

Executive Guide for

# Turning Growth Strategies into Sales Results





In today's digital world, competition is fierce and buyers are sophisticated. Survival requires transformation. It requires growth strategies that drive a culture of change. However, executing on growth strategies is fraught with difficulty. Failure is common.

**A modern sales  
playbook can help.**

# The Transformation Challenge

In the final analysis, change sticks when it becomes ‘the way we do things around here,’ when it seeps into the bloodstream of the corporate body.

*John P. Kotter<sup>1</sup>*

Many C-level executives underestimate the challenges of implementation, or they don’t realize the importance of ‘baking’ implementation strategies into the culture of a company.

Change is essential to the success of your business. While human nature is naturally resistant to change, it’s important that you evolve and shift strategies to achieve your business objectives. A new strategy may be required to respond to changing market pressures, a new crop of competitors, shifting buyer needs, or new technologies that alter the way you do business. In fact, you may have already committed to a new strategy to achieve your desired outcomes. The challenge lies in successfully implementing that strategy.

Whether your company is looking to improve its competitive situation, market position, or financial performance, executing on your growth strategy can be fraught with difficulty. In *Harvard Business Review*, John P. Kotter discusses the challenge: “Many C-level executives underestimate the challenges of implementation, or they don’t realize the importance of ‘baking’ implementation strategies into the culture of a company.”<sup>1</sup> In fact, studies show that a large majority of transformation efforts fail to achieve their desired outcomes. As many as 90% of business strategies fail due to poor execution.<sup>2</sup>

Ensuring successful execution requires cultural change. Kotter emphasizes this need when he writes, “In the final analysis, change sticks when it becomes ‘the way we do things around here,’ when it seeps into the bloodstream of the corporate body.”<sup>1</sup> Whether your strategy involves a new product or service or a new way to scale your sales organization, you need an approach that will drive the change necessary to achieve your transformation objectives.

The Solution

# A Playbook Approach to Growth

How do we achieve the transformation that's so crucial to the success of the business when the odds are stacked against us?

It starts with sales. They are the conduit to your customers, and they must be enabled to effectively grow the bottom line. The modern sales playbook is foundational to this endeavor. The modern sales playbook is an engaging, interactive, just-in-time resource that gives sales the practical content and tools they need to lead the compelling conversations that result in closed deals. It makes strategy execution possible. It makes transformation possible.



# The Four Growth Strategies

There are four paths that businesses commonly take to achieve their transformation objectives.



Improved  
Message



New  
Offering



New Sales  
Approach



Sales  
Scalability



Growth Strategy #1

## Improved Message

Messaging is critical to the way products and services are sold, marketed, and perceived in the marketplace. When we define our messaging, we drive consistency across the organization to ensure that everyone who interacts with customers is using the right words and phrases in describing our company, products, and services. What we say about ourselves has a direct effect on the bottom line. When a company looks to refine its messaging to achieve growth, it often comes in the form of a new message. But there are also cases where a message simply needs to be fine-tuned. No matter the case, it's important to enable sales to deliver the message in a way that will both align with the corporate brand and grow revenue.





### Common Pitfalls

When you're looking to improve your messaging, there are several pitfalls that commonly lead to failure. The primary tendency is for the messaging to be focused around a single product or service without consideration for the needs of buyers and their broader objectives. By the same token, messaging fails when it lacks focus around the buyer's journey, the process buyers go through when educating themselves and evaluating options for their purchasing decisions. Consideration must always be made for the needs of buyers and the messages that resonate at each phase of the buying process.

In addition, your new messaging might fall flat when it is too closely focused on brand or marketing strategy and fails to connect with the realities of sales conversations. The disconnect between sales and marketing often leaves sales with no content that they can bring into executive meetings. They are left to their own devices to define their sales conversations which may or may not align with your broader corporate message.

And when messaging needs to be integrated into every customer conversation, it cannot be developed with a narrow mindset around a single deliverable or LMS course. Driving a culture of change around the new message requires a broad approach and consistency among everyone who interacts with customers.

