

**2025 Sales Leader Report**

# **Best Practices of Winning Sales Teams**

## Welcome to our second annual Sales Leader Report.

Our Sales Performance Research Center surveyed B2B sales leaders about their priorities and plans. This report shares our findings and the strategies for sales excellence in 2025.

It's clear the selling environment remains challenging for many:

- For some, the buying process is longer. For others, more stakeholders are involved.
- The use of AI and other technology is disrupting status quo activity for both buyers and sellers.
- Senior executives are uncertain of the direction in the economy, making them more likely to conserve resources and hesitant to invest.

Given these dynamics, how do successful sales teams meet their revenue goals—or even overperform?

**Our big takeaway: Success comes from forging collaborative connections with customers that build trust and align with buying needs.**

Highly effective sales teams leverage consultative selling skills. These skills are essential for differentiating your product or service and closing deals. They include:

- Deep questioning to pressure test wants and understand the customer's buying process;
- Building trust to create confidence in your value proposition;
- Creating a business case that shows reliable return on investment;
- Having a healthy dose of emotional intelligence that guides you in tailoring your communication and knowing when to ask for the business.

See our recommendations (page 11) for practical advice to build a capable, confident sales team and take your performance to the next level in 2025.

**BONUS:** Look for our special section “A Deeper Dive” (page 9) to see specific strategies of elite teams that **exceed their sales** goals year over year.



Spencer Wixom  
President and CEO  
The Brooks Group

## New Sales Priorities for 2025

New year, new strategy. Sales leaders' priorities have changed since our previous survey. Heading into 2024, their top three goals were increasing customer retention, strengthening margins, and expanding existing accounts.

This year, while retention and profitability remain the top two priorities, we see a shift away from existing accounts and a focus on winning new business and moving into new markets.



## Building Consultative Skills to Overcome Sales Challenges

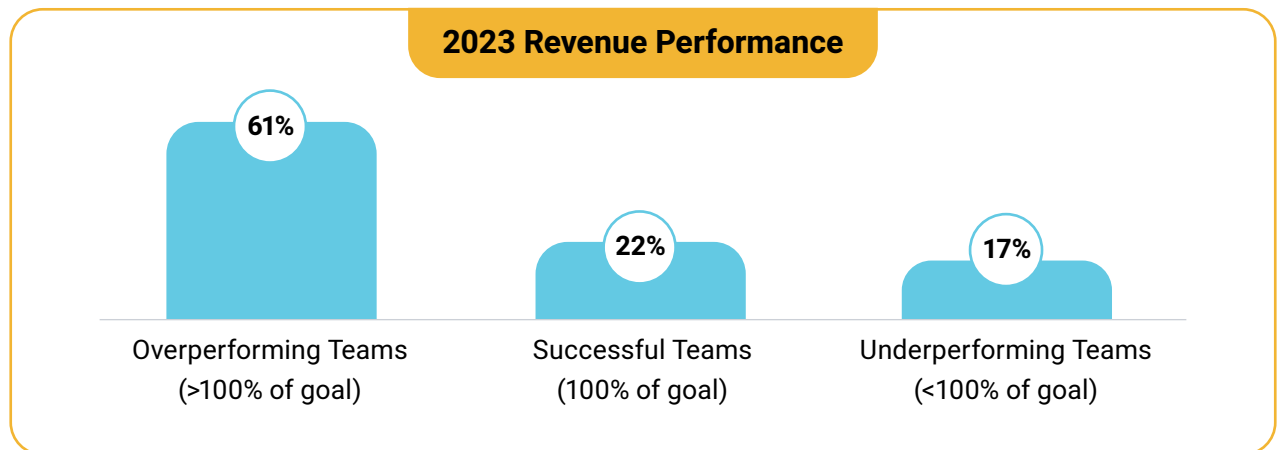
The sales leaders we surveyed admit there are obstacles to accomplishing these priorities. Winning new business requires a different skillset from expanding existing accounts. Building relationships, qualifying opportunities, and differentiating against competitive offerings remain sales teams' biggest sales challenges. The core skills of consultative selling are critical.



## Characteristics of Overperforming Sales Teams

We surveyed 208 B2B sales leaders about their 2025 priorities, processes, and seller skills. Based on the data, we grouped their sales teams into three categories:

1. **Overperforming:** Teams that exceeded revenue goals in 2023 (61%)
2. **Successful:** Teams that met revenue goals in 2023 (22%)
3. **Underperforming:** Teams that were below revenue goals in 2023 (17%)



The findings show significant differences in how teams that meet or outperform their revenue goals sell, train, and coach their teams.

