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Enhancing Sales Performance Through Human Resource Interventions: Training, Coaching, and Competency Development in Consultative Selling (A Practical Study at Telkom Yogyakarta)

Hanung Satria Sakti[1*], Majang Palupi[2]
[1]Universitas Islam Indonesia Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia, hanungsatria93@gmail.com
[2]Universitas Islam Indonesia Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia, majang_palupi@uii.ac.id

[*]Corresponding Author: hanungsatria93@gmail.com[1]

Abstract: This study aims to analyze the implementation of consultative selling strategies in the sales of IndiBiz products at Telkom Yogyakarta, focusing on the role of the Human Resources (HR) department in supporting the development of sales team competencies. The research employs a qualitative approach through in depth interviews, observations, and documentation, with participants consisting of the HR Manager, Sales Supervisor, and members of the sales team. The findings indicate that the role of the HR department is crucial, not only as a provider of training but also as a change agent that facilitates the transformation of the sales mindset from transactional selling to a consultative approach. The inhibiting factors identified include competency gaps, low self confidence among sales staff, an incentive system that emphasizes quantity over the quality of interactions, and the price sensitive characteristics of the MSME market in Yogyakarta. Support in the form of training, coaching, monitoring, and evaluation has been proven to enhance sales competencies, although consistent follow up is still required for effectiveness in practice. With continuous improvements in training, incentive systems, and the utilization of CRM, the consultative selling strategy has the potential to increase customer value and drive sustainable sales growth for IndiBiz.

Keyword: Consultative Selling, IndiBiz, Human Resources, Training, Telkom Yogyakarta.

INTRODUCTION

PT Telekomunikasi Indonesia (Telkom) is a state owned enterprise engaged in providing telecommunications and network services, and it is the largest company of its kind in Indonesia. As part of Telkom Regional III Central Java and the Special Region of Yogyakarta, Telkom Witel Yogyakarta plays a significant role in delivering telecommunication services, including internet networks, data, and digital solutions for both individual and corporate customers.

The Witel Yogyakarta office oversees several work units, including the Kandatel Sleman Unit, which focuses on customer service and market development through the provision of Telkom's products and services. One of the flagship products currently prioritized in marketing efforts is IndiBiz, an internet based digital service designed for the micro, small, and medium

enterprise (MSME) segment as well as corporate clients. This product is intended to support customers' business activities by providing stable internet access, communication solutions, and additional digital based services.



Figure 1. Logo of Telkom Indonesia

Vision of Telkom Yogyakarta

"To become the preferred digital telco in advancing society."

Mission of Telkom Yogyakarta

1. To accelerate the development of intelligent digital infrastructure and platforms that are sustainable, affordable, and accessible to all communities.
2. To develop outstanding digital talents that drive the nation's digital capabilities and adoption levels.
3. To orchestrate the digital ecosystem in order to deliver the best digital customer experience.

Background

In the era of increasingly intense digital competition, telecommunications companies are required to continuously innovate their sales strategies in order to remain relevant and achieve sustainable growth. One approach that has been increasingly adopted is consultative selling, a sales method that focuses on a deep understanding of customer needs before offering product solutions. This approach is considered more effective, particularly in marketing new products that require more intensive market education (Nasution & Siregar, 2021).

As the largest digital service provider in Indonesia, Telkom Indonesia continues to develop its product lines, one of which is IndiBiz, designed for the MSME and corporate segments. However, in regions such as Yogyakarta, the sales team faces the challenge of introducing IndiBiz which is still relatively new to a market that tends to be conservative and has diverse needs. This condition requires the implementation of a more strategic and solution oriented sales approach, in which consultative selling becomes relevant to enhance the effectiveness of the sales team in conveying product value and building long term customer relationships (Adamson et al., 2012).

Consultative selling requires not only persuasive skills but also human resource capacity in terms of competence, product knowledge, and the ability to build long term relationships with customers. In many cases, the effectiveness of this strategy depends on the readiness of the sales team, which is managed through HR practices such as training, communication skills development, and an appropriate incentive system (Ingram et al., 2008; Flaherty et al., 1999). Limitations in these aspects often become obstacles for companies in optimizing consultative selling strategies, especially when launching new products that demand intensive market education.