## A Playbook Approach

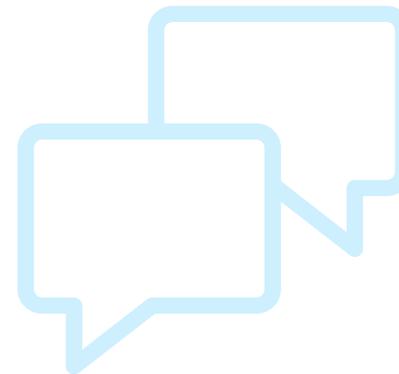
The modern sales playbook avoids these many pitfalls and ensures the messaging is accurately and broadly defined while creating the compelling content that sales can use in customer conversations. Delivered in an interactive way, the modern sales playbook includes insights into targeted buyers, talk tracks around buyers' strategic imperatives, and whiteboard messages that enable engaging, two-way conversations between sales and their executive buyers.

The playbook also enables the business to drive execution of the message throughout the buyer's journey or sales engagement strategy. It helps sales teams understand exactly what messages will resonate with buyers who are in the early investigation phase or those who are actively looking to make a purchase.

Lastly, the playbook includes talk tracks built around the customer's challenges, strategic imperatives, or industry trends. This enables sales teams to demonstrate to the buyer that they understand and sympathize with their challenges and can help resolve those challenges. Talk tracks are highly prescriptive and can be used in social media or even copied and pasted into an email.

### TALK TRACKS





### A Success Story: TELUS

In an effort to transform its sales messaging, Canadian telecommunications company Telus needed a new sales strategy and message around digital transformation. In a journey with DSG, Telus has effectively helped sales executives define a new identity and adopt a new way to sell. By embedding DSG in its multi-year strategy, Telus has seen great adoption of its sales messaging playbook, high levels of satisfaction among managers, and 95% coaching certification. The new message has resulted in larger, more strategic deals and faster time to productivity for new sales reps.

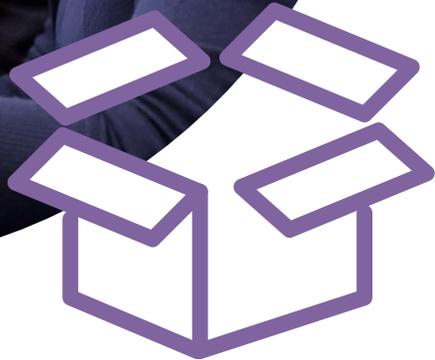


“ Over the past 3 years, DSG has provided TELUS with exceptional consulting, advisory and training services to help us strengthen our identity as a national B2B sales organization. We appreciated DSG’s collaborative approach to engaging our sales, enablement, marketing and product stakeholders to co-create a powerful sales messaging strategy that has positively impacted our sales teams from coast to coast. Through the use of these virtual playbooks, today’s new and tenured sales team members have everything they need to feel inspired and confident to lead engaging executive level sales conversations and be viewed as transformation advisors in the eyes of our customers.

**Paul Bleier**  
*Director, Sales Enablement*

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Growth Strategy #2

## New Offering

Creating new product or service offerings is likely the most common growth strategy. New products and services are often created in response to competitive pressures, gaps in the marketplace, or new technologies that enable greater innovation. In most businesses, the launch of new products and services is supported by training, demo scripts, pricing, competitive positioning, marketing collateral, and more. Delivering actionable content for sales conversations cannot be left out of the process.



### Common Pitfalls

One of the most common pitfalls when it comes to launching a new offering is around the content and support that is delivered. Often, many months are spent defining and delivering sales training or product launch kits that are merely focused on features and functions.

There's little doubt that your sales teams need training, demo environments, battle cards, and other content typically developed to support a product launch. But the most important need for sales is an understanding of where the new product fits in the marketplace, how it solves buyers' common challenges, and what types of conversations will resonate most.

