

10

“Magic Bullets” for Successful New Home Sales Management

By John A. Palumbo

One of the first things you should become aware of as a new home sales manager is that there are many roles you must fill. At various times (and often all at the same time), you are a talent scout, customer service specialist, trainer, psychiatrist, report generator, meeting planner, time management supervisor, disciplinarian, coach, salesperson and contest creator. All these roles, when executed together, make for a great new home sales manager – whose main purpose is to get the best out of his/her sales staff. That is the bottom line goal of every new home sales manager – to build a strong, confident, effective team. It’s not always an easy job and there are many factors that can block success. After years coaching/managing top producing sales teams around the country, the following “10 Magic Bullets” are the direct feedback from salespeople and managers who have moved through the ranks.

Where do successful managers come from? In the new home industry, most come from the ranks of successful salespeople. Unfortunately, that doesn't necessarily make them great new home sales managers. Taking the traits of effective leadership combined with what they have learned in the field, any manager can take the following ideas to boost their effectiveness and the ability to lead in new homes sales.

The following "10 Magic Bullets" are traits that will distinguish the best from the rest:

1 The best managers don't blame others for their mistakes. When something goes wrong, they are the first ones to admit or point out that they were at fault and exactly what it will take to remedy the problem. Successful managers understand that there is room for error with their salespeople and sometimes even themselves, but they are not defeated by it. They expect it as part of life, know that there is a lesson to be learned in every setback and pass this philosophy on to their sales agents.

2 They develop a genuinely positive attitude. A positive attitude is more than "thinking good thoughts." Successful managers believe that a person's attitude can make all the difference. They believe in possibilities; that most problems can be solved. They know that how they act and react to various situations is a model for the team's actions and reactions. They are enthusiastic about their jobs and about their lives. Since enthusiasm is catching, a manager who is positive usually leads a team with a positive attitude. Just remember the pace of the leader will be the pace of the pack.

3 They exhibit self-confidence without self-arrogance. The successful new home sales manager exhibits an attitude and willingness to help at all times. Your efforts as a sales manager are only rewarded if you are fully engaged and totally immersed in your craft. Think of yourself as a consultant, as a consummate professional. Until you feel pride in your profession, you can't develop the power of a positive attitude that leads to sales management stardom, which exudes self-confidence.

4 They can reach a decision. Successful managers are constantly moving in the direction of their goals. Salespeople respect a manager who can make a decision and get on with the day-to-day events. Even when it is an unpopular decision, the fact is, salespeople come to respect the forward momentum which decision making creates.

5 They surround themselves with positive ideas and role models. Successful managers believe in the saying “you become what you think about.” They know the importance of a positive environment and keep reminders of their success and their team’s success visible. By helping those performers of the team understand that *the mind moves in the direction of its current dominant thoughts*, successful new home sales managers seek out mentors whose wisdom and experience can help them achieve their goals and they encourage their new home sales agents to do the same.

6 They simplify the goal setting process. Understanding that barely five percent of all managers set and effectively execute the goal setting process, the successful new home sales manager focuses on what he/she wants to achieve, establishes priorities and knows what he/she has to do in order to keep moving forward. Successful managers spend time with their agents developing goals that are in the best interest of the company, the team and each individual sales agent. They understand and are able to set *achievable* and *realistic* goals for themselves and their team and to keep those goals visible so that everyone knows the targets they are expected to reach.

7 They don’t hog credits for their accomplishments. The successful manager doesn’t need the ego stroking for every small victory obtained by their team and doesn’t try to make every sale become his/her own no matter how much or little he/she had to do with it. Successful managers make sure their sales agents receive all the credit for each success no matter how small, and constantly look for ways to reward their staff.

“If you are a manager and you haven’t thanked one of your people for doing a good job today, you either have a seriously ill organization on your hands . . . or you are cheating those people, ripping off assets they have worked hard to acquire.”

– Frank Pacetta, “Don’t Fire Them, Fire Them Up”

8 They are passionate about what they do. If you love your work, it is not a hard labor. For the new home sales managers who love their careers, there is a much higher chance that all their sales agents will love their communities and assignments. Passion fires you up; it produces energy and gives you a sense of unlimited potential and possibilities.


9 Successful managers are constantly looking to improve. They don’t assume that since they have reached a certain level of success they can stop learning. A good manager expects his/her team to continually build and improve their skills. The more they grow and learn, the more they can pass on to their team. If managers aren’t learning and growing, they are not just standing still, they are going backwards.

“In time of drastic change, it is the learners who inherit the future. Those who have finished learning find themselves equipped to live in a world that no longer exists.” – Eric Hoffer

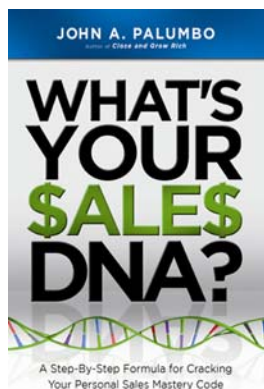
10 They build a strong team. The successful new home sales manager who can recruit qualified people, motivate, train and coach his/her team will have no trouble reaching the nine goals listed above. There are five levels to building a good team and a good new home sales manager takes equal care and concern with each level:

- a. **Select** and recruit the *best* people.
- b. **Develop** excellent training methods so sales agents can have extensive knowledge of their product, the critical sales path and know and understand the customers and the “other guys” (what *some* call “competition”).
- c. **Motivate** and monitor. Inspect what you expect.
- d. **Reward**, monetarily and emotionally.
- e. **Promote** with title and/or compensation.

This article describes ideas that every sales manager can use. By applying the principles that you have read, it will assure you that you will never fall into the category of a manager no one likes to work for. These principles will give you insight into some of the most important skills managers should possess: the ability to train, counsel, coach, hire and keep constantly motivated.

These are not skills that are used once and then discarded. They should be part of the new home sales manager's everyday existence. Motivation, training, hiring, counseling and coaching are on-going processes. I hope you will save this report as a reference guide to keep learning and improving these skills and add to them over the years as you learn and grow. I encourage you to spend time with your people and tweak and tune your evaluation skills on the job site and in the field. Set up systems for monitoring your sales agents' activity levels and let them know clearly what is expected of them. Use the knowledge you gain from spending time with your salespeople to create a motivating environment and to design sales meetings that are interesting and informative. And finally, be the sales manager everyone loves to go the extra mile for and you'll find these principles will become more than just bullets – they'll truly become magic bullets for you. 

Continue to learn from the sales master, **John Palumbo**, in his recently published book that is certain to help you improve your sales!



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