Another challenge that arises is the competency gap between market demands and the actual capabilities of the sales team. Studies show that a lack of deep understanding of products and customer needs can hinder the success of consultative selling (Geiger & Turley, 2005; Moncrief & Marshall, 2005). The HR Department of Telkom Yogyakarta plays a crucial role

in bridging this gap through continuous training programs, coaching, and monitoring of strategy implementation in the field.

Furthermore, the shift in mindset from a transactional to a consultative approach also requires organizational support, both in the form of leadership that promotes collaboration and HR policies that emphasize customer oriented competency development (Rentz et al., 2002). This highlights that the successful implementation of consultative selling in marketing IndiBiz products is not only influenced by sales strategy itself but is also strongly determined by how the HR Department of Telkom Yogyakarta equips, directs, and evaluates the performance of the sales team comprehensively.

Based on the background described above, the main problem lies in the role of the organization in this case, the human resources department in ensuring the readiness and competence of the IndiBiz sales team to implement consultative selling for a new product. The challenges that arise include limited training, insufficient product mastery, and a lack of follow up on performance evaluation results, all of which affect human resources in terms of competence, product knowledge, and the ability to build long term relationships with customers. These issues constitute the primary problems identified in this research.

METHODS

Research Approach

Every research study requires a method or approach to investigate the phenomena or facts found in the field. The research procedure must be based on a scientific method to ensure that the results are reliable and accountable. This study employs a qualitative approach. According to Creswell (2014), qualitative research is a method used to explore and understand the meaning that individuals or groups ascribe to social or human problems. Qualitative research aims to understand phenomena experienced by the research subjects holistically such as behavior, perceptions, motivations, and actions through descriptions in the form of words and language, within a specific natural context, and by utilizing various natural methods (Moleong, 2007).

In qualitative research, several approaches may serve as guides, including ethnography, case study, grounded theory, phenomenology, and narrative (Dessler, 2009). This study adopts a phenomenological approach. Phenomenological study is a scientific approach that examines and investigates events experienced by an individual, a group of individuals, or other living beings. Such events become significant and are part of the lived experiences of the research subjects (Moleong, 2018).

Creswell (2015) further explains that phenomenological studies describe the common meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences regarding a concept or phenomenon. The primary aim of phenomenology is to reduce individual experiences with a phenomenon to a description of its universal essence. In phenomenological research, experience is understood as what is consciously experienced by an individual, a group of people, or other living beings. Human experiences are studied in phenomenological research through comprehensive descriptions of the individuals examined (Yusanto, 2020). Geertz (1973)explains that phenomenology seeks to understand how and what meanings are constructed by subjects concerning the events or phenomena in their daily lives, which then shape their reality (Ahmadi, 2016).

Sources of Research Data

Primary Data

According to Sekaran & Bougie (2013), primary data refer to information obtained firsthand by the researcher for specific research purposes. Individuals provide such information when interviewed, given questionnaires, or observed. The sources of data in this study are

informants directly related to the research topic, namely the HR manager, the sales supervisor, and members of the sales team. The total number of participants in this study is three, consisting of one main subject and two supporting subjects. However, the number of participants was not predetermined; rather, it was based on the principle of data saturation, which occurs when the information obtained becomes repetitive and no longer provides new insights (Guest et al., 2006).

Secondary Data

According to Sekaran & Bougie (2013), secondary data refer to information collected from existing sources. These may include books and journals, government publications on economic indicators, census data, statistical abstracts, databases, media, company annual reports, and others. In this study, secondary data were obtained from the author's observations as well as from literature review.