### Overperforming sales teams:

- Are more effective at questioning, presenting value, and closing sales
- Have managers who are better at coaching conversations and leveraging peer coaching
- Conduct more frequent sales process training and product training
- Offer extensive onboarding for new hires

Instead of focusing on transactions, forward-looking leaders make sure their teams have the skills to differentiate themselves, build long-term relationships, sell with value, and become trusted business partners.

## 4 Best Practices for Sales Leaders

### Best Practice 1: Sales process adherence is still critical.

As we presented in our 2024 sales leader report, most teams have a sales process, but successful sales teams are more likely to closely adhere to it. For the second year in a row, our data shows the true benefits of adhering to a sales process.

**Better Performance: Teams that consistently follow their sales process have more sellers on track to hit quota.**

- 62% of organizations that consistently adhere to their sales process have more than 60% of their sellers on track to hit quota.
- Only 32% of organizations that occasionally follow their sales process have more than 60% of their team on track to hit quota.

**Better Skillset: Teams that consistently follow their sales process are more effective at key consultative selling skills.**

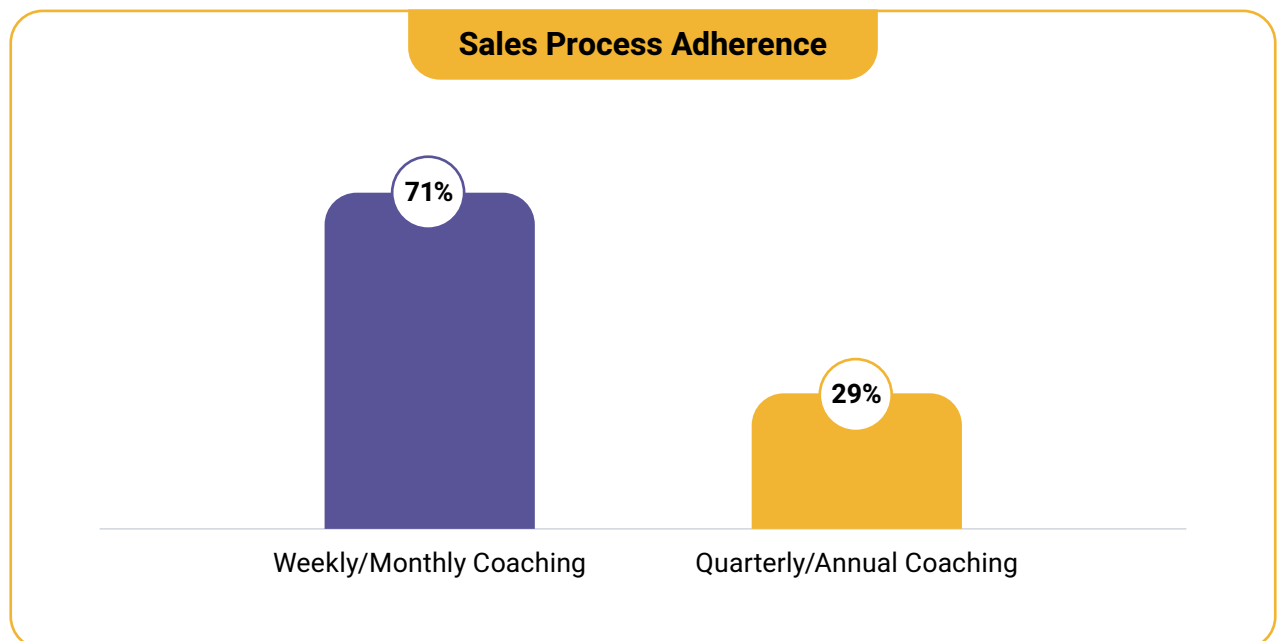
- 62% of organizations that consistently adhere to their sales process are very effective at **pre-call planning**.
- 79% of organizations that consistently adhere to their sales process are very effective at **asking questions** to identify the appropriate product or service for the customer.
- 80% of organizations that consistently adhere to their sales process are very effective at **showing the ROI of their product or service**.
- 74% of organizations that consistently adhere to their sales process are very effective at **negotiating**.

**62%** of organizations that **consistently adhere** to their sales process have more than **60%** of their sellers on track to hit quota.

## Best Practice 2: You need to train and coach to your sales process.

Organizations that train on sales process more frequently also follow their sales process more consistently.

