

mindtickle

2022-2023

Sales Enablement Outlook

How 500+ sales & enablement leaders plan, execute, and measure success

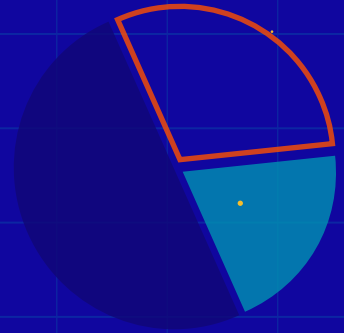


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Introduction

These days, sales leaders have their work cut out for them. Month after month, they're expected to meet large (and seemingly ever-growing) sales targets—even in less-than-ideal circumstances.

And it's certainly not easy. Markets are constantly changing. Competition is fierce. Seller retention is low. It's no wonder why, at many organizations, missed quotas have become the rule rather than the exception.

And sales enablement looks dramatically different from organization to organization. While some boast formalized programs, others take a more ad hoc approach. And of course, not all approaches deliver the same ROI.

We wanted to know:

How exactly are organizations approaching sales enablement today?

Mindtickle recently surveyed 500+ sales leadership, sales, and sales-adjacent professionals to find out. The survey explored topics including:

- Investment in enablement resources, technology ownership, and scope
- The makeup of sales enablement tech stacks
- How success is measured
- Priorities and plans for the upcoming year

See how your peers in sales are tackling today's revenue challenges, investing in their enablement strategies, and measuring success.



Methodology

This report is based on an online survey of 501 sales leadership, sales, and sales-adjacent professionals throughout the United States. The survey was conducted by Atomik Research, an independent, creative market research agency, between August 22 and September 13, 2022.

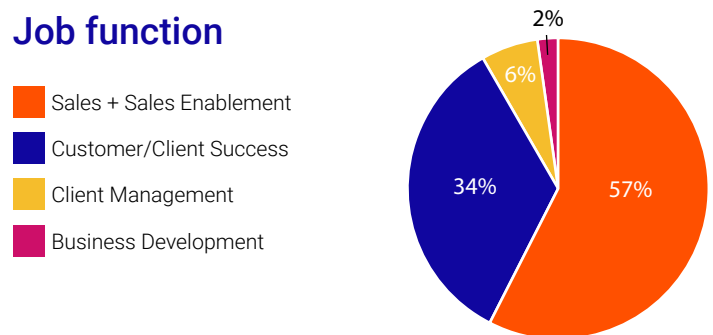
For the purposes of this research, sales leadership includes employees within the sales department who hold VP or C-Suite titles. Sales and sales-adjacent employees in the sample are employees within sales (non-VPs or non-C-Suites), sales enablement, customer/client success, client management, and business development departments. All participants are employed at companies consisting of 500 or more employees.

Here's a closer look at who we surveyed:

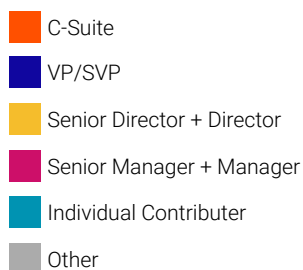
Industry



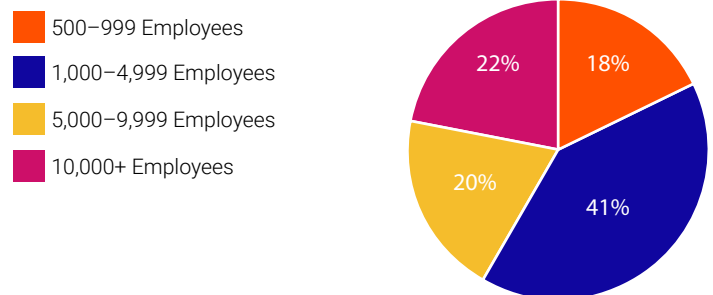
Job function



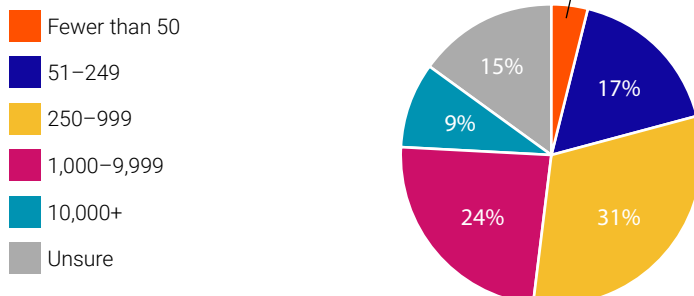
Level of responsibility



Company size



Number of reps



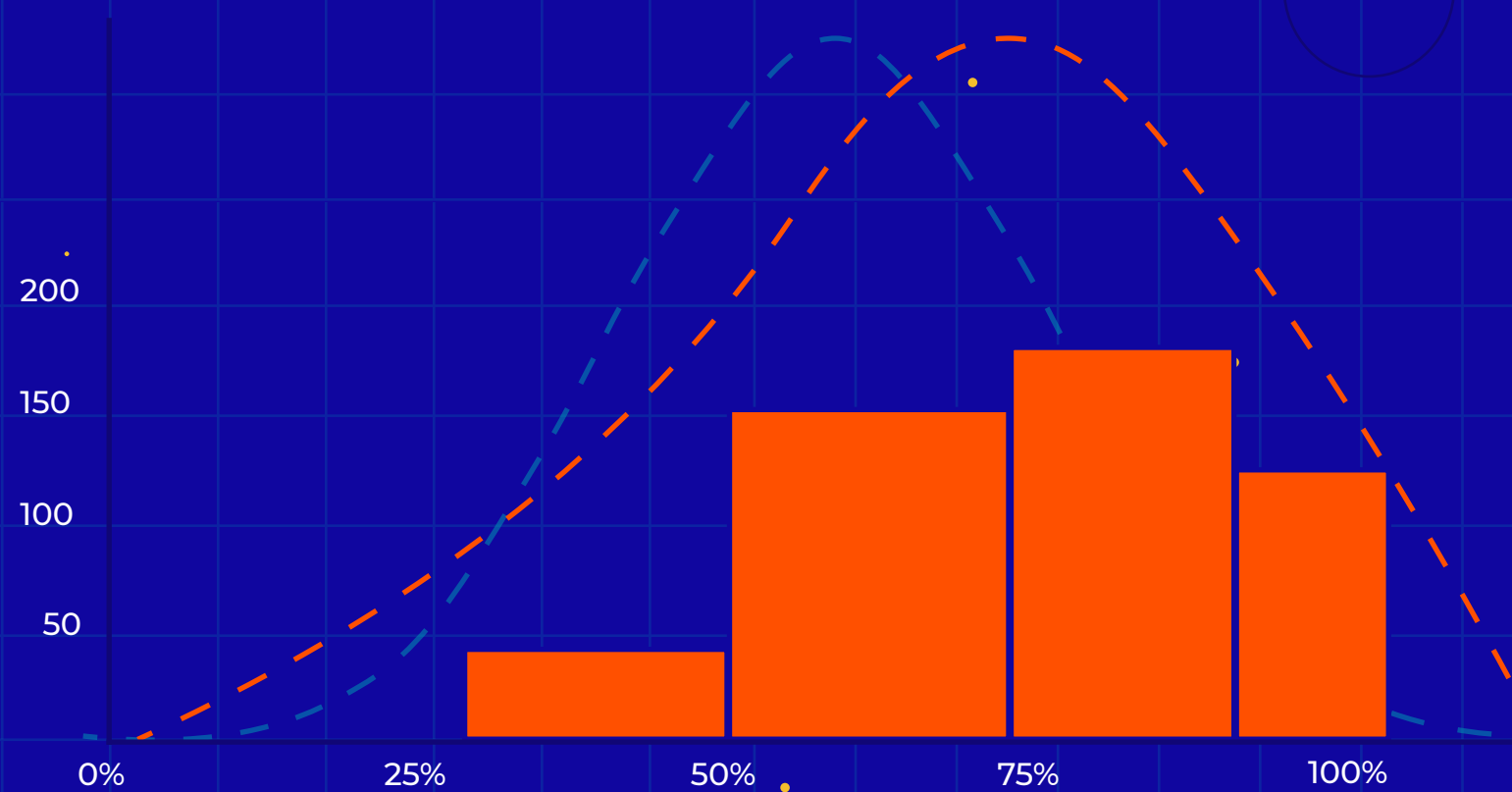
*Response percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding. Response percentages may also exceed 100% if the question allows respondents to select multiple answers.

Quota attainment

If there's one thing that keeps sales leaders up at night, it's quota attainment. In fact, missing quotas has become widely accepted. The bell curve isn't a bell anymore.

