Aligning Strategy and Sales
The Choices, Systems, and Behaviors that Drive Effective Selling
Frank Cespedes

WHAT'S THE SINGLE, POWERFUL, PRACTICAL IDEA?
Methods and principles to help align your sales force with your company’s strategic objectives.

DESCRIPTION
Most firms face a wide gap between their strategic goals and their sales and other go-to market efforts. Aligning these activities is — or should be — an important component of competitive advantage for entrepreneurs and established companies. Yet for most, it isn’t.

Aligning Strategy and Sales will help readers close the gap. It is not another book about strategy formulation or another selling skills manual. It’s all about aligning strategy and go-to-market efforts.

It starts by explaining why many sales problems in companies are really strategic alignment issues. It helps managers understand and diagnose both the overt and hidden costs of not aligning strategic goals with sales initiatives, and why “getting better at selling” typically requires more than a motivational speech, sales force reorganization, new incentives, or a good training seminar. It outlines a process for articulating strategy in ways that people in the field can understand and in ways that help strategy formulators understand the required sales tasks inherent in strategic plans for the enterprise.

Given a coherent strategy, the book provides a framework for analyzing and managing the core levers available to firms when they seek to align selling behaviors with sales tasks, and examines each lever. Readers will learn how to synchronize strategy and sales activities across the organization, and get value from improving their firm’s performance in the following areas:

How to move from a strategic vision to an integrated selling plan
How to build a sales organization to match strategy
How to create and maintain the optimal infrastructure and processes

Practical, thoughtful, clear, and engaging, Aligning Strategy and Sales will give you the know-how and tools to do exactly what the title promises.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Frank Cespedes was a professor at Harvard Business School for 15 years, and led strategic marketing programs for senior executives and their leadership teams. He is currently a Senior Lecturer in the Entrepreneurial Management Unit and heads the executive program on "Aligning Strategy and Sales."
AUDIENCE

- Sales managers
- Other functional heads who align with sales
- Strategists

FEATURES FOR READERS

- A practical framework that addresses a real pain point in organizations
- Taking sales beyond either fables (like The Go-Giver) or tips and tricks (like Pink's To Sell Is Human)
- Clear and engaging writing that speaks directly to sales professionals
- A wealth of personal experience and practical examples

EDITOR’S NOTES

- This stands out from the pack of books on sales, offering a clear and actionable framework for real people in real firms.
- Sales is a consistent strong seller in the marketplace, especially as the idea that “everyone is a salesperson” has taken hold.

ENDORSEMENTS

“Finally . . . a business book with real, pragmatic insight about the vitally important, but often ignored, discipline of sales and why it’s vital to any plausible strategy.” — Lou D’Ambrosio, Chairman, Sensus; former CEO, Sears Holdings and Avaya Inc

“You spend a lot on sales. A LOT. Read Cespedes’ wise words to get a better handle on how to make your sales investments pay off through smart, strategic alignment.” — Jeffrey Bussgang, General Partner, Flybridge Capital Partners

“It often feels like sales people are from Mars and strategists from Venus. Little wonder so many strategies fail when tested by real-world customer contact. Whether you are in sales, strategy, or a CEO, you should read this book. It addresses thorny issues like culture and compensation, and it will help you get results.” — Charles Wilson, CEO, Booker Group

“Frank Cespedes has brilliantly captured why aligning strategy and sales is so darn difficult. He walks you through the alignment process in a methodical yet witty manner, reminding you of the nitty-gritty intricacies that will provide the wind in the sails of your strategy. This book should be required reading for all senior executives and sales managers.” — Jeanne O’Kelley, cofounder and CEO, Blueprint Technologies