# Why Empowering Sales Teams and Improving the Employee Experience is Critical Today

It used to be that customer satisfaction was the most important element of a company's success. In recent years, however, we've seen a surprising shift toward employee satisfaction as a top indicator of business outcomes. The pandemic forced employees to reevaluate what is important in the workplace. Microsoft's Work Trends Index found that many employees have a new "worth it" equation. Over half (53%) of employees are more likely to prioritize mental health and wellbeing now than prior to the start of the pandemic. Employees in today's workplace want flexibility, technologies that make work easier, and they want to feel like they have a seat at the table.

Unfortunately, we've seen what happens if employees don't feel like they are a priority to their employers: they'll leave. The Great Resignation has been a mass exodus in the workplace, forcing many employers to take a good hard look at what employees want, the culture they've created, and how they can better meet employee needs. And while we are currently experiencing the lowest unemployment rate in recent history—just 3.5 percent as of July 2022, that doesn't mean employees are happy. Globally, **85 percent of employees** are either not engaged or are actively disengaged at work. **The World Economic Forum predicts that 20 percent** of workers will leave the workplace in 2022.

The sales workforce was not immune to the Great Resignation. Today's salespeople are working longer, feeling greater burnout, and are frustrated by growing tech stacks that don't seem to deliver on their promises of streamlining and automating their workloads. According to a recent survey, done in partnership with Microsoft, 46 percent of salespeople shared that they feel like they're spending more time than they like manually entering data (and does anyone ever like manually entering data?), and 20 percent shared they feel like they are always manually entering data. It's difficult to meet sales goals when too much time is required to be spend on tasks like data entry.

It's clear that employers need to make a change. The good news is that culture changes that focus on employee experience and satisfaction bodes well for organizations. In fact, it's been proven that employee experience is a strong driver of revenue. And in today's unpredictable marketplace, that's something no company can ignore.

The companies that are able to attract the best candidates in today's marketplace are the ones that offer what employees now want: flexibility, mentorship, growth, and a positive culture. **A Gallup study showed that work units in the top quarter**

**of employee engagement** saw 17 percent higher productivity, 20 percent higher sales, 21 percent greater profitability than the rest of the pack.

That's why now is the time to evaluate your employee experience, especially as it relates to sales teams, identify the common roadblocks and determine what technologies can help.

## Employee Experience Challenges for Today's Sales Teams

Every organization today is dealing with massive changes as they navigate the effects of the global pandemic. Changes in how, where, and when people work, disruptive business models, and new technologies are making waves in the workplace. Amidst all of these issues, sales teams are working harder than ever to meet customers where they are, while dealing with technologies that don't do exactly what they need them to do. To say the employee experience for sales teams has waned in the last few years is an understatement. Some common employee experience challenges that we are seeing for sales teams include:

**Understanding what employees want.**
Understanding what employees want includes understanding how employees actually spend their time and what it takes for them to be able to work more efficiently. **One survey focused on why salespeople quit specifically found that 8 in 10 respondents** said their management teams had

no idea how time-consuming their non-revenue-generating activities are. At the same time, nearly 80 percent said that lack of understanding caused unrealistic expectations about what they were actually able to achieve. That lack of understanding means the foundation of employee engagement is cracked from the start.

**Implementing the right tech tools.** Tools, tools, tools. Unfortunately, many organizations don't understand that more tools aren't always the answer. According to our research, 52 percent of salespeople feel they are always or frequently wasting time on administrative tasks that can be automated. Many feel they are spending majority of their day manually entering data into CRM systems, which is causing them great angst. More tools? A resounding no! The right tools, that's what sales teams are clamoring for.

**Siloed pieces of technology make work more complicated and difficult.** Siloes are a problem in any industry, but the problem can be even more frustrating and complex in the sales sphere. Business today is usually completed in two places: systems of record and systems of productivity. These two systems are often siloed and don't integrate easily (or at all) with one other. In addition to disparate siloes in customer relationship management and customer data platforms, employees are operating in a hybrid work environment with an array of collaboration tools also in the mix. As a result, inefficiencies abound.

**Insufficient training or technology.** With sprawling, disconnected, and inefficient tech stacks, employees are overwhelmed by technology that is confusing, fails to integrate, or offers fragmented views of their sales opportunities, goals, and accomplishments. Even when technology is capable of streamlining a process, the process may be so complicated or feel so daunting that employees will choose to enter information manually instead. That's why monitoring tech adoption and providing ongoing training are so important.