Portion of Sellers Achieving Quota Last Year

- 39% of sellers achieved below 75% of quota
- 35% of sellers achieved 75%–90% of quota
- 26% of sellers achieved above 90% of quota



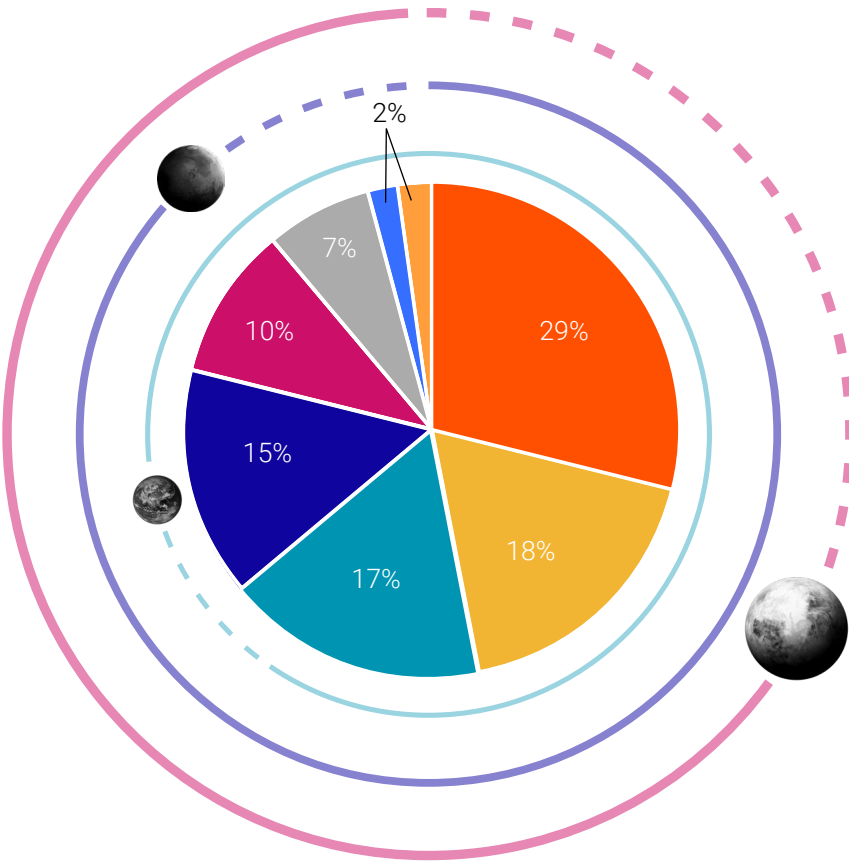
Sales enablement ownership

Ownership of sales enablement varies by organization. The largest portion (29%) of respondents indicate the Chief Revenue Officer oversees sales enablement. An increasing portion of companies—18%—house sales enablement under the head of revenue operations.

Surprisingly, 17% of organizations indicate that sales enablement falls under the purview of the Chief Financial Officer—which points to the growing importance of direct revenue impact.

Interestingly, a mere 2% of organizations indicate Sales Enablement is owned by Human Resources. HR continues to play an important role in delivering general, company-wide training. But on its own, this training doesn't guarantee a rep is ready to sell. That's because sellers also need specialized, personalized, and ongoing training tailored to the unique nature of their role in order to be successful.

Who most commonly oversees sales enablement



CRO (Chief Revenue Officer) or Head of Sales	29%
Head of Revenue Operations or Head of Sales Operations	18%
CFO (Chief Financial Officer)	17%
COO (Chief Operations Officer)	15%
CMO (Chief Marketing Officer)	10%
CXO (Chief Experience Officer)	2%
CHRO (Chief Human Resources Officer) / Chief People Officer or Chief Learning Officer	2%
Other	7%

It's well understood that cross-functional collaboration is essential to sales enablement success. Today, 68% of respondents already work closely with their sales or revenue operations team to improve seller performance—or plan to do so in the near future. The number is even higher—94%—among those in the C-Suite.

Even though leadership is meeting regularly, it seems there's a gap when it comes to execution. Organizations must think about how to collaborate in ways that are more actionable.

For example:

- If Revenue Operations (RevOps) sees deals stalling at the discovery stage, they can partner with enablement to launch discovery training and reinforcement and partner with front-line managers to deliver discovery coaching.
- If managers notice deep discounting, they can work with RevOps to uncover opportunities to adjust pricing or with enablement to improve value-based selling.
- If customer success notices an increase in churn, they can work with enablement and RevOps to uncover common churn reasons and work to remediate where possible.



68%
of respondents
already work
closely with their
sales or revenue
operations team
to improve seller
performance—or
plan to do so in
the near future.

94%
of those in the
C-Suite indicate
they already work
closely with their
sales or revenue
operations team
to improve seller
performance—or
plan to do so in
the near future.