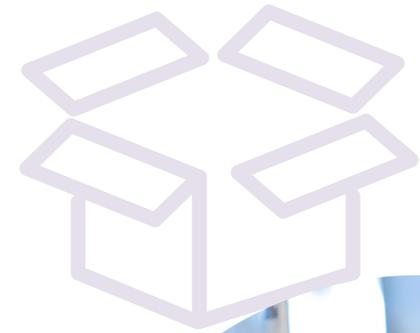
Similarly, new product support often lacks continuous reinforcement. Not only does sales need to know how to turn a new offering into compelling conversations, but they also need continuously updated content. As the new product or service grows and changes so will the needs of buyers.

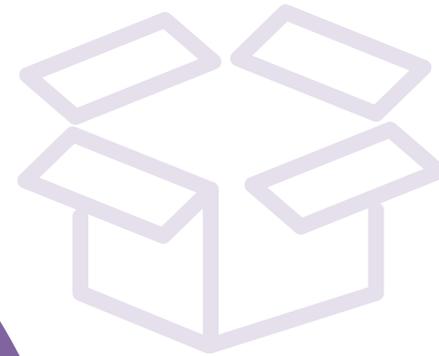
### A Playbook Approach

A sales playbook is a key deliverable for the launch or expansion of your new product or service. Rather than focusing on features and functions, the sales playbook includes messages that resonate with buyers. These messages come in the form of a clearly defined value prop, common use cases, product differentiators, success stories, industry insights, and more.

In addition, the sales playbook defines the value of your new product or service in the form of insights and provocations. It gives sales a way to establish a “give to get” scenario with their buyers where they offer an insight to earn the right to make a provocative statement or ask a provocative question. Insights commonly take the form of industry research, analyst commentary, or even the experiences of sales. The provocation is meant to make your buyers think differently.

Lastly, the playbook includes discovery questions around the new product or service. Different from a provocative question, the discovery question is merely meant to explore the need for the new product in the buyer’s mind. For the less experienced sales rep, the playbook can even include instructions on how to effectively use discovery questions. This might include, for example, not peppering buyers with a slew of questions that can be easily answered with a little investigation.





### A Success Story: NetApp Cloud Value Management

In support of a corporate shift to support cloud technologies, data management company NetApp developed a new service offering, Cloud Value Management (CVM). The offering helps customers identify the business, technology, and regulatory effects of moving to the cloud. NetApp looked to DSG to build a sales messaging playbook that would not only educate internal stakeholders on the value of the new service, but also give sales the content and tools to lead compelling conversations and open doors for the new service.



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As we developed a new consulting service for NetApp, we wanted to provide our sales teams with a structured single source of truth. The messaging playbook from DSG is an easy-to-use format and provides sales with an optimal level of detail to lead engaging, high-level conversations about CVM with their targeted buyers. The playbook has been very positively received and applied.

**Sebastian Zilch**  
*Practice Lead Cloud Value Management  
Go to Market & Enablement, EMEA  
Support & Services, Netapp*

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Growth Strategy #3

## New Sales Approach

As your company is looking to grow, new sales approaches can be effective. These new sales approaches often take the form of defining a new industry focus, expanding partner relationships, and incorporating insight-based solution selling, team selling, social selling, cross-selling, upselling, and more. A sales playbook plays a key role in keeping your sales teams on point while they learn and implement new sales methodologies.



### Common Pitfalls

A common pitfall associated with defining a new sales approach is building it around a methodology from a third-party vendor that lacks customization or is simply pulled off the shelf. When a sales methodology isn't designed with the specific needs of your business in mind, it lacks the content and tools that are unique to your company's products, services, market, culture, or the language spoken by the business.

Another pitfall when defining a new sales approach is ignoring the way successful sales people currently operate. When these new sales approaches fail to incorporate approaches that are working well for the team, the resulting irrelevant approach causes skepticism and a lack of traction across the sales team.

### A Playbook Approach

When built by an expert in sales playbooks with a process for delivering customized content, a sales playbook avoids these pitfalls. The playbook supports the change and comes complete with sales strategy, messaging, sales processes, and an approach for sales leadership, coaching, and continuous reinforcement. Sales reps of all experience levels are involved in the process, ensuring that every aspect of the playbook is relevant to your entire sales team.