Data Collection Techniques

According to Creswell (2015), qualitative researchers collect data themselves through documentation, behavioral observation, interviews, and audiovisual information. The researcher then summarizes all the data obtained, interprets them, and processes them into categories or themes that cut across all data sources. The data collection methods used in this study include interviews, observation, and documentation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Evaluation and Measurement of the Impact of Organizational Policies within the HR Department of Telkom Yogyakarta

In an interview with the HR Manager (R1), it was revealed that the HR Department of Telkom Yogyakarta applies competency based indicators to evaluate the success of consultative selling implementation. The evaluation is carried out by assessing the aspects of knowledge, skills, and attitude of each member of the sales team, as stated by Respondent 1:

> *"We evaluate from three perspectives. Knowledge: whether the sales team understands the IndiBiz product and its segmentation. Skills: whether they are able to conduct probing and engage in consultative communication. Attitude: whether they are disciplined in recording customer data and maintaining good relationships with clients."* (Respondent 1, 03/09/2025)

The Supervisor (R2) added that the evaluation is not limited to formal reporting but is also conducted through daily coaching and customer feedback. Thus, the assessment is comprehensive and continuous, as highlighted by Respondent 2:

> *"Supervisors usually accompany sales directly, providing input after they meet customers. In addition, customer feedback also serves as an important indicator, for example, whether they feel they have been well served."* (Respondent 2, 03/09/2025)

The results of this evaluation are utilized by the HR Department of Telkom Yogyakarta to improve future training programs and also serve as the basis for providing incentives and recognition.

Table 1. Evaluation and Measurement

1. How can the organization evaluate and measure the impact of the policies implemented on improving the sales team's performance and achieving IndiBiz sales targets?	
Respondent 1	The HR Manager monitors performance through the CRM system to ensure that customer data genuinely represents business clients. Monitoring is conducted through: (a) Field notes,

	(b) Feedback from the sales team, (c) Comprehensive assessments using a checklist during business customer surveys. The impact of these initiatives demonstrates that the training not only improves understanding of the IndiBiz product but also strengthens the core competencies of the sales team's human resources. From the **knowledge** perspective, the team has developed a deeper understanding of business customer segmentation, the differentiation between IndiBiz and residential packages, as well as digital needs trends among SMEs in Yogyakarta. From the **skills** perspective, they have mastered techniques such as consultative questioning, active listening, and designing business solutions tailored to customer needs. From the **attitude** perspective, the team shows significant behavioral changes: they are more patient in exploring customer needs, more confident in engaging with business owners, and more consistent in documenting customer data in the CRM system.
Respondent 2	The impact of training on the team can be observed not only in improved technical ability to sell IndiBiz products but also in overall human resource development. In terms of **knowledge**, the team now better understands how to position IndiBiz as a business solution rather than just a standard internet service. In terms of **skills**, they have demonstrated enhanced consultative communication abilities, such as open ended questioning, active listening, and tailoring solutions relevant to business customers' needs. In terms of **attitude**, a noticeable shift is evident: they are more confident in engaging with business owners, more patient during the discovery process, and more disciplined in recording customer data in the CRM system. The HR Department of Telkom Yogyakarta has successfully instilled a new mindset that sales competence is not only about achieving numbers but also about building quality interactions with customers.
Respondent 3	a. Training and coaching provided by the HR Department of Telkom Yogyakarta directly enhanced their competencies as sales representatives. From the **knowledge** perspective, they now understand that IndiBiz is designed specifically for business owners and its differentiating features compared to residential packages. b. From the **skills** perspective, they have become more capable of uncovering customer needs using appropriate questioning techniques and linking them to IndiBiz benefits, such as network stability for digital cashiers or business operations. c. From the **attitude** perspective, they feel more professional no longer merely offering prices, but striving to act as business partners for customers. This has not only earned them greater respect from clients but also increased their confidence in applying a consultative approach.

Source: Processed Data (2025)

Coaching by the HR Department of Telkom Yogyakarta in Daily Sales Practices

In daily practice, coaching serves as one of the main strategies employed by the HR Department of Telkom Yogyakarta to ensure the consistent implementation of consultative selling. Based on the interview with the Supervisor (R2), coaching is conducted not only in formal sessions but also through direct field mentoring, as stated by Respondent 2:

> *"We often accompany the sales team directly in the field. From there, we can provide real time feedback, for example on questioning techniques, listening skills, or how to explain the IndiBiz product."* (Respondent 2, 03/09/2025)

In addition, weekly coaching sessions are also organized, during which the supervisor reviews the achievements of the sales team and the strategies used. The sales team (R3) perceived these sessions as valuable in helping them recognize their mistakes while learning from the experiences of their peers, as expressed by Respondent 3:

> *"In the weekly coaching, it's more like a reflection session. We share our experiences, and then the supervisor provides feedback. So, we learn together."* (Respondent 3, 03/09/2025)

Through coaching, the sales team feels more guided in applying consultative selling strategies, while also gaining motivational support from both the supervisor and the HR Manager.

