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Propelling Sales in Adverse Condition in a Distribution Company: A Literature Review

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Abstract- With the growing and numerous distributors that compete in the market, the distribution company is measured on how it can propel sales in a regular or adverse condition. The salespersons and other related personnel of the company are accountable for delivering the sales to customers. The goal of this review is to evaluate issues encountered when propelling sales in the adverse conditions in a distribution company as it examined articles posted in on-line international journals from 2013 to 2020. It focuses on the findings of some articles when propelling sales in adverse conditions, particularly the accountability of the personnel in the Sales organization.

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I. Introduction

This study aims to focus on sales in a distribution company and address issues when propelling sales in normal and adverse conditions. Distribution companies in the context of this paper are those who import their raw materials and products from different suppliers. The business units that import these materials sell them to their customer and maximize potential margin as much as possible. Chatterjee A., Rong M. (2019)

Obtaining the products can happen thru regional purchasing or from a local business unit to address the customer's requirements. These materials will be converted and distributed to their customers and consumers who will use their end products. Provided that these distribution companies can build their infrastructure, personnel, offices, warehouses, and technical capability, it is still necessary to determine personnel accountability to deliver the customer's order. (Ross D. F. 2015)

Support functional groups like administration, sales coordinator, imports coordinator, collector, warehouse personnel, delivery personnel, and other personnel interrelated with the sales process should be accountable and understand their scope of responsibilities to secure the delivery, Kuo, Stewart, (2017).

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II. Discussions

a) Sales Strategy

The Sales Strategy of a business unit is part of the budget planning before the next fiscal year. These business strategies are studied together with the management, which includes the sales forecast, cost of goods, other expenses, commissions, capital expenditures, headcount requirements, and any related expenses that will affect the income of the business unit budget. Cheng, C.S.A., Chu, K.C.K. & Ohlson, J. (2020).

Substantial growth and market share are key elements to maintain your position as a leading distributor. You can propel your sales with quality products, branded suppliers, and most of all, competitive pricing. (de Almeida, M.I.S., Porto, R.B., Coelho, R.L.F., 2017).

The proper planning from the beginning should be in place for you to meet your objectives. You may strategize it together with your team and other internal parties to meet your sales objective. For any changes, revision, and unmet objectives, alignment of actions and strategy will be the next activity. (R de Graaf, 2019).

As discussed in the paper of O'Connor, N. G., and Wu, A. (2020), these procedures of Plan Do Check Action (PDCA) will provide you proper planning, doing the activities, checking or monitoring the activities, and action to adjust the plans to meet your objectives.

In Sales and Operations Planning, the effectiveness and efficiency of a plan is being measured. It also helps the organization to measure the capability of the planning with transparency, Hulthén, H., Näslund, D. and Norrman, A. (2016). Roscoe, Subramanian, Prifiti, Wu (2020) explained that the main objective of sales planning is to maximize operational efficiency and to make the business more profitable.

Attributes like finding new clients, making marketing sales tools, and a highly competitive environment improve a salesperson to be more active and efficient as indicated in the research of Evgeni and Todorova, Gergana (2017). Arnette and Wittman (2014) identified that marketing success could be met with thorough knowledge and exchanges of discussion with other sales and marketing business units. Thus, the investment of the correct individual will result in meeting the desired work output, Paleri P. (2018).

It is explained in the paper of Spillecke S., Brettel M. (2017), that challenges in the new selling

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environment of the salespeople encourage to improve inter-relation with other stakeholders thru communication. With this, top-level sales executives should continuously guide, uncover the opportunities, review, and revised the necessary process together with their team to propel sales in adverse condition, Cron, W.L., Baldauf, A., Leigh, T.W. et al. (2014).

Same with the research paper of Hartmann, N. N., Lussier, B (2019), due to severe changes and implementation of organizational changes, sales company needs to be flexible and address the impact of these changes.

b) Accountability in the Sales Workplace

Salespersons are considered assets by the company and valued for their experiences, soft skills, and capabilities to deliver sales through customer relationships. (Pullins E. B., Roehm M., Roehm H., 2015). In the research of Bachrach D. G., Mullins R.R., Rapp A. A. (2017), salesperson securesto improve customer experience and continuous improvement.

