

Viewpoint

Don't pump up the volume

Imagine you could control the volume on your car stereo but not the tuning. You'd be stuck listening to a single station, your only option being to turn the volume up or down. In managing sales force effectiveness, the industry has had only a volume control on its management dashboard for the past 20 years—measuring only things like the number of reps, share of promotional “voice” or physician reach and call frequencies.

What's been missing are metrics on sales force quality—your ability to “tune in” to those things that are important to physicians. By measuring these factors, you can identify and quantify how to improve your market position. Instead of

asking whether a sales force is “likeable,” better to answer such questions as, “What are the specific ‘drivers’ of market share?” and “Are we executing effectively with respect to those drivers?”

Today every major pharmaceutical company is working to reinvent its sales and marketing model. Those firms that identify the metrics that determine sales force quality, and that measure and manage the sales force and marketing in a way that instills a new level of accountability, will succeed.

Think of this as adding the tuning dial to your car stereo. Your options increase exponentially, and as companies hone in on the right metrics and revamp operating practices, they will no longer need to pump up the volume.

Mike Luby
CEO & Co-founder
TargetRx