Table 2. Coaching by the HR Department

2. How does the HR Department at Telkom Yogyakarta provide coaching in day to day sales practices?	
Respondent 1	In practice, the HR Department prepares a coaching guideline that outlines the competency indicators to be mastered, such as the ability to ask open ended questions, active listening, and designing solutions based on business needs. As a supervisor, I play the role of ensuring that coaching is carried out consistently through weekly one on one sessions, shadowing during customer visits, and debriefing sessions after meetings. In addition, the HR Department emphasizes the importance of *work behavior reinforcement*. This means that coaching is not only intended to correct technical mistakes but also to shape professional attitudes, such as discipline in recording discovery results in the CRM system, patience in dealing with MSME customers, and the ability to build long term trust.
Respondent 2	Thus, coaching facilitated by the HR Department functions as a tool for sustainable human resource development. It is not merely aimed at increasing short term sales but also at building competencies that are relevant to the long term success of the consultative selling strategy.

Source: Processed Data (2025)

Monitoring by the HR Department of Telkom Yogyakarta on the Implementation of Consultative Selling

Monitoring has become an essential aspect carried out by the HR Manager (R1) and the Supervisor (R2) to ensure that the consultative selling strategy is effectively implemented in the field. Based on the interviews, the HR Department conducts periodic monitoring through performance reports, training evaluations, and customer satisfaction surveys, as stated by Respondent 1:

> *"We check the sales performance reports every month to see whether there is an improvement in CRM usage, closing rates, and also customer satisfaction."* (Respondent 1, 03/09/2025)

Meanwhile, the Supervisor (R2) conducts daily monitoring by directly supervising the interactions between sales staff and customers. This is done to ensure that each salesperson genuinely applies a consultative approach rather than merely offering a product, as expressed by Respondent 2:

> *"In the field, I can immediately see whether the sales staff are truly listening to customers or just focusing on selling. From there, I can give immediate feedback."* (Respondent 2, 03/09/2025)

The key indicators of this monitoring include improved product knowledge, consultative communication skills, consistent use of CRM, and achievement of IndiBiz sales targets. This monitoring ensures that the strategy does not stop at the training stage but becomes an integral part of the sales team's work culture.

Table 3. Monitoring by the HR Department

3. What is the monitoring mechanism of the HR Department at Telkom Yogyakarta regarding the implementation of consultative selling in the field?	
Respondent 1	The HR Department of Telkom Yogyakarta applies success indicators for consultative selling not only based on sales figures but also through the

	measurement of the sales team's competencies. First, from the **knowledge** perspective, HR assesses whether the sales team has a deep understanding of the IndiBiz product, business customer segmentation, and the ability to communicate the product differentiation compared to residential packages.
Respondent 2	From the skills perspective, the HR Department of Telkom Yogyakarta evaluates the practical abilities of the sales team, such as conducting need analysis, asking open ended questions, active listening, and designing solutions tailored to the specific needs of business customers. These skills are typically assessed through sales simulations, field shadowing, or recorded customer interactions. From the attitude perspective, the HR Department emphasizes work behavior indicators, such as professionalism, consistency in recording customer data in the CRM system, discipline in conducting follow ups, and the ability to build long term relationships with business customers.