Also, the playbook is built to enable sales reps to assume the role of valued advisors to the targeted buyers and customers. No matter what new sales approach your business may be adopting, enabling the rep to take on a consultative approach with buyers is always a good thing. The playbook contains insights valuable to buyers and talk tracks built specifically around your customers' strategic objectives.



### A Success Story: Enterprise Holdings

Faced with a price-competitive market, transportation solution company Enterprise Holdings sought to differentiate their solution, drive renewals, and accelerate new customer acquisition. With DSG, the company developed a sales transformation program that drove lasting behavioral change and shifted sales from taking orders and selling features to resetting requirements and influencing the customer.



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We needed somebody with the expertise, the resources, and the organization to drive lasting sales behavior change. The amount of post-launch support DSG provided has been central to our success in building momentum and keeping the momentum going.

**David Grace**  
*VP Global Sales,  
Enterprise Holdings*

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Growth Strategy #4

## **Sales Scalability**

Scaling the capabilities of sales is critical to the growth and success of any organization, but particularly smaller companies who have yet to clearly define a selling system. Successfully scaling sales require a complete sales system with a singular sales process, coaching frameworks, and a consistent message.



### Common Pitfalls

Companies that lack a sales system are often simply unable to grow their sales organizations. These companies are often shooting from the hip and chasing after whatever sales approach or strategy seems to be working for the moment. The “strategy of the week” is a familiar refrain.

In addition, scaling your sales team requires more than a sales kickoff or boot camp event for new reps. While these events can be great opportunities to learn, they need actionable content they can refer to immediately before heading into a customer meeting.

Ultimately, without a sales system, your reps lack clarity on what to prioritize, what messages to deliver, who to target, what are acceptable best practices, and what metrics to measure.

### A Playbook Approach

When devising a sales system with the goal of scaling sales capabilities, a sales playbook is a centralized tool that houses all of the relevant content that builds the sales system. It contains the content, tools, and training that establish a consistent, standardized approach to selling.

When the playbook is adopted by your sales leadership and includes sales manager coaching, it creates a repeatable process that is embedded across the team. This repeatable process includes targeting the right accounts, reaching the right buyer, and delivering the right message, all reinforced by training, coaching, and ongoing sales enablement. In the end, the consistency in approach drives sales productivity and growth, adding to the company's bottom line in a smart, organized way.





### A Success Story: Tufin

When looking to scale their sales organization, security policy orchestration company Tufin developed a sales enablement system. With DSG, they built a sales messaging playbook, led sales manager coaching through a coaching playbook, trained their teams on the playbook during a two-day sales kickoff event, and reinforced the messaging with 90 days of continuous sales enablement.

As a result of their work with DSG, effective coaching efforts, and a concerted effort to drive change with a whiteboard message, Tufin saw a measurable increase in sales. The average deal size increased from \$60,000 to more than \$100,000, and the company's annual revenue rose from \$70 million to \$95 million.

The Tufin logo, consisting of the word "tufin" in a bold, lowercase, sans-serif font, centered within a light gray circle.



Change is never an easy endeavor. Strategies must be put into place, but they must be done so in a way that speaks to the needs of sales and the unique aspects of your business and market. They must also be implemented with longevity in mind, enabling you to achieve your outcomes in the years to come. Sales playbooks are foundational to achieving the transformation your business needs and enabling you and your sales teams to stay the course while driving change across the organization.

By partnering with DSG, you can build a sales playbook that enables sales to achieve your growth objectives. DSG has implemented growth strategies across hundreds of clients for more than two decades, bringing the longevity and experience to successfully execute on your unique growth strategies—ultimately building the sales teams that drive the growth that truly transforms your business.



To learn more about how DSG can help you turn your growth strategy into sales results, visit [www.dsgconsulting.com](http://www.dsgconsulting.com)