

2024 Executive Summary

As the demands of your role continue to evolve, you must identify organic growth, demand generation, and sales talent.

We hope to see you at Gartner CSO & Sales Leader Conference 2025.

Sincerely,
Steve Rietberg,
Conference Chair and VP Analyst, Gartner

Top takeaways

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Adapt your go-to-market strategy

To meet today's B2B buyers and drive commercial performance, you must analyze your customers' journey to identify specific points where you can influence their value perception. Avoid relying solely on traditional channels, which can lead to diminishing returns. Instead, coordinate across channels and enable sellers organizationally to deliver different types of value through virtual, in-person, and digital channels.

"75% of B2B buyers say they prefer a rep-free experience."

Robert Blaisdell,
VP Analyst,
Gartner

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Refine your strategy to drive growth with existing accounts

It's crucial to partner with marketing to develop customer-centric content for buyer enablement and change enablement. Encourage marketing to participate in both account and joint business planning to enhance collaboration. Coordinate sales and marketing efforts through technology to streamline processes and fuel revenue growth. By steering customers toward growth and embracing change, you can maximize the potential for success in existing accounts.

"61% of B2B buyers say that when it's time to act, their organization is paralyzed by uncertainty."

Elizabeth Jones,
Sr Director Analyst,
Gartner

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Establish a modern sales culture

To attract and retain top talent, you must identify and prioritize critical attributes for a competitive advantage. Given that traditional sales cultures are inadequate in today's labor marketplace, it's crucial to align with current generational preferences and market demands. Recognizing and leveraging generational shifts allows for tailoring job descriptions, work conditions, and promotion environments to ensure consistent success.

"We focus on filling an open sales role with a single individual who fits a predefined job description. But what if we focus on hiring for skills that are missing from the team instead?"

Christopher Gamble,
Sr Director Analyst,
Gartner

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Pair exceptional human skills with technology

Focus on blending human skills with technology by identifying activities where humans add unique value and assessing seller and sales manager time usage. Use technology to automate low-value tasks and augment high-value human activities, such as active listening and coaching. For example, evaluate the adoption of call AI by both sellers and buyers, empower sellers to use it autonomously, embed it into sales routines, and enhance sellers' understanding of buyers' feelings.

"Sales managers are constantly making trade-offs with how to spend their time, even when AI can materially improve both the quality and speed of their workflow."

Guy Wood,
Sr Director Analyst,
Gartner

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Make impactful decisions with revenue operations

Ensure effective utilization of data in decision making by communicating a strategic vision and building a roadmap to advance your data and analytics capabilities. Explore AI solutions, align cross-functional goals, co-create customer analytics maps, and establish a dedicated taskforce for insight sharing. Emphasize collaboration to boost sales success, lead generation, conversion rate improvement and forecast accuracy to maximize growth.

"CSOs need a dedicated team to gather intelligence and to challenge their thinking."

Tyler Huguley,
Sr Director Analyst,
Gartner

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Cultivate a modern sales enablement function

To achieve sales goals and accelerate growth, you must prioritize building a collaborative partnership with marketing, curating content that meets buyers' needs and ensuring alignment across channels. Combine digital tools with seller skills to create digital experiences that promote sellers as influencers within the purchase journey. Encourage seller behaviors that align to sales strategy and drive performance by implementing reinforcement strategies and providing a platform for social learning.

"Many sales leaders struggle to see the true value in enablement because of its amorphous responsibilities and lack of attributable impact."

Shayne Jackson,
Sr Director Analyst,
Gartner

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Approach the rollout of AI with intentionality and discernment

Considering the pivotal role of AI in revenue technology, you should continue to focus on its potential to enhance seller productivity, buyer engagement, and business growth. Maximize AI's benefits by discerning between hype and reality, and making intentional investments based on strategic use cases. Review your existing technology stack to identify gaps and build your AI roadmap, and evaluate vendors based on their ability to meet your needs.

"Evaluating Generative AI isn't just about being dazzled by what technology can do; it's about understanding the full spectrum of its impact—both the opportunities it presents and the risks it carries."

Doug Bushée,
VP Analyst,
Gartner

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Evolve commercial strategy amid market uncertainty

To effectively navigate the ever-changing market dynamics, assemble a strategic planning team to define your minimum viable strategy and prepare for potential future scenarios. Maximize indirect routes to market as part of an integrated go-to-market strategy by collaborating with marketing to better execute your indirect channel strategies and enable channel partners to drive scale, efficiency, and additive capabilities. Lead the sales function through organizational change by creating a compelling change story and involving sellers in the process.

"By 2026, 65% of B2B sales organizations will transition from intuition-based to data-driven decision making, using technology that unites workflow, data, and analytics."

Adnan Zijadic,
Director Analyst,
Gartner

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Innovate sales leadership for organizational growth

To navigate the complexities of B2B buying and selling, you must first acknowledge and address the inherent role bias by empowering sales leadership teams and identifying areas for improvement. Strategically engage with your board by projecting into the three-to-five-year future and communicating in both enterprise and sales terms. Leveraging their unique selling propositions, utilize insights from current customers and market trends to drive both immediate gains and future growth.

"67% of sales leaders say resolving ad-hoc issues prevents you from focusing on those long-term goals."

Rachael Buchler,
Sr Director Analyst,
Gartner

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Sustain success with adaptability

Gather a mix of quantitative data and qualitative signals to access opportunities and performance insights. Convert data into organized and contextualized information to drive actionable insights. Evaluate alternatives comparing the advantages and drawbacks, then select the best option. Execute the decision with planned measures of success to adapt to specific situations. Sustain by supporting decisions and change through culture, strategy, and enablement.

"It's not a matter of *if* another major disruption will occur but rather *when* it will occur."

Dave Egloff,
VP Analyst,
Gartner

Save the date!



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