Source: Processed Data (2025)

Summary of Research Findings

The findings of this study emphasize that the role of the HR Department of Telkom Yogyakarta is highly crucial in the successful implementation of the consultative selling strategy for IndiBiz products. The research findings can be summarized into several key points as follows:

1. Strategic Role of the HR Department of Telkom Yogyakarta
   The HR Department of Telkom Yogyakarta does not only function as a training provider but also acts as a program designer for competency development, a change agent in transforming the sales mindset from transactional to consultative, and a facilitator of coaching and monitoring. HR ensures that the sales team is equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes aligned with the needs of the IndiBiz market.
2. Barriers to the Implementation of Consultative Selling
   The main barrier arises from the competency gap, where sales personnel still lack confidence in acting as business consultants. Another obstacle lies in the incentive system, which continues to emphasize sales quantity rather than the quality of consultative interactions, thereby hindering the internalization of the consultative selling strategy in the field.
3. Challenges Faced by the Sales Team
   Despite the support from the HR Department of Telkom Yogyakarta in the form of training and coaching, the sales team still struggles to align theory with field realities. The MSME customers in Yogyakarta, who tend to be highly price sensitive, present a unique challenge, requiring consultative strategies to adopt more time intensive and tailored approaches to achieve success.
4. Evaluation and Measurement by the HR Department of Telkom Yogyakarta
   The evaluations conducted by the HR Department already cover indicators of knowledge, skills, and attitude, complemented by coaching from supervisors and customer feedback. However, the weakness lies in the fact that the evaluation results are not yet systematically followed up. There remains a gap between evaluation outcomes and subsequent development programs, resulting in slow improvement of sales competencies. A suggested improvement is the establishment of a more consistent evaluation system, accompanied by follow up actions such as additional training or individualized coaching for underperforming sales staff.
5. Coaching and Monitoring
   The coaching and monitoring practices conducted by Supervisors and HR Managers are already in place, yet they remain somewhat normative and still heavily oriented toward achieving sales targets. This limitation causes the feedback provided to fall short in fully

guiding sales personnel to strengthen their role as business consultants. It is recommended that coaching be directed more toward soft skills such as persuasive communication, empathy, and the ability to analyze customer needs, while monitoring should evaluate the consistency of consultative behavior rather than focusing solely on sales figures.

Theoretical Review

Concept of Consultative Selling

Consultative selling is a sales approach that emphasizes understanding the needs, problems, and objectives of customers before offering product solutions (Adamson et al., 2012). Unlike transactional selling, which is product and price oriented, consultative selling focuses on building long term relationships and creating value (Moncrief & Marshall, 2005). In the context of new products such as IndiBiz, this approach is considered particularly relevant as it enables the sales team not only to sell but also to educate MSME and corporate customers on the strategic benefits of the product (Ingram et al., 2008).

Implementing consultative selling also requires active listening, market understanding, and strong interpersonal communication skills. Previous research has shown that the success of consultative based sales depends more on the sales team's ability to provide solutions than merely explaining product features (Geiger & Turley, 2005).

Mullins et al. (2023) indicate that companies encouraging sales to focus on solution selling aligned with consultative selling achieve higher customer engagement and long term loyalty. Additionally, Razmak et al. (2023) found that combining communication skills with product knowledge increases sales confidence in acting as business consultants rather than mere sellers. HubSpot (2024) also confirms that most modern sales professionals prioritize building relationships and understanding customer needs over quickly closing deals.

Sales Competency as a Strategic Human Resource

Sales competency is a fundamental pillar for the successful implementation of sales strategies, particularly consultative selling. Competency can be understood as a combination of knowledge, skills, and attitude required to perform sales roles effectively (Spencer & Spencer, 1993). In the context of IndiBiz at Telkom Yogyakarta, sales competency extends beyond the ability to sell products, encompassing the capacity to understand business customer needs, provide solutions, and build long term relationships.

Consistent with research findings, the HR department plays a crucial role in developing these competencies through training, coaching, and monitoring. According to Ingram et al. (2008), the success of consultative selling is significantly influenced by sales ability in interpersonal skills, active listening, and problem solving. In other words, sales success is determined by the quality of human resources, not just marketing strategies. Chakrabarty & Brown (2021) emphasize that highly competent salespeople in communication and business solutions can more easily build customer trust. Research by Razmak et al. (2023) also shows that combining product knowledge with soft skills increases sales confidence in performing as business consultants. Hence, sales competency is a strategic HR investment for the company.

