

## Sales Personnel Training – An Integrated Framework for Indian Brick-and-Mortar Retailers

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### ABSTRACT

In brick-and-mortar retailing, sales personnel play the most important and complex role whereby they are the ones who are connected to consumers directly on a real-time basis. Besides, to this complexity retailers in India find it difficult to recruit well-trained sales personnel who is an all-rounder. It is observed that majority of bricks-and-mortar retailers in India assume: (a) sales personnel in the store are required to assist consumers in finding the right product at the earliest; (b) consumers who walk into their stores have a clear understanding of their needs and based on their needs they enquire sales personnel in the store about a specific product/category/brand; (c) sales personnel attrition rate in stores is generally higher owing to lower pay scale; (d) product-specific training has to be given the highest priority; (e) designing a common training program relevant to all types of sales personnel is difficult, and most importantly; (f) existing training efforts have not yielded in any significant positive impact on the store profitability. Such assumptions and misconceptions have created a predisposition and mindset in sales personnel and sales organization, and they believe that they are delivering the best results. In this exhaustive study, we have attempted to design a new sales personnel training framework that attempts to integrate a majority of the elements such as training content, trainee, trainer, training time frame in addition to firm-level and consumer-level evaluation techniques. In this twelve months-long research work we have analyzed a select brick-and-mortar retailer's existing training framework, designed a new integrated sales personnel training framework, applied it to a select group of experimental stores to derive insights from the experimentation and check validity and reliability of the proposed framework. Results have demonstrated that more than 35 percent of the consumers repeat store visit rate could be determined by (a) store profitability that is a positive motivator to sales personnel to perform better; (b) walk-in conversion rate that is directly affected by the sales pitch of sales personnel which is directly affected by the continuous training efforts; (c) sales personnel monetary incentive earnings that are directly affected by their performance through improved learnings; and (d) sales personnel attrition rate that is a result of overall satisfaction of sales personnel.

**Keywords:** Brick-and-Mortar Retail, Sales Personnel, Salesperson, Retail Sales Training, Sales Personnel Development, Training, On-the-Job Training, Training the Trainer, Retail Education, Sales Personnel Training Framework.

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