Sales enablement scope

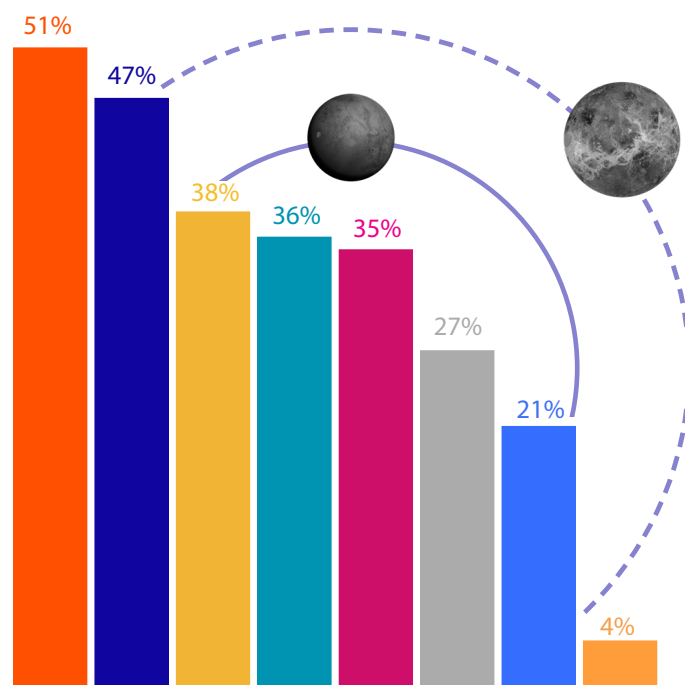
Regardless of to whom they report, sales enablement teams are responsible for a myriad of activities. Ongoing training (51%), sales onboarding (47%), and sales kickoffs (38%) top the list.

Notably, over a third (36%) claim responsibility for creating a coaching culture. But that's easier said than done. While coaching is key to sales success, it can be challenging when enablement alone is responsible for driving a coaching culture. Leadership buy-in is key. Enablement must also provide front-line sales managers with the data they need to identify knowledge gaps in their reps; templates, and forms for coaching execution; and coach-the-coach training to develop coaches' key coaching skills and behaviors. Then, managers can deliver personalized coaching—supplemented by the relevant enablement content—to close knowledge gaps.

Activities owned by sales enablement

Respondents could select all that apply

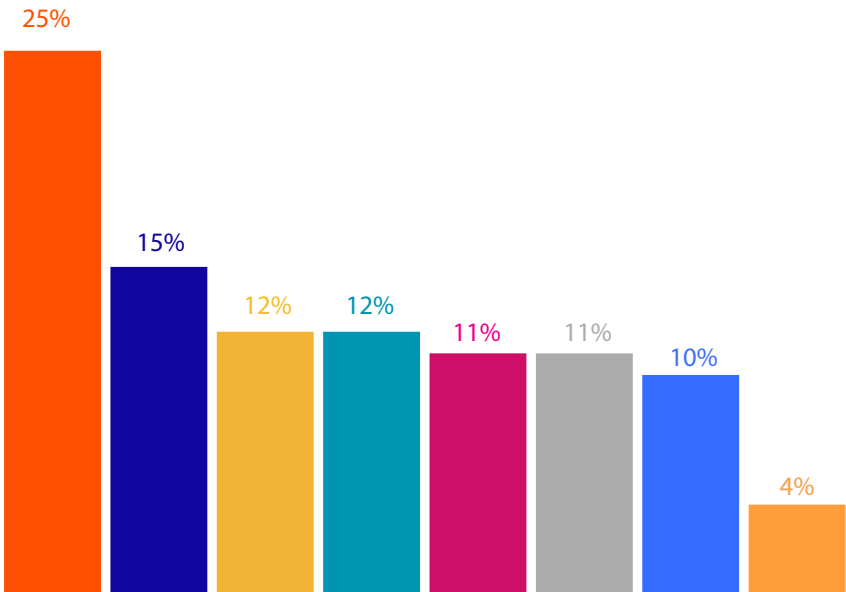
Ongoing training	51%
Sales onboarding	47%
Sales kickoffs	38%
Creating a coaching culture	36%
Sales certifications	35%
Partner enablement	27%
Ad hoc enablement content	21%
Other	4%



Interestingly, fewer than half (43%) of respondents say their organization has an institutionalized sales methodology.

Force Management/Command of the Sale is the methodology most frequently used, followed by **others**. At organizations with a sales methodology in place, 72% of respondents indicate they play a role in enabling and driving accountability of it.

Most common sales methodologies, among organizations who have one



Force Management/Command of the Sale	25%
Other Methodologies	15%
Baker	12%
Miller Heiman	12%
Ken Blanchard	11%
Don't know	11%
Sandler	10%
Other	4%



57% of respondents indicate their organization hasn't institutionalized a sales methodology—or they're not sure.