The Role of Training in Enhancing Product Knowledge

Training is the primary tool used by the HR Department of Telkom Yogyakarta to improve sales competency, particularly in product knowledge. Adequate product knowledge allows sales to explain product differentiation, relate features to specific business customer needs, and build confidence in their role (Flaherty et al., 1999).

In this study, the HR department employed a blended learning approach, including workshops, microlearning, and role playing exercises simulating MSME customer cases. This

aligns with Noe (2017) view that effective training integrates theory with practice, enabling participants to apply learning in real world situations.

Lack of product understanding often reduces sales confidence when facing critical customers. This aligns with Geiger & Turley (2005), who found that sales need a combination of product knowledge and soft skills to function as business consultants rather than mere sellers. Razmak et al. (2023) further show that role playing exercises in training improve sales confidence in dealing with demanding customers. Therefore, training not only enhances technical knowledge but also builds sales self assurance in selling new products.

Coaching as Reinforcement of Sales Team Competency in the Field

Beyond formal training, coaching is an effective HR strategy to ensure that sales skills are properly applied in the field. Ellinger et al. (2003)note that coaching helps sales improve their capabilities through direct guidance, real time feedback, and reinforcement of work behaviors.

At Telkom Yogyakarta, supervisors actively perform shadowing in the field and provide feedback after customer interactions. This not only improves technical skills but also cultivates professional behaviors such as patience in discovering customer needs and discipline in recording data in the CRM. Consequently, coaching serves as a sustainable HR development tool, rather than merely a short term sales enhancement measure.

Humphreys & Leach (2022) state that regular coaching improves sales capability in implementing consultative selling, particularly in listening to customer needs. Mullins, Swain, & Friend (2023) add that when coaching is supported by appropriate incentives, salespeople are more motivated to perform their roles as consultants rather than simply sellers.

Competency Based Performance Evaluation

Evaluation is a critical element in the HR development cycle. Armstrong & Taylor (2014) argue that competency based performance evaluation allows HR to assess not only results (outputs) but also the behaviors (processes) demonstrated by sales. In this study, the HR Department of Telkom Yogyakarta evaluates sales based on three dimensions: knowledge, skills, and attitude.

1. Knowledge: Assesses the extent to which sales understand IndiBiz products and the business market segmentation.
2. Skills: Evaluates abilities in probing, asking open ended questions, active listening, and designing solutions based on customer needs.
3. Attitude: Measures discipline in recording customer data, patience during consultations, and professionalism in building long term relationships.

This approach supports Bande et al. (2021), who assert that competency based evaluation is more effective in improving performance than evaluation based solely on sales figures. Verbeke et al. (2022) emphasize the importance of evaluation focusing on listening skills and empathy, which have been proven to enhance customer relationship quality.

Sales Incentive and Motivation System

In addition to training and coaching, the incentive system plays a crucial role in guiding sales behavior. Research findings indicate that the incentive system at Telkom Yogyakarta still emphasizes sales quantity, leading some salespeople to revert to transactional behavior. However, the success of consultative selling is strongly influenced by the quality of interactions with customers (Moncrief & Marshall, 2005).

Deci & Ryan (2020)argue that intrinsic motivation, such as pride in being a business consultant and the satisfaction of helping customers, is more sustainable than extrinsic

motivation based on sales numbers. Similarly, Bergers et al. (2023) find that incentive systems rewarding quality interactions enhance customer loyalty. HubSpot (2024) also confirms that most modern sales professionals prioritize building relationships over merely meeting targets.

Therefore, the HR Department of Telkom Yogyakarta needs to adjust the reward system to emphasize consultative behaviors, such as depth of customer discovery, consistent CRM use, and customer satisfaction.

Research Discussion

The Role of the HR Department at Telkom Yogyakarta in Supporting Consultative Selling

The findings indicate that the HR Department at Telkom Yogyakarta has provided support through training and coaching; however, this support is insufficient to fully instill confidence in sales staff to act as business consultants. This aligns with theory, which suggests that consultative selling requires active listening, understanding customer needs, and providing relevant solutions rather than merely explaining products (Moncrief & Marshall, 2005; Adamson et al., 2012).

