.
Step 2: Watch the Video and then add more comments and examples to your Manager's Notes.
• Each Video consists of two or three short lecture segments. The Manager's Notes tell you when each Video segment will be used. Although the Manager's Notes provide some general discussion questions, we recommend that you write down additional questions that are most relevant for your sales team and sales situations. This will help you to lead a discussion with your sales team on how the Video lecture applies to your sales situations. • Write down some key points and examples that you would use to support the teaching points in the Video. Add these comments to your Manager's Notes.
Step 3: Ask for help if needed.
You should be all ready for your Sales Meeting after doing Steps 1 and 2. However, if you have any questions, visit: Online Sales Training Resources for Managers. We'll do our best to answer any questions that you have.

DON’T OVERLOOK SOME PRE-MEETING AND POST-MEETING ACTIONS

PRIOR to the Sales Meeting: Do the appropriate pre-session activities.
Communicate: Tell the sales team in advance that the sales meeting will include some sales training. If appropriate, give them a prework assignment (such as the recommended assignment for the Handling Objections sales meeting kit). **Set up:** Make sure that the meeting room has everything that you need. Notably: equipment to show the Video; one or more flipcharts or whiteboards for doing brainstorming and discussion; and sufficient copies of the Participant Handout so that each attendee has his/her own copy.
AFTER the Sales Meeting: Follow up with the sales team collectively and/or individually.
Follow up: Don’t overlook the importance of follow up. Research shows that participants forget much of the teaching points if you don’t do any follow up. Since most of the sales meeting kits include some brainstorm activities, a good initial follow up action would be to type up the suggested items on the brainstorm lists and send them to the sales team. You also should do 1-on-1 follow up with the individual salespeople. For example, many of the sales meeting kits include some planning forms that can be used to prepare for upcoming sales calls. You can follow up with each person to review the planning form and make suggestions.