- 81% of teams that train on sales process at least **2x per year** follow their sales process all or most of the time. The secret to having sellers who follow a process is to keep it top of mind and to make it a common part of your everyday activity and language.



Manager coaching is a best practice for driving sales process adherence. Sales leaders who conduct frequent one-on-one meetings (weekly or monthly) with their sellers are more likely to have teams that follow their sales process consistently.

- 71% of teams with managers who coach on a weekly or monthly basis follow their sales process consistently.
- Only 29% of teams with managers who coach quarterly or annually follow their sales process consistently.

Having a structured sales process in place provides “something to coach to”—a standard framework for evaluating and coaching to skill and process proficiency.

### Best Practice 3: Overperforming teams have stronger capabilities in three important skill areas.

Overperforming teams have strong “early stage” consultative skills that lay the foundation for success at later stages of the sales process.

- 83% of overperforming teams are very effective at **listening**.
- 77% of overperforming teams are very effective at **questioning to identify what and why a customer will buy**.
- 80% of overperforming teams are very effective at **connecting the value of their solution to customer needs and challenges**.

Effective sellers lay the groundwork for successful sales by digging deep in the discovery stage to identify customer wants and needs, listening with intention and curiosity, and demonstrating value by highlighting how benefits outweigh the cost of change.

The more a seller understands their customer, the better they can mitigate objections, negotiate, and close sales.

**83%** of overperforming teams are very effective at **listening**.

## Best Practice 4: Overperforming teams have the skills to close.

Overperforming teams are more effective at skills associated with closing the sale: managing price objections or customer discounting requests, and negotiating final contract terms.

### Managing Price Objections

- 75% of overperforming teams are effective.
- 56% of underperforming teams are effective.

### Negotiating Contract Terms

- 71% of overperforming teams are effective.
- 53% of underperforming teams are effective.

Underperforming teams are weak in differentiating the value of their product or service from competitor offerings and presenting the value of their solution. Out of all skills, underperforming teams scored lowest in showing the ROI of their product or service.

### Showing ROI

- 75% of overperforming teams are effective.
- 58% of underperforming teams are effective.

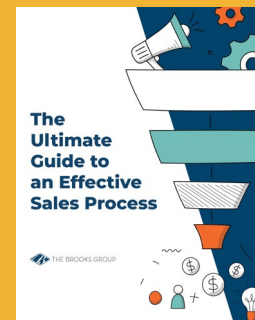
### Differentiating Against Competitors

- 77% of overperforming teams are effective.
- 64% of underperforming teams are effective.

### Confidently Presenting Price

- 83% of overperforming teams are effective.
- 67% of underperforming teams are effective.

Effective sellers present price confidently, show the ROI of their product or service, differentiate the value of their product or service vis-à-vis other alternatives, present the features of their product or service in a compelling way, and connect the value of their solution to customer needs and challenges.



### White Paper Download:

The Ultimate Guide to an Effective Sales Process



## A Deeper Dive: Best Practices of Elite Sales Teams

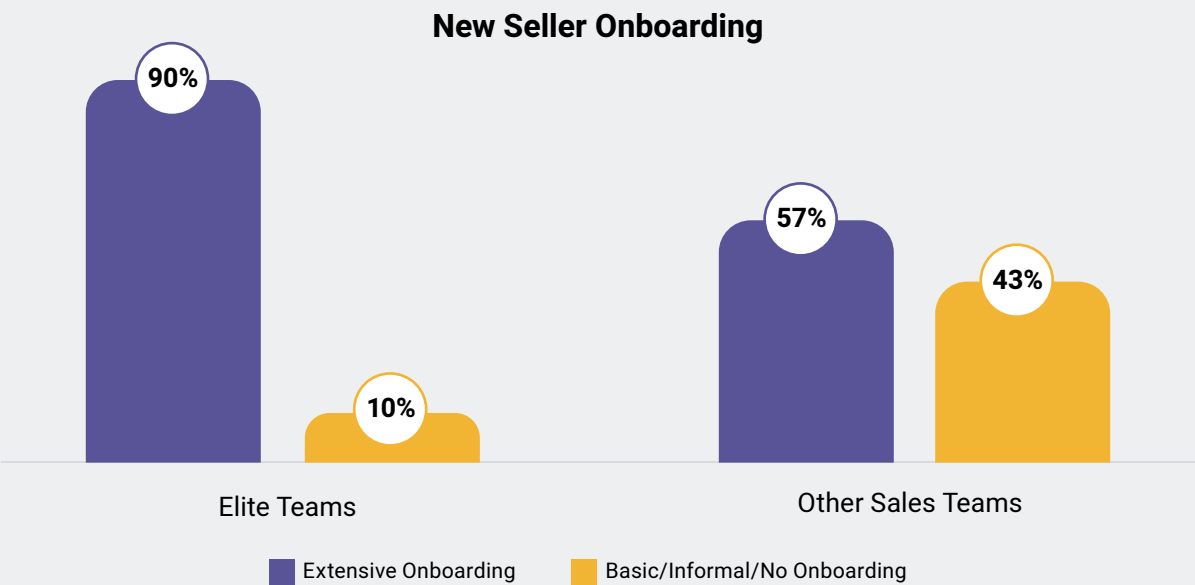
We took a deeper look at what consistently top-performing teams do differently from everyone else. We analyzed only those sales teams that finished well ahead of their goals in 2023 AND expected to finish well ahead in 2024.