However, short term training alone is not sufficient. Recent studies have proven that training conducted in stages and accompanied by field coaching is more effective in enhancing sales skills in daily practice (Nguyen et al., 2022). This implies that the HR Department of Telkom Yogyakarta does not only serve as a training provider, but must also ensure that the materials taught are effectively transferred into practice through continuous mentoring and evaluation. This was emphasized by Respondent 2, who stated:

> *"The HR Department of Telkom Yogyakarta does not stop at training alone. They act as change agents, helping the sales team shift their mindset from merely selling products to becoming business partners for customers. In fact, we have incorporated consultative behavior indicators into the performance appraisal system."* (Respondent 2, 03/09/2025)

Sales Competency Gaps and Self Confidence

A key finding is that many sales staff feel insufficiently confident when acting as business consultants. They are more comfortable explaining products based on features and price rather than linking them to business benefits. This is particularly evident when dealing with corporate or SME customers who critically inquire about technical product details, as noted by Respondent 3:

> *"We have received consultative selling material, but honestly, some of us still lack confidence when asked to provide complex business solutions. Sometimes we feel we are not expert enough to be consultants for large clients."* (Respondent 3, 03/09/2025)

Literature shows that consultative selling success is strongly influenced by the self efficacy or confidence of sales staff in providing business solutions (Bandura, 1997; Brown et al., 2021). Recent research also emphasizes that product knowledge alone is insufficient; sales must connect products to tangible business impacts to deliver a convincing message (Rahman & Prabowo, 2021). Therefore, Telkom Yogyakarta's HR Department should provide more contextual training modules, such as case studies demonstrating the use of IndiBiz for specific SMEs, to help sales link features to real customer benefits.

Incentive System Limitations

Field findings indicate that the current incentive system still emphasizes sales quantity over the quality of customer interactions. This encourages sales staff to rush to meet targets without thorough exploration. As Respondent 3 stated:

> *"Our reward system is still dominated by the number of closings. So even though we are trained to focus on customer needs, many eventually revert to a numbers oriented approach because it determines their bonus."* (Respondent 3, 03/09/2025)

Recent studies suggest that when reward systems focus solely on quantity, sales behavior adjusts accordingly, and the quality of interactions tends to be neglected (Rodríguez, 2024). Therefore, the HR Department and management should balance evaluation indicators, including CRM data quality, post implementation customer satisfaction, and depth of needs analysis, to ensure that consultative behaviors are internalized.

Suboptimal CRM Usage

Interviews revealed that some sales staff perceive CRM as an administrative burden, resulting in incomplete customer data. Consequently, supervisors struggle to monitor sales progress. Theoretically, CRM is a critical tool to support consultative selling strategies as it stores detailed information about customer needs and preferences (Buttle & Maklan, 2019). As Narasumber/Informant 1 noted:

> *"We check sales performance reports every month to see if there are improvements in CRM usage, closing rates, and customer satisfaction."* (Respondent 1, 03/09/2025)

Recent research indicates that CRM adoption failures often result from perceptions that the system is too complicated or does not directly aid sales tasks (Ali et al., 2022). Recommended solutions include simplifying CRM forms, providing a practical mobile version, and offering specialized training on CRM benefits for sales success.

Characteristics of the SME Market in Yogyakarta

Findings also reveal that most SMEs in Yogyakarta remain price sensitive, posing a significant challenge as sales must educate customers to recognize the long term value of IndiBiz. Recent studies indicate that Indonesian SMEs tend to be price sensitive but are more easily convinced when shown practical benefits and short term ROI (Susanto & Wibowo, 2023). Respondent 1, HR Manager, explained that the HR Department designed a blended learning training program, including kick off workshops, microlearning, and role playing exercises tailored to the context of Yogyakarta SMEs:

> *"We conduct a full day kick off workshop to emphasize that IndiBiz is not just home internet service but a business solution. This is followed by microlearning and role play exercises with SME scenarios, such as restaurants or small shops. Field coaching is also provided with supervisors accompanying sales during customer visits."* (Respondent 1, 03/09/2025)

Thus, the HR Department and sales team should prepare supporting materials, including local case studies or simulations relevant to Yogyakarta SMEs. This strategy will help sales persuade customers who remain price focused.