## Transforming the Seller Experience with Microsoft Viva Sales

With so many issues making life challenging for today's sales teams, it can be difficult to know how to make sales processes easier, let alone how to make employees feel more engaged and valued. The good news is that there are solutions specifically designed to make employees more engaged and, ultimately, to make businesses more profitable.
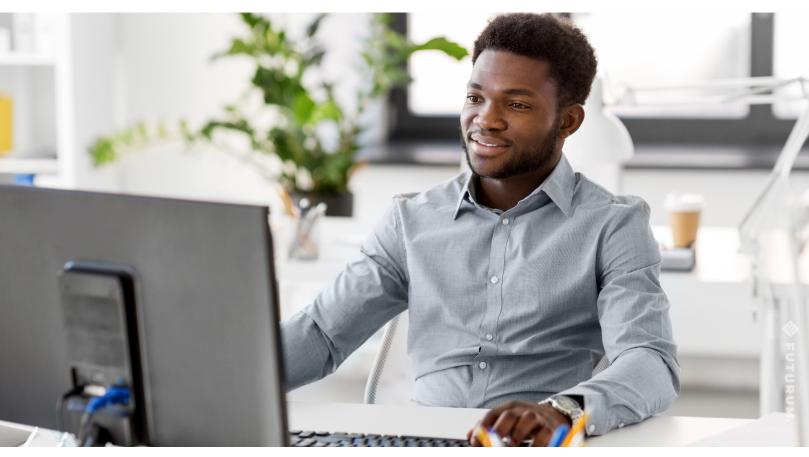
This is what led us to evaluate Microsoft Viva Sales, a seller experience application that connects systems of record and systems of productivity to automatically capture data. Sellers can spend less time on manual data entry and more time on what matters: selling. For the organization as a whole, that results in a massive improvement to the seller experience. Happy, productive sales teams deliver great results — and they stay.

Here are a few benefits that we like about the Viva Sales experience.

**Work smarter not harder.** Viva Sales helps employees work faster and easier while enhancing collaboration amongst team members. The app helps break down silos and enables salespeople to connect data from tools like Outlook, Word, PowerPoint, and Teams into any CRM. And this happens automatically, so salespeople can be confident that the data they are using is accurate and up to date. And sales teams can spend more time doing what they do best — developing customer relationships and winning deals.

**Improve productivity with real-time insights.** With accurate data that updates in near real-time, sellers can be empowered with better insights into where customers are in their journey and more easily guide customers to the next step in the sales

funnel. Viva Sales eliminates the many frustrations that salespeople have with their current CRMs, which are often the source of many negative employee experiences.

**Tapping into the power of AI.** AI is quickly becoming a powerhouse for several departments in enterprises today. Viva Sales taps into that power too, turning CRMs into gateways of action. With real-time transcripts and sentiment analysis of sales calls, salespeople can gain deeper understanding of their customers' needs. Better yet, action items created from this information will enable a higher volume of sales — who can say no to that?

**Collaboration is a breeze.** With Viva Sales, sales teams can easily collaborate and share customer information in Microsoft Teams. This eliminates the time spent chasing information or doing work about work with other sales team members, and will exponentially improve the employee experience.

In essence, Microsoft's Viva Sales is designed to take the seller experience to the next level. It's a whole new way of doing business — and one we think sellers will enjoy.

## Viva Sales will Power the Future of Work

Today's sales teams are working longer, feeling greater burnout, and are increasingly frustrated by growing tech stacks that don't seem to deliver on their promises of streamlining and automating their workloads. These compounded issues contribute to dissatisfaction in the employee experience, contribute to employee retention challenges and, ultimately, have a negative impact on the bottom line.

In our current economic climate, many organizations are cutting budgets as they face the possibility of a recession. That is why now is the right time to put the employee experience — especially for sales teams — first. We recommend you put Microsoft's Viva Sales on your consideration list. The solution offers an immensely empowering solution for automating both manual processes and AI-powered recommendations in real time. More than a storehouse of customer data, it's a gateway to action for sales teams in every industry. It promises to enhance the employee experience and make selling fun again.