We identified 29 “elite teams” out of 208 respondents (14%). These teams ended the year more than 120% ahead of their goals. In addition to the findings above, these teams uniquely share three practices that set them apart: extensive onboarding, selling skills training in key areas, and strong coaching cultures.

### Bonus Insight 1: Elite teams provide extensive onboarding to new sellers.

Elite sales teams are strategic in how they bring in new sellers and set them up for success.

90% of elite teams provide new sellers with a structured, comprehensive onboarding program, as compared to only 57% of lower-performing teams.



## Bonus Insight 2: Elite teams are stronger at three key skills.

All selling skills are not equal. High performance depends on emphasizing the right skills to meet the moment and give customers the sales experience they are looking for.

Today's elite teams perform better than lower-performing teams at three critical selling skills.

- 90% of elite teams are effective at identifying the decision-making criteria in the buying process.
- 90% of elite teams are effective at showing ROI to their customers.
- 93% of elite teams are effective at asking for the business in the closing step.

## Bonus Insight 3: Elite teams have stronger coaching cultures.

A culture of coaching really makes a difference in today's competitive selling environment. In 2025, it will be critical for new business acquisition and market penetration. This is why elite teams prioritize manager performance in certain coaching conversations, including joint calls with sellers, opportunity/deal coaching, and funnel coaching/pipeline reviews.

- 83% of elite teams are effective at deal coaching.
- 79% of elite teams are effective at pipeline coaching.
- 72% of elite teams are effective at joint call coaching.

Effective deal coaching ensures sellers focus early in the selling cycle on more profitable opportunities and discard those not likely to close. Elite teams also coach on the fundamentals of discovery, relationship building, and solution positioning as part of joint calls. These sales leaders ensure their sellers take the right actions to build a pipeline of qualified opportunities with effective pipeline coaching.

## 5 Recommendations for Sales Leaders



### 1. Coach and Train to a Well-Defined Sales Process

Overperforming sales teams are more likely to consistently follow a sales process, and teams that follow a sales process are more effective at critical sales skills.

A sales process is an organization's standard approach to closing deals. It's a series of repeatable steps to move a prospect from the early stage of awareness to a sale. Sales process adherence means the team has a consistent framework for conducting business.

Organizations that overperform against revenue goals value a structured sales process and reinforce it with training and coaching.

Visit **The Brooks Group** to learn about our award-winning **IMPACT** sales process and skills training programs.



### 2. Develop a Formal Onboarding Process

Sales onboarding is a process designed to welcome, train, and engage new sellers into an organization. Successful teams have extensive, structured onboarding and most use a hybrid mix of in-person and virtual onboarding activities.

Your onboarding process can include company and product knowledge, industry insight, compliance and regulatory information, as well as sales process and selling skills training.

This is a perfect opportunity to align new sellers with your company's selling culture. When done well, sales onboarding engages sellers and puts them on a fast track to meet targets and, ultimately, ensure success for the organization.



### 3. Strengthen Discovery and Value-Based Selling Skills

Build discovery skills around understanding the customer's needs, wants, and buying process; presenting a solid ROI that can be advocated through the customer's organization; and strengthening your team's confidence and ability to ask for the business.

The ordering of these skills is intentional. Each skill builds on the previous one. Sellers must start exploring both business wants and buying process details early in discovery. They need to figure out the problem they are solving and the way the

solution will be purchased. Then they can help advocates in the buying group promote that solution to executives weighing other priorities. A seller can only confidently ask for the business once they are clear about the value of the solution and the process for buying it.