Evaluation and Recommendations for the HR Department at Telkom Yogyakarta

Overall, it is clear that the HR Department plays a crucial role in supporting the successful implementation of consultative selling. Evaluation considers knowledge, skills, and attitude of each sales member, as noted by Respondent 1:

> *"We evaluate from three aspects: knowledge whether sales understand IndiBiz products and market segmentation; skills whether they can conduct probing and consultative communication; attitude whether they are disciplined in recording customer data and maintaining good customer relationships."* (Respondent 1, 03/09/2025)

However, this support should be reinforced through:

1. **Structured, Tiered Training Focusing on Both Product Knowledge and Consultative Skills**
   Structured, tiered training is a learning program conducted progressively and continuously, from basic to advanced levels. In the context of this study, the training emphasizes not only mastery of product information (product knowledge) but also consultative skills such as active listening, problem solving, and providing solutions based on customer needs. The goal is to enable sales staff to act as business consultants rather than merely product sellers.
2. **Routine Field Coaching to Enhance Sales Confidence**
   Field coaching involves direct guidance from supervisors or managers while sales staff carry out their daily sales activities. This process is conducted regularly to provide direction, feedback, and motivation. Through field coaching, sales staff can learn from real experiences, gain greater confidence, and reduce hesitation when interacting with customers.
3. **Improvement of the Incentive System by Balancing Quantity and Quality of Interactions**
   Incentive systems are forms of recognition given to sales staff based on their performance, usually in the form of bonuses or commissions. However, incentives often focus solely on sales volume (quantity). This recommendation emphasizes that the quality of interactions should also be an evaluation criterion, such as how well sales staff understand customer needs, build relationships, and provide appropriate solutions. Consequently, sales motivation will not only focus on achieving sales numbers but also on cultivating long term customer relationships.
4. **Simplification of CRM for Easier Use by Sales Staff**
   Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is a digital system used to record customer data, track interactions, and develop data driven strategies. However, CRM is often perceived as complicated and time consuming by sales staff. Simplifying CRM means making it more practical, user friendly, and relevant to the needs of sales in the field, so that its use is not seen as an administrative burden but as a tool that supports the consultative selling strategy.
5. **Local Case Study Based Educational Materials to Assist Sales in Dealing with Price Sensitive SMEs**
   Local case study based educational materials are training resources developed from real examples of the local market conditions. For instance, these materials illustrate how to handle SME customers in Yogyakarta who are highly price sensitive. By using local case studies, sales staff can better understand the mindset of customers in their area, identify appropriate negotiation strategies, and demonstrate the added value of IndiBiz beyond price considerations.

This discussion indicates that the implementation of consultative selling in IndiBiz at Telkom Yogyakarta has not yet fully aligned with the concept. Although the HR department has provided training and coaching, there remain competency gaps, an incentive system that does not sufficiently support consultative behavior, and challenges in dealing with price sensitive SME markets. By improving HR aspects such as training, incentives, coaching, and the CRM system, it is expected that the sales team can enhance their confidence and consultative capabilities, thereby delivering added value to customers and supporting the sustainable growth of IndiBiz sales.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings and theoretical review discussed in the previous chapter, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. The HR department of Telkom Yogyakarta plays a crucial role in the implementation of consultative selling. The HR department not only functions as a facilitator of training but also acts as a guide, ensuring that the sales team possesses adequate competencies in product knowledge, communication skills, and the confidence to act as business consultants.
2. The main barriers to the implementation of consultative selling include competency gaps among sales personnel, low confidence in providing consultative solutions, and an incentive system that remains more focused on sales quantity rather than the quality of customer interactions.
3. Support from the HR department through training, coaching, monitoring, and evaluation has proven effective in enhancing the implementation of consultative selling, although continuous adjustments are still required to optimize this strategy in local contexts such as Yogyakarta, which has a highly price sensitive SME market.
4. The implementation of consultative selling for IndiBiz products demonstrates that success is determined not only by sales strategy but also by the extent to which the HR department of Telkom Yogyakarta can manage the continuous development of human resource competencies.

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