

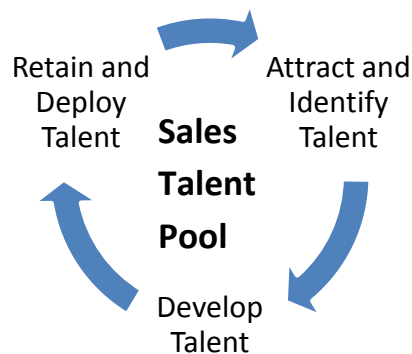
## Talent Management Lifecycle: Strategic Enablers of Sales Force

*Sales force management has to focus on talent management lifecycle to optimize the potential of sales force*

Companies have recognized that 'people' are the most important assets. The statement is more relevant with the salespeople because the quality of salespeople has much to do with the success of products. The combined survey of GMA (the Grocery Manufacturers Association), NEW (the Network of Executive Women) and ATKEARNEY (global management consulting firm) has revealed that the CPG (consumer packaged goods) salesperson has to become a merchandiser, a long-term category strategist, a general manager and a thought partner. The CPG companies have to raise the bar for sales force talent management to build integrated, self-reinforcing talent management programs to address employee and customer needs.

Sales force talent management has three dimensions as follows.

1. Attracting and identifying talent
2. Developing talent
3. Retaining and deploying talent



**Sales force management** is the process of recruiting, selecting, training, supervising, motivating, and evaluating sales representatives to manage sales force effectively

To keep the company up to its potential, talent management lifecycle of sales force has to focus on the following four strategic enablers.

- **Locate sales talent:** 60% executives say locating sales talent is the challenging aspect of talent management lifecycle, followed by developing (25%) and retaining (17%) talent.
- **Align sales talent with customer expectations:** Aligning right sales talent with the right customer is strategic for profitable sales.
- **Measure performance:** Develop new metrics and measurement tools to measure informal and softer programs. Focus on developing better retention tools and processes to distinguish talent from competition.

- **Address diversity:** Enriching diversity not only in terms of gender and race but also on age and sexual orientation for company's long-term talent management strategy.

Top CPG sales force think beyond their own brands, toward collaborative relationships and tailored solutions to boost retail and CPG sales volume. Companies have to focus on sales force talent management life cycle to leverage the potential of sales force.

Topic	Course
Sales Force Management: Personal selling and sales force management: Unit 21.7	Marketing Management

**Source:** *Talent Triage: Raising the Bar for CPG Sales Force Talent Management*, GMA, NEW and ATKEARNEY survey, [www.atkearney.com](http://www.atkearney.com)