The greatest area for improvement among all sales teams—regardless of 2023 and 2024 performance—is **pre-call planning**. All sellers have room to improve in understanding the prospect's business, individual communication and behavior styles, and planning approach and objectives for a meeting.

Only 61% of overperforming teams are effective in this area, compared with 57% of teams that met goal, and 53% of underperforming teams.

Without these essential skills, sellers have difficulty asking for the business or overcoming late-stage stalls and objections. You can expect longer cycle times and more deals lost to time and indecision.



#### 4. Align Coaching and Development with Strategic Priorities

Focus your coaching efforts and seller development on the areas that most align with your strategic priorities. If you plan to generate more new business from new customers and markets in 2025, then you need to evaluate how well your sellers are showing up as they present themselves to the market, prospect, pre-call plan, and execute customer meetings.

Three types of coaching will make a difference here:

- Use joint visits and calls to observe and assess your sellers' skills.
- Use deal coaching sessions to know how well sellers can execute and make strategic decisions on particular deals.
- Use pipeline coaching to evaluate how sellers use their time, qualify prospects, forecast deal likelihood and timelines, and move opportunities forward to close.



#### 5. Consider **IMPACT Selling®** Training from The Brooks Group

Whether you have a team of seasoned pros or new talent in need of guidance, **IMPACT Selling®** provides a process and skill foundation for consultative selling and gives your team the ability to engage customers where they are today.

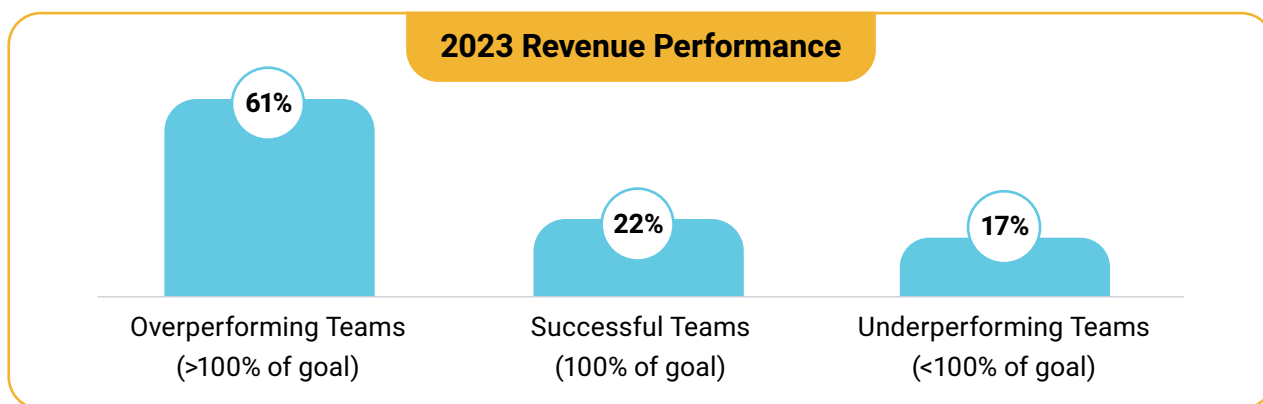
Sales skills training takes the guesswork out of sales and lets your team control the sales process from start to finish. IMPACT is a proven methodology that ensures long-term improvement and consistent performance across your entire sales organization.

## REPORT METHODOLOGY

The Brooks Group commissioned independent research firm Qualtrics to survey 208 B2B North American sales leaders across multiple industries at organizations with revenue greater than \$50M. Survey questions were designed to identify trends in B2B seller capabilities and sales leader priorities for 2025.