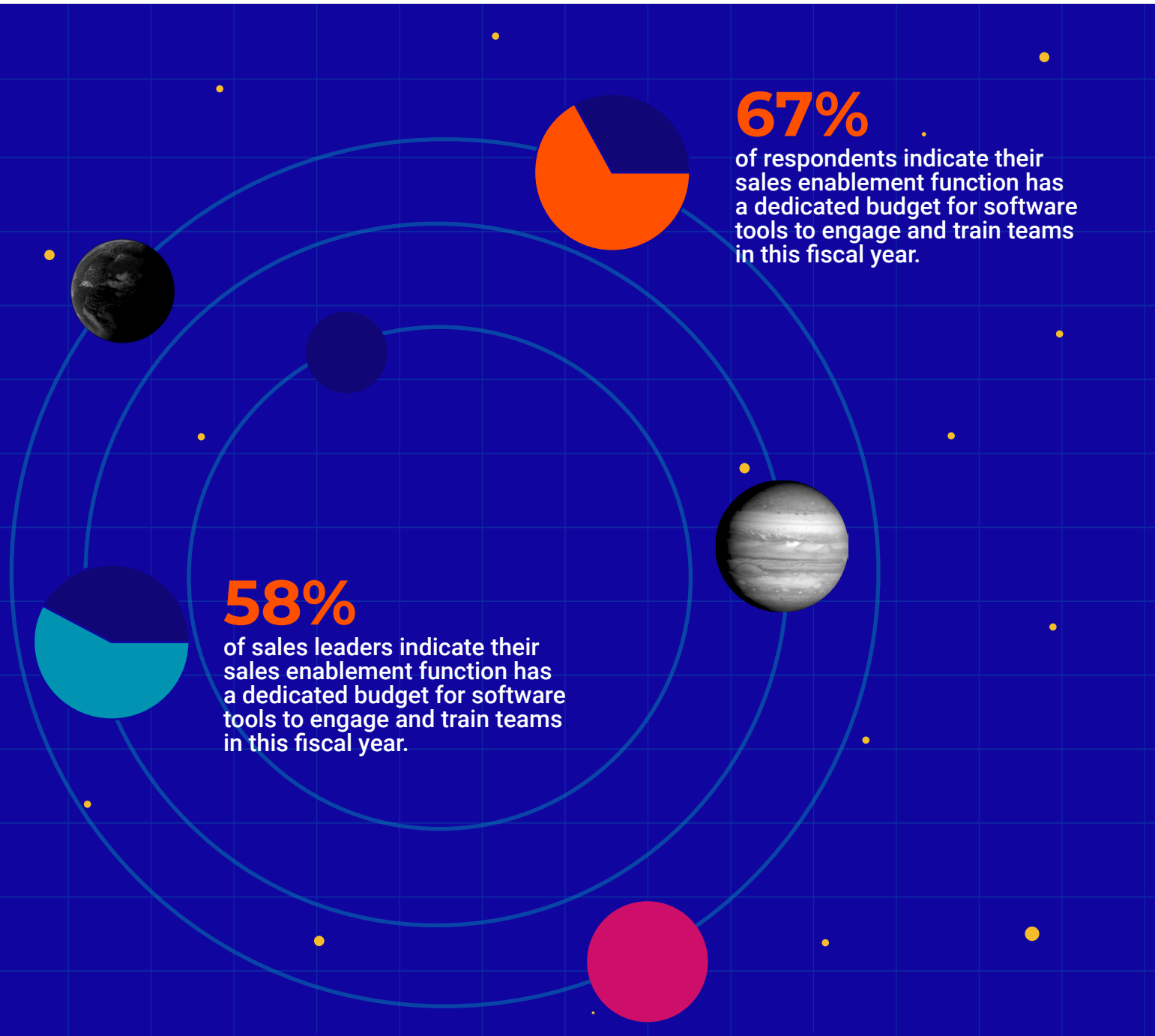
At organizations with a sales methodology in place,

72% of respondents indicate they're part of enabling it.