As per Becerra E.P. (2015), he explained that accountability influenced the outcome of the decision and process. Process accountability should be in place and do the decisions with unbiased behavior, Moser, Wolff, Sourcek (2020). In the published paper by Su, Y and Chen, L (2014), Struggle experiences will help you compete and proceed with the correct path during the market downturns. In like manner, Fred Miao C., Evans K. R. (2015) showed the selling effort for less experienced salespeople are more complicated than more experienced salespeople. Thus the organizational leaders need to provide the correct Management Control System (MCS) that will balance the decision as per requirements, Schäffer, U., Strauss, E. and Zecher, C. (2015). In the research paper of Hulstijn J., Burgemeestre B. (2015), is explained that it is necessary to have open communication and accountability if you are one of the process owners to close the issues as your social values of transparency.

Transparency and accountability play a big part within the sales company, particularly when propelling sales in adverse condition to achieve delivery of products thru the business process, internal controls, and other factors affecting the process, Hulstijn J., Burgemeestre B., (2014). With the two types of Accountability: Vertical Accountability and Horizontal Accountability. Vertical Accountability is the processes with the business units or department where the Horizontal Accountability is considered as co-equal accountability among different department and act as horizontal accounts, Sakib N.H. (2020). The necessity to provide correct information with other stakeholder, same understanding, and update, Yao J., Chen S., Levy D. (2014).

On the other hand, the research paper of Bonilla-Hernández A.L. (2020), explained that due to fear and punishment, the accountability of each person in any process was affected because of a lack of knowledge about their responsibility. Baldoni M., Baroglio C., Boissier O., May K.M., Micalizio R., Tedeschi S. (2018), it is possible to provide specific areas of responsibilities to each employee that will connect to other stakeholders to achieve their goals.

To understand the accountability capability, company leaders should design a role competency matrix that will help align the process owners to understand their targets. This will help employees to conduct the business process at their own capability with accountability. Kuruba M. (2019). It can be measured thru analytical, technical, educational, and experienced-based capability, Madhavi T., Mehrotra R. (2019).

In propelling of sales in an adverse condition, such as competency to deliver the sales are vital to the distribution companies that will make the company sustainable in short, mid, and long-term situation. Chowdhury, M., Sarkar, A., Paul, S.K. (2020).

c) Digitalization in Sales

Technology is another area that needs to be checked and considered. It provides a major role for both interested parties from the proposal up to the product delivery. The sales professionals can improve their efficiency, by monitoring the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tool, Rodriguez M., Yim F. (2015). It also supports venues like virtual meeting with your customer and within the organization, Winarsih, Indriastuti M., Fuad K. (2021). In the research paper of Saavedra C.A. (2016), there are still customers who require technical support and customer visitation to address their concerns.

With some limitations of virtual meetings, salespersons tend to do more on talking and explaining the presentation rather than having a good chat with the customer, highlighting the product value and discussing the product features and benefits, Davies I.A., Meunier-Fitz Hugh K. L., Ryals L. J. (2015). Some customers still prefer to have a face to face discussion with the salesperson to address his inquiry rather than discussing on the mobile phone or virtual meeting, Kaptein M., Parvinen P. (2015).

Given that Customer Order has been placed, the processing is still a question. It will be processed and passed to different processes to realize the sales, Hase S., Busch C. (2018). In the literature review of Luszczak A. (2019), it explained that customer orders should follow the sales process starting from customer requirement, price quotation, sales order, delivery, invoicing, and collection of payment.

In the research paper of Hase S., Busch C. (2018), he included the vital role of sales service, back-office support and successful teamwork to propel sales in normal or adverse conditions.

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III. Results

The articles reviewed showed that affecting the performance of sales in various conditions. However, the literature reviewed showed insufficiency of studies on propelling sales in the different process of the Distribution Company. The factors both from Sales Strategy and Accountability are the very important subject matter of the study. Further studies on the different areas to propel sales in a Distribution company are recommended that will affect the different levels of personnel in the organization.

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