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## **FEATURE: Are You Geared Up for Sales Success? By Jill Konrath**

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If you're launching a new product or service shortly, it's highly likely your firm has invested a great deal of money and time to bring it to market.

Unfortunately, many companies don't ever realize their desired results. Why? Their launch methodology is severely flawed.

Over the past 15 years, I've worked with numerous organizations in the hand-off of new products from Marketing to Sales. I've seen it all - the good, the bad, and the downright ugly.

Sometimes I shudder at the naivete of companies who have an "If you build it, they will come mentality." It doesn't happen that way. Ever. Well-trained, well-prepared salespeople are absolutely vital if you want your offering to turn into a massive revenue generator.

To see how your launch process stacks up to what's needed for success in today's market, assess your firm using this checklist.

Write "yes" if you agree with the statement in its entirety and "no" if you disagree. Be brutally honest.

___ 1. Marketing and Sales work hand-in-hand on new product or service introductions.

___ 2. The target market is clearly defined; our sales force (or channel) knows which organizations to call on, who to contact, the prospect's current situation and the business reasons they would consider alternatives.

___ 3. Our lead generation campaign delivers highly qualified leads to our field sales organization; they're delighted to follow-up because it's well worth their while.

___ 4. Our new products/services have strong, compelling, and financially attractive "value propositions."

___ 5. At launch, we always have well-written "proof sources" that highlight business results gained from the new offering.

___ 6. After the sales force is trained about the new product, we always train them on "how to sell" it.

___ 7. Our sales force is satisfied with the selling tools received at launch time; in fact, they're so good that the average rep is successful with them.

___ 8. Our salespeople don't waste any time creating materials (e.g., customizable PowerPoint slides, proposal templates) for their customers. It's all done for them so they can be out selling.

___ 9. Our sales force feels the launch analysis of competitive offerings, tactics and strategies is "complete" and "accurate."

___ 10. On launches, we always get the sales results we expect in the time frames projected.

___ 11. Marketing never blames sales for the less-than-desirable results; Sales never complains about high pricing or poor market analysis.

(Scoring below)

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Already concerned about your scoring - even before you look at your results?

If so, check out the all-day workshop I'm giving on April 28th with some of my LaunchPeople colleagues. It will be well worth your time to attend.

Here's the URL: <http://www.launchpeople.com>

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Scoring

When you're done, count up your "Yes" responses.

1-3 "Yes" Cross Your Fingers

Responses You're missing many, many things required for sales success. You'll be VERY disappointed in your results.

4-7 "Yes" Good Luck

Responses You're doing some things well, but there's definitely room for improvement. Success will be sporadic and limited to current top sellers.

8-11 "Yes" Great Job

Responses Way to go! You're doing things the way they need to be done. Enjoy your success.

So how did you do? Are you well positioned to get a jumpstart in the marketplace? Or are you hoping that things will turn out right? Remember, hope is not an effective sales strategy!

Prepare your reps for sales success and they'll deliver. Force them to come up with everything themselves and be disappointed.
Those are your options - your only options!

Make the investment. It's well worth it!

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Article by:

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