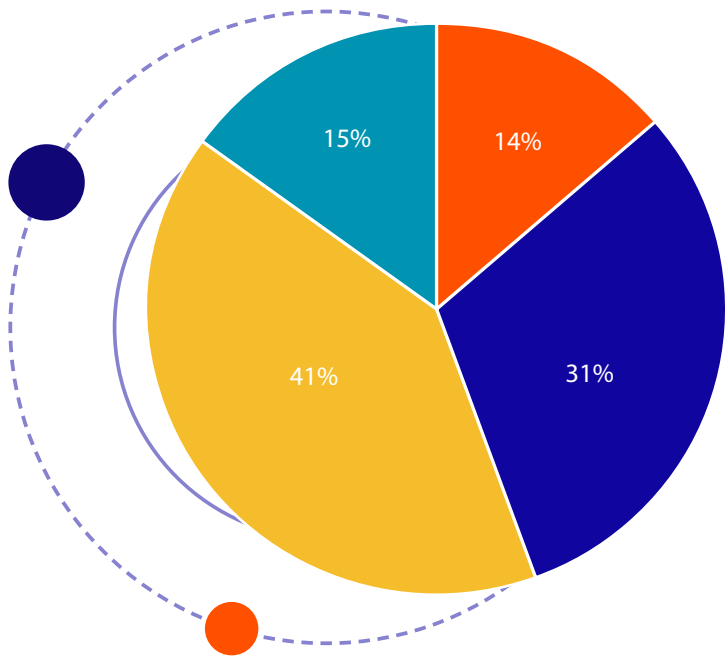


Sales enablement budgets

Overall, just over two-thirds (67%) of sales and sales-adjacent professionals indicate their sales enablement function has a dedicated budget for software tools to engage and train teams in this fiscal year. When looking solely at sales leaders, 58% say they have a dedicated sales enablement budget.



Among organizations who do have dedicated sales enablement software budgets, many have large ones. Over half (55%) have a budget of \$100K or more. When organizations spend big—especially in an economic downturn—it becomes even more important to prove ROI.



Sales enablement software/tech budgets

Less than \$50,000	14%
\$50,000–\$100,000	31%
\$100,000–\$200,000	41%
\$200,000 or more	15%

55% of those with dedicated sales enablement budgets have a budget of \$100K or more.



Sales enablement tech

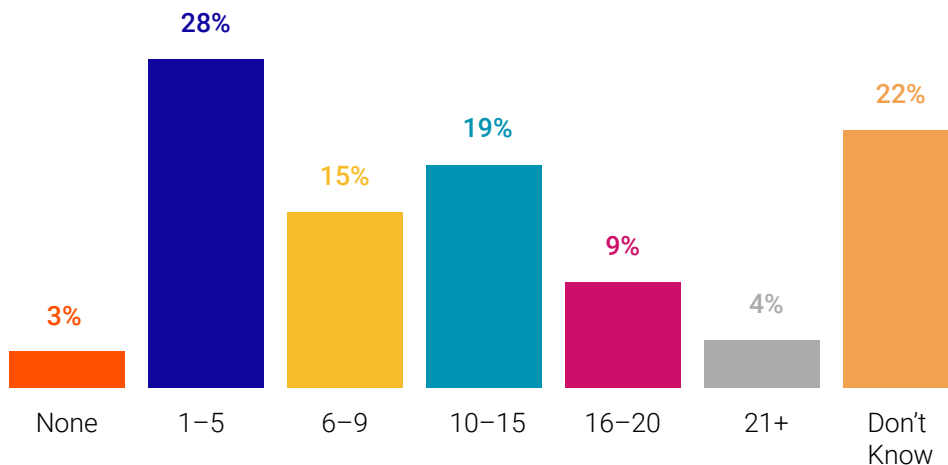
For any given sales challenge, there are a dozen or more tools on the market that promise to solve it. And many sales leaders are willing to invest in the right tools.

In fact, lots of organizations boast quite large sales tech stacks. About a third (32%) of respondents indicate there are 10 or more tools to support their tech stack. Notably, 51% of sales leadership professionals indicate this is the case.

However, investing in a sales tool doesn't necessarily mean it'll be used by the sales team. Twenty-eight percent of respondents report their teams use 10 or more tools on a daily basis. And 53% use five or more.

Sales orgs invest in many tools—but sales reps incorporate fewer into their daily workflows

Number of Tools Used to Support Sales Tech Stack



28%
of respondents
report their
teams use 10 or
more tools on a
daily basis.

53%
of respondents use
5 or more tools on a
daily basis.



It's important to note that the number of tools used on a daily basis varies based on a number of factors, including industry and company size. For example, over half (58%) of those in financial services use five or fewer tools in their tech stack daily. And 46% of sales organizations with between 5,000 and 9,999 employees use 10 or more tools per day.

