

Incorporating IQ and EQ into Sales Training and Development

By Cindy Tincher

We've all encountered that so-called "natural born salesperson."

You know the one.

She works the office holiday party like a politician before the primaries; hobnobbing while noshing through the hors d'oeuvres, clapping folks on the back and joining conversations effortlessly. And then leading the huddle in less than 30 seconds with everyone nodding, laughing, and over-sharing.

The one who breaks the Rule of Silence in elevators by the second floor, get you engaged in conversation by the third floor and has you smiling by the time you reach your office on the fourth floor.

The friend that persuades you to go skydiving with him.

These are individuals displaying *Emotional Intelligence*, also commonly referred to as **EQ** or Emotional Quotient.

EQ is that "natural instinct" for reading the emotions of others and understanding others' perspectives. EQ gives them their natural curiosity about the world around them and an interest in the people they encounter in it – which is often accompanied by a knack for putting strangers at ease and engaging them in conversation.

EQ and IQ in the Sales Environment

In sales, Mr. High-EQ can quickly disarm a gatekeeper in "friend-or-foe" mode into an "open sesame" mood. Where other salespeople encounter a perfunctory "We're not interested," followed by the dreaded dial tone – Mr. High-EQ gets ushered into the inner sanctum to pow-wow with the decision-maker.

This prompts the question: does natural talent trump technique in sales?

On one side, can a low EQ individual with a solid, practiced, rehearsed sales technique match, or even triumph, over the high EQ individual with a less practiced approach to sales?

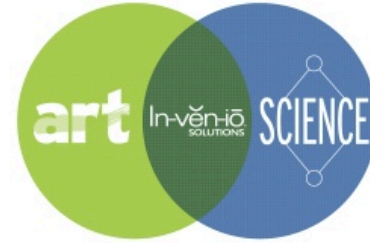
On the other side: can a low-EQ salesperson be trained enough in IQ (i.e. the "science" of the sale) to compensate for their deficit in Emotional Quotient (the "art" of the sale)?

Perhaps the question should be: how would salespeople perform if both the Science and Art of the Sale were trained – and developed – as if they were equally critical to sales success?

Because, you see – they are.

Let's look at some of the components of IQ and EQ in Sales:

- **IQ / Science** – Product knowledge, processes, systems, procedures, technical know-how
- **EQ / Art**– Relationship management, empathy, reflection, motivation, social awareness and organizational dynamic



Most companies look for EQ in potential sales candidates in the job interview. And rightly so; just like prior experience with a CRM or prior sales experience, EQ is a valuable asset to bring to the table when one is being interviewed for a sales position.

Can a sales force be trained in EQ?

Let's explore the landscape:

So companies tend to prefer, and select, job candidates with high EQ for their sales positions, but what happens after the offer is made and the new employee is onboarded?

Most companies offer some product and systems/process training to build IQ or product knowledge. Some companies offer sales training to new employees either to introduce sales rookies to the sales process or to further hone the sales skills of new employees with prior sales experience.

Companies often use training as an opportunity to "brand" new employees and imprint their culture upon them as well. They also hope "IQ" training in the technical process, or "science" of the sale, will provide more oomph to the salesperson's value propositions, more slide to their segues into probing for pain points and opportunities, more bang when talking benefits, and more clinch to the close.

Yet, how many companies offer to sharpen the EQ skillsets of new salespeople?

How might that impact sales performance?

What could EQ sales training look like?

Would it be educating sales professionals about EQ?

To make salespeople self-aware of the areas in which they could strongly leverage and/or demonstrate their EQ – as well as reveal to them potential opportunity areas for growth?

Would it be experiential training in active listening to further cultivate the EQ skills?

Skills like listening, taking an interest in others, gaining new perspectives, reflection, acknowledging, questioning and clarifying?

Would it be engaging in exercises to help sales professionals get in touch with their emotions, (fear, anxiety, frustration, enjoyment, playfulness, confidence, etc.) during a sales process?

Training on learning to manage those emotions? Managing one's emotions is the first step in managing the emotions of others. Managing the emotions of others is paramount in the art of selling, as buying is rarely an action devoid of emotion. Buyers too often experience feelings of anxiety, fear, anticipation, curiosity, excitement and a myriad of other emotions from their sales person.

Or would it be determining what emotions trigger what reactions?

Exploring responses over reactions, and learning how to adjust those behaviors to obtain more positive outcomes.

Outstanding sales – and leadership – development programs must include both IQ and EQ training

Traditionally, IQ training, in the form of product training, systems training, process and procedure, scripts and conversation guides is accepted as essential to sales success.

Just as essential are the EQ skills of self-awareness, relationship management, empathy, responsiveness to others emotional states, and the ability to view the world from others perspectives, but these EQ skills are not often trained. It's a missed opportunity for recruiters, sales teams and companies seeking to hire and retain the best talent.

A company focused on decent sales success must train in the science of the sale and will develop their employees' IQ and provide the technical and product training to give their sales force the hard tools to do the job.

A company focused on outstanding sales success will also train in the art of the sale, develop their employees' EQ, provide the soft skills to help their sales force build rapport, build trust, relationships, and build excitement in their customers for the product or service they are offering.

Invenio believes in leveraging the Science of sales to inform the art. We quantify the art, measure it and train to it in what we call Inveniology™. Not only do we do this for reps we manage, but also for those companies building sales programs in-house through **sales training as a service**.

Understanding the **psychology** of sales is key to training and executing at the highest level.

<https://www.inveniomarketing.com/incorporating-iq-eq-sales-training-development/>