

Sales Operations during High Growth

Executive Brief



The high growth phase of a business instills optimism and excitement in staff, but it can also disorient salespeople and further burden sales operations. You need a clear strategy to keep staff focused and fairly compensated. This executive brief explains how high growth can affect sales operations and how you can turn this function into a strategic advantage.

High growth can create a dynamic environment that encourages everyone in sales, operations and leadership to deliver their best. This virtuous cycle can also generate resources needed to scale up, setting the stage for even more growth and helping you stay ahead of the competition.

Sales leader Anthony Iannarino takes an even more interesting approach to growth. He believes leaders should manage two types of growth:

1. Company Growth

Revenue and profit growth, increased market share, growth of new capabilities;

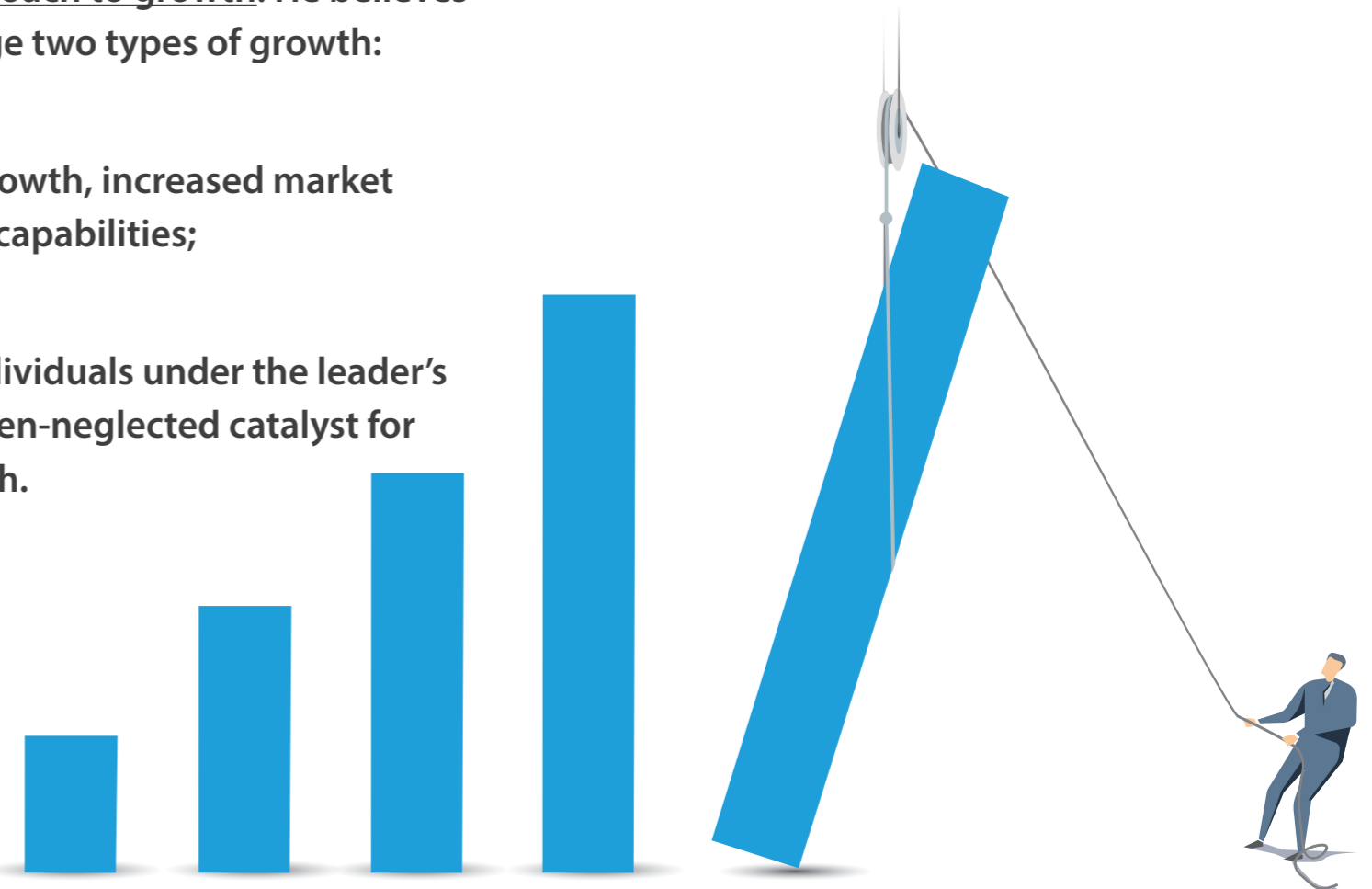
2. Individual Growth

The growth of the individuals under the leader's responsibility – an often-neglected catalyst for the first type of growth.

WHAT IS A HIGH GROWTH COMPANY?

A company performing better, or expected to perform better, than its industry or the market as a whole. Companies generating a return on equity of greater than 15% are generally classified as high growth companies.

Financial Dictionary



Key Findings

Investments in sales operations achieve economies of scale as a company's annual revenue approaches \$1 billion, according to [SiriusDecisions](#). During high growth, the budget, resources and responsibilities of sales operations continue to expand and evolve.

In the last 26 years, we have worked with many companies in all stages of the maturity curve. Helping our clients expand their operations has also helped us define a list of sales ops best practices during high growth:

SCALE CAPACITY

To ease pressure on sales ops, scale sales capacity accordingly – if you expand too quickly, the cost of sales will increase faster than revenue; expand too slowly, and you'll lose opportunities to the competition.