Daily tool use varies widely by industry

34% Financial service companies use 5+ tools daily

81% Manufacturing organizations use 5+ tools daily

Daily tool use varies widely by company size

46% of sales organizations with between 5,000 and 9,999 employees use 10 or more tools per day

As organizations grow, complexity increases. Companies often invest in more tools to address complexities. However, adding myriad point solutions isn't the best approach. Instead, growing organizations must consistently and holistically re-evaluate their tech stack to look for opportunities to streamline.

In addition, you may have acquired a number of point solutions in the past, or technology that solves only one problem. If your stack is mostly SaaS solutions, it's likely the providers have released new features and acquired other solutions since you signed the contract, and there could be some overlap in functionality. Evaluate new and upcoming features of your existing products and compare these to platform players. There could also be an opportunity to renegotiate during a consolidation.



Measuring success

Sales enablement teams are at the helm of the ship, charting the path ahead and adjusting course to avoid rough waters. Enablement has a huge impact on business outcomes because they are the agents of change. As competition heats up, markets fluctuate, and new products/services are released, the enablement team is called upon to ensure sellers are prepared to continually execute in the field.

In the recent past, measuring the impact of sales enablement often meant focusing on vanity metrics like adoption or completion. Sure—these metrics matter. But they only tell a small part of the story. Increasingly, sales enablement leaders are realizing they must also track metrics that help them quantify the impact of sales enablement on key business outcomes—like quota attainment and rep retention. They need to track leading indicators of success, such as skills on calls and winning behaviors.

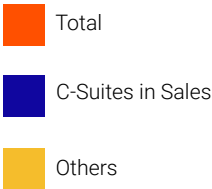
Failing to measure sales enablement impact makes it impossible to prove the value. And if sales enablement teams aren't able to clearly articulate their value beyond adoption and completion, it makes it nearly impossible to make the case for more resources and, in some cases, justify the existing allocation of resources.

Sales organizations must determine the metrics that matter to them—and then start regularly tracking them to ensure their sales enablement programs are running on all cylinders. Sales enablement must be closely plugged into organizational objectives—whether they are new product/service launches, key messaging changes, and pivots in target markets.

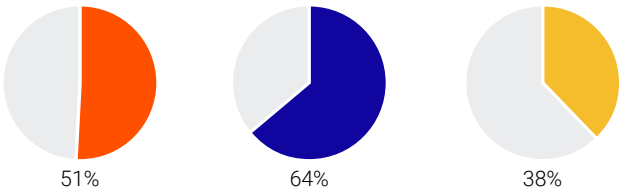


How organizations measure the success of sales enablement

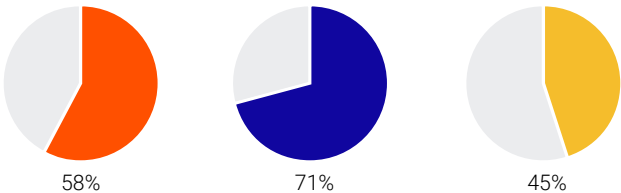
**Respondents could select all that apply*



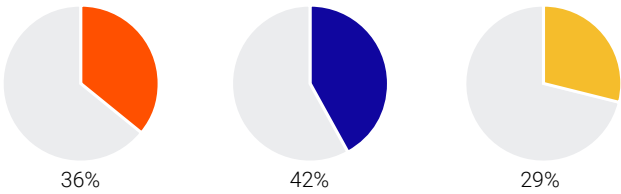
Time to productivity (the amount of time it takes a new sales-person to become fully productive from when they are first hired)



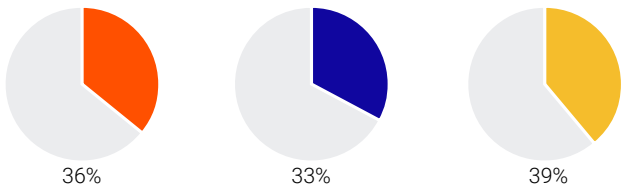
Business metrics such as quota attainment



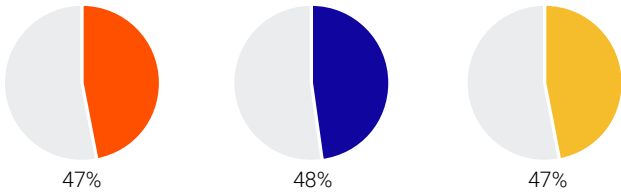
Measurement of time to milestone (e.g., quota, first deal, etc.)