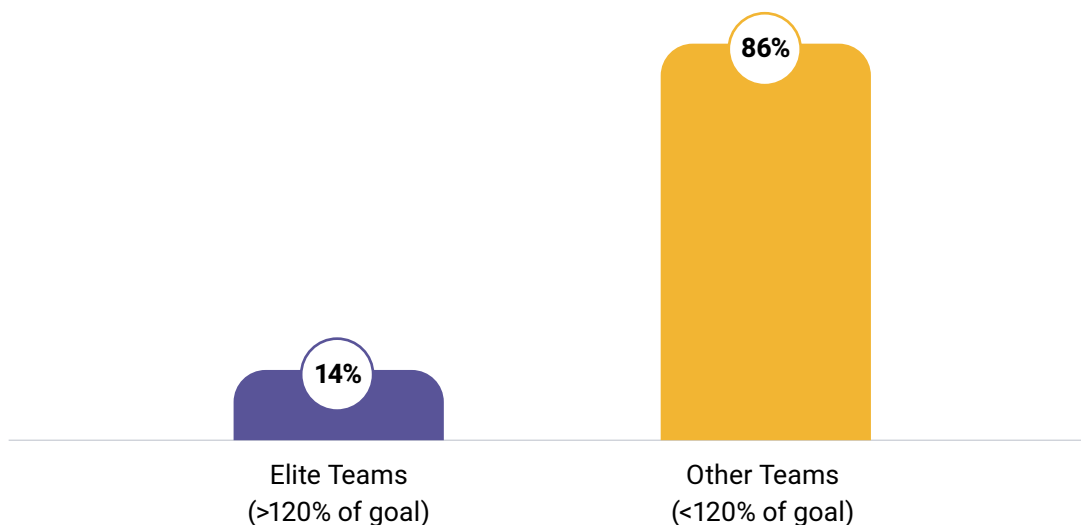
Findings are segmented by performance of previous year's revenue goals.

- Overperforming teams that exceeded revenue goals (61%)
- Successful teams that met revenue goals (22%)
- Underperforming teams that were below their revenue goals (17%)



### A Deeper Look at Elite Sales Teams

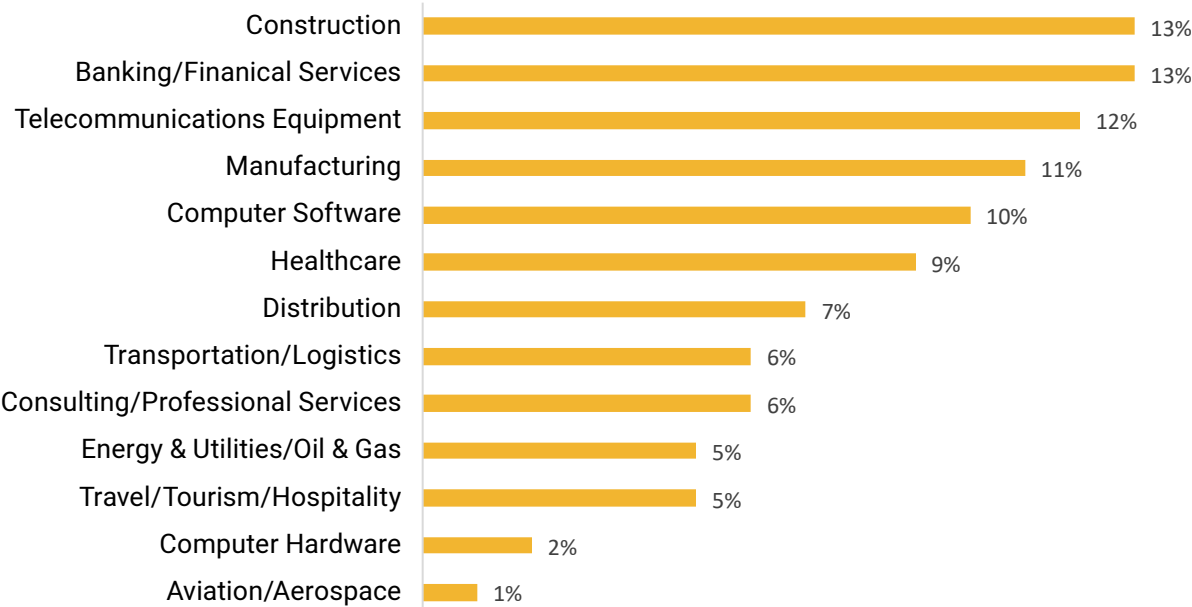
Deeper dive findings are based on teams that finished ahead of their goals in 2023 AND expected to finish ahead or significantly ahead in 2024. These teams finished more than 120% ahead of their goals. We identified 29 “elite teams” out of 208 respondents (14%).



Sales Leader Survey Respondent Titles



Industries Represented





## About The Brooks Group

Unlocking sales potential for over 45 years, The Brooks Group is the leading sales training and development company empowering sales teams to generate breakthrough results.

To learn more about our suite of ROI-driven sales training and development programs, industry-leading reinforcement tools, and best-in-class assessments, visit [brooksgroup.com](https://brooksgroup.com).



**Sales Performance  
Research Center**

## About The Sales Performance Research Center

The Sales Performance Research Center helps sales organizations make informed decisions on sales strategy, sales talent management, sales training, and more. Learn more here:

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