ONBOARD AND ALIGN

Sales operations also face the challenge of onboarding and deploying salespeople flexibly. During high growth, sales ops have to gently shift alignment of salespeople and customers without risking active opportunities.

COMPENSATE AND COMMUNICATE

Growth can also lead to changes in sales compensation plans, heightening insecurities. As salespeople raise their revenue base, commission rates will often go down to improve efficiency and maintain labor costs. Put yourself in their shoes, and prepare a clear plan to communicate change.

MANAGE SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES

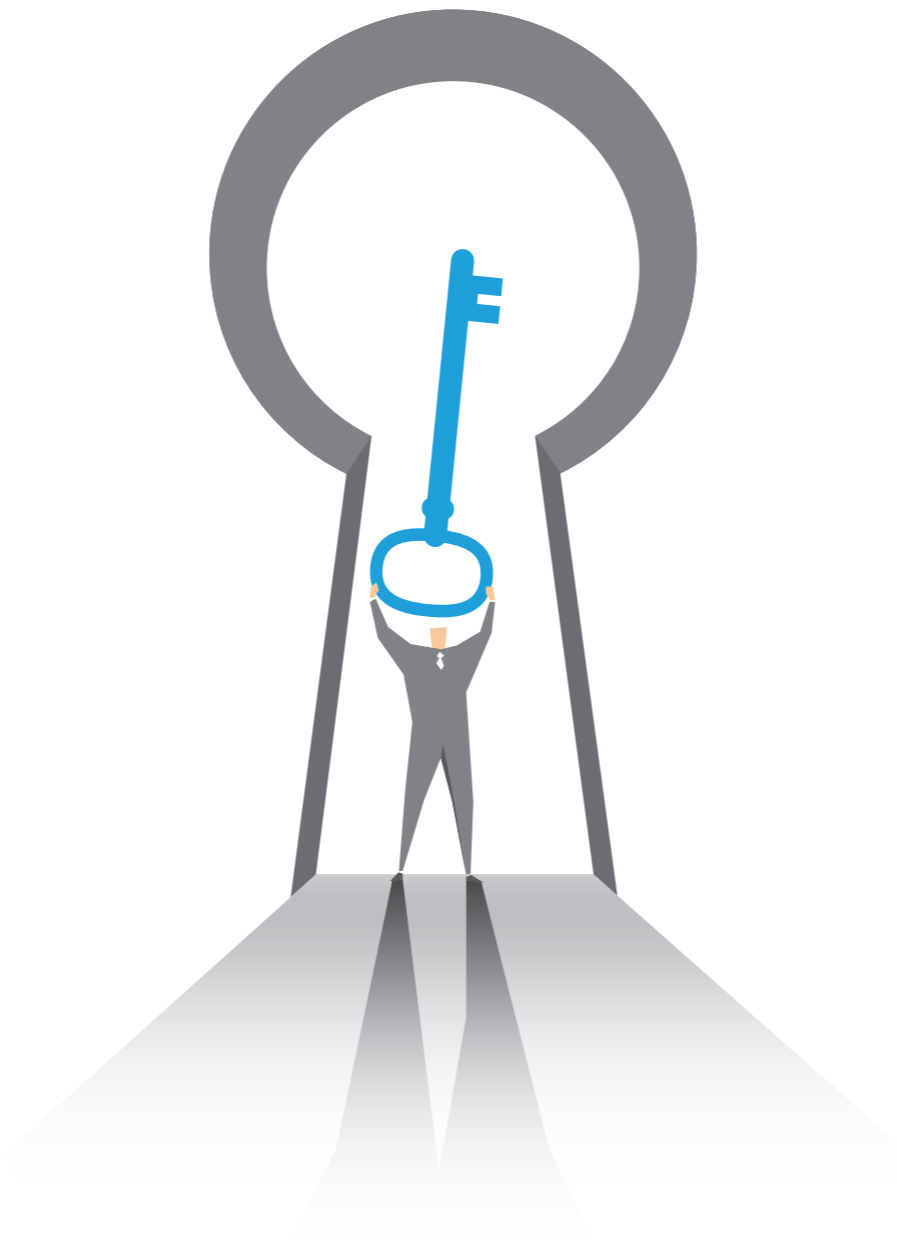
Just as it is important to invest in salespeople to drive growth, you must also ensure sales ops limitations don't threaten sustained growth. If the organization expands abruptly, sales compensation systems and processes that work on a small scale can quickly become unmanageable.

MANAGE QUOTAS

If your organization grows rapidly, sales operations will have a hard time setting and managing quotas. Often, these will be either too hard or too easy for salespeople to achieve. You may need to split sales credit between two salespeople who collaborated through a transition for a particular opportunity.

TECHNOLOGY SUPPORTING SALES OPERATIONS

Any investment in technology needs to be future-oriented to ensure the new system can grow with the organization. Systems should meet the needs of today as well as 3-5 years down the road.



Bottom line

Periods of fast growth can be incredibly exciting for an organization, but they can also introduce uncertainty for sales teams and leadership. This is when sales operations need to step beyond crunching numbers and creating reports.

As they shift focus toward more strategic initiatives, they will help the entire organization capture that momentum and cement its position in the market.

Learn more about sales operations, high growth, and how to manage change:

- [Sales Enablement during High Growth: Telling the Right Story](#)
- [Sales Operations as a Service Disrupting the SPM Industry](#)
- [Why Organizational Change is Not Scary for an Agile Organization](#)

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