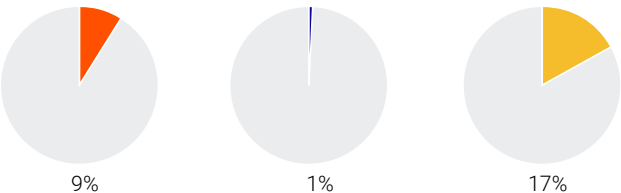
Completion of training materials and modules



Level of satisfaction and engagement of employees



Don't know/Unsure/Do not measure



Looking forward

With a potential recession on the horizon, many organizations are scrutinizing their budgets and proactively looking for ways to trim spending. Yet, if its value is effectively proven, sales enablement is likely to emerge unscathed.

Nearly three-quarters (74%) of respondents indicate their organizations plan to dedicate more resources toward sales training and enablement—even in the midst of a possible recession. This number is even higher—87%—among sales leadership.

There are likely many reasons for this increased investment. However, there's no doubt many organizations are choosing not to hire more sellers to hit goals—and instead are focusing on developing and optimizing the sellers they already have.

But where does the C-Suite plan to focus increased resources?

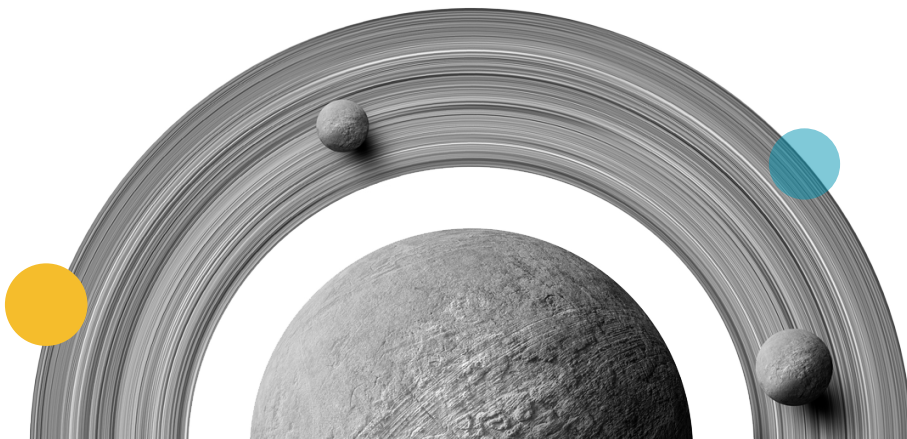
Improving the strategic importance of the enablement function within the sales organization tops the list. This can only happen when enablement's impact on deals can be quantified. This involves partnering closely with ops, delivering more just-in-time content for reps, and enabling the RevOps creation of custom content for deals.

Measuring return of investment (ROI) or business impact of enablement is a close second. The ability to do so will be critical to securing resources.

Improving sales coaching efforts among front-line managers comes in as the third most important priority for those in the C-Suite. Clearly, organizations understand the importance of a strong partnership between enablement and front-line managers. Front-line managers know their reps best—and are best equipped to deliver coaching that drives in-field behaviors and improves sales performance.

74%
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more resources
towards sales
training and
enablement.

This number is
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87% among
sales leadership.



C-Suite's top sales enablement priorities for 2023

Respondents could select all that apply

	C-Suites in Sales
Improving the strategic importance of the enablement function within the sales organization	49%
Measuring ROI or business impact of enablement	45%
Improving sales coaching efforts among front-line managers	40%
Driving higher adoption and completion rates of existing programs	30%
Creating more seller engagement via gamification, leaderboards, etc.	30%
Launching new training programs	24%
Enabling channel sales teams	24%
Onboarding more new reps	23%
Delivering training and content in the flow of work for sellers	18%

Company size also has an impact on priorities. For example, coaching seems to become a priority after a certain size threshold. However, coaching should be a foundational component of an organization's sales enablement journey—regardless of size. Incorporating it early on is easier than trying to shift the organizational culture after it's already been established.

Top sales enablement priorities by company size

	Total	Less than 1,000 employees	1,000–5,000 employees	5,000–10,000 employees	10,000+ employees
Measuring ROI or business impact of enablement	33%	26%	48%	24%	20%
Improving sales coaching efforts among front-line managers	35%	23%	42%	39%	29%
Improving the strategic importance of the enablement function within the sales organization	36%	36%	49%	23%	23%



Start maximizing sales enablement ROI

Today, a large portion of organizations invest in sales enablement tools, teams, and programs. Often, however, their efforts don't yield the results they'd hoped for.

Research tells us the more formalized the sales enablement program, the greater the results. Yet, as the results of our latest survey found, many initiatives lack the basic components of a strategic program—including regular measurement, an optimized tech stack, and alignment behind a consistent methodology.

Now that you know how other organizations are approaching sales enablement, are you ready to see how Mindtickle can help you meet and beat your revenue goals?

Request a Demo

