



ENHANCING THE SALES PROCESS TO EASTERN AFRICA

TAMK EDU Global

Peter Perttula

THESIS
November 2020

International Sales and Sales Leadership

ABSTRACT

Tampereen ammattikorkeakoulu
Tampere University of Applied Sciences
Master's Degree in International Sales and Sales Management

Perttula, Peter
Enhancing the Sales Process to Eastern Africa

Master's thesis, 47 pages
November 2020

This thesis was done as a part of international sales and sales management studies. The commissioner of the thesis, TAMK EDU Global is a unit of TAMK that sells Finnish education globally. The objective was to enhance the sales process of the unit in the newly opened Eastern African market to increase turnover and profits. The purpose of this research was to find practical solutions to increase sales. The thesis aimed to answer the following two research questions. The first one was "how to increase expert sales to the Eastern African market?" The second research question was "what modern sales theories support the efforts of TAMK EDU Global in the Eastern African market?" The theoretical framework is based on theories about strategy and modern sales. For the empirical part, theme interviews were conducted with three Eastern African CEOs with a proven record of success. The process gave TAMK EDU Global and especially the researcher insights and theoretical support in daily tasks as a customer relationship manager.

The research gave concrete enhancement ideas for the sales process of TAMK EDU Global. As a part of the process, a strategy was needed for the organization and it was created in a coaching way. The research confirmed that the Eastern African market is one of the slowest on the planet and that the existing sales process that the researcher has been following needs to be tailored to suit the mentioned market better. Theories and interviews supported high power hierarchy in the market, where personal relationships take time to mature. Digital sales and platforms are on the rise in the Eastern African market.

Over all the goals for the research were reached and the thesis paves way for creating a complete sales playbook for TAMK EDU Global. The Covid19 pandemic forced interviews to be online, which made the understanding and interpretation of body language and facial expressions challenging. As a development proposal, the researcher proposes interviewing more than three experts for a wider view of experiences and thus more rich research material. The results cannot be taken directly into use in other sales organizations since all organizations and markets are unique. TAMK EDU Global should now proceed in its sales efforts to follow the made strategy and updated sales process to Eastern Africa.

CONTENTS

Key words: eastern africa, sales process, modern sales

1	INTRODUCTION	4
1.1	BACKGROUND	4
1.2	Objective and purpose	5
1.3	Theoretical reference	5
1.4	Research.....	6
1.5	Outline.....	6
2	TAMK EDU GLOBAL	7
2.1	The researched organization	7
2.2	Strategy.....	8
2.2.1	The strategy of TAMK and TAMK EDU	10
2.3	Projects and Markets	12
2.4	The sales process of TAMK EDU Global	13
2.5	Eastern Africa.....	13
3	MODERN SALES	18
3.1	Sales Channels.....	19
3.1.1	Expectations of the buyer and seller.....	22
3.1.2	The future of sales.....	22
4	SALES PROCESS.....	25
5	QUALITATIVE & DEVELOPMENTAL RESEARCH.....	27
5.1	Ethicality.....	27
5.2	Theme interviews	28
5.3	Content Analysis on the Material.....	30
5.4	Reliability.....	30
5.5	The research	30
6	RESULTS	32
6.1	Ethics and reliability	36
7	THE NEW SALES PROCESS	37
7.1	Prospecting for new customers.....	37
7.2	Starting the dialogue	38
7.3	Tailoring an offer	38
7.4	Following up on decision makers	39
7.5	Closing the deal	39
7.5	The follow-up phase.....	40
8	CONCLUSIONS	41
8.1	Feedback and Further study ideas.....	42
9	REFERENCES	43

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

“High-quality university programs in Africa, particularly in areas such as the applied sciences, technology, and engineering, could dramatically increase the region’s competitiveness, productivity and growth,” says **Makhtar Diop, the World Bank Group’s Vice President for Africa.** *“Strategic reforms are needed to expand young people’s access to science-based education at both the country and the regional level, and to ensure that they graduate with cutting-edge knowledge that is relevant and meets the needs of private sector employers.”* (The World Bank 2014.)

This thesis has been done as a part of a master’s degree in international sales and sales leadership. The author of this thesis works for the assignment company within the field of education export, where domestic and international competition constantly grows. Researcher Monika Schatz states (2016) that several recent developments in the Finnish economic and education sectors make education export seem more topical than ever. The government has made significant funding cuts to the educational sector meaning that new income streams such as education export are warmly welcome. (Schatz 2016, 16.)

Some scholars regard the 1990s as a “lost decade” for Africa. It appeared that the region was doomed to be in a “permanent crisis.” The economic hardship and political oppression that the continent suffered between 1979 and 1999 is well documented. This time of crisis changed Africa’s economic and political institutions and ideologies in a dramatic way, allowing improvements for the political and economic environments of business. (Scott 2012, 45.) Kenya is the economic capital of Eastern Africa. In 2017, it became the third most developed country in the African continent. Kenya invests into developing regional and international trade. (Business Finland 2018.) Eastern Africa has been the fastest growing area in Africa for the last 5 years.

Ethiopia, Rwanda, Kenya and Tanzania have been in the ten fastest growing economies in 2019 according to the development bank of Africa. (Chamber of Commerce 2019.) Internal reforms, growth, renewed interest by investors and trade partners, the rise of China and donors hint that this era will be very beneficial to Africa (Scott 2012, 9). Thus this thesis is topical and important.

1.2 Objective and purpose

The objective of the research is to increase sales by enhancing the sales process of TAMK's education export to the Eastern African market. This answers to TAMK's strategy for 2030 where it aims to be a forerunner in education export. The purpose is to find practical enhancements for the current sales process of TAMK EDU Global, which is responsible for the education export of Tampere University of Applied Sciences. As a part of the development task a strategy for the sales organization needed to be created and the enhanced sales process will be a part of a sales playbook that will be created in the future for TAMK EDU Global. This all aims to create a sales process that helps in sales with potential clients but also assists in more sales to existing customers.

Research tasks

1. How to enhance the sales process of TAMK EDU to the Eastern African market?
2. What modern sales theories support the efforts of TAMK EDU Global in the Eastern African market?

1.3 Theoretical reference

The theoretical reference of this thesis is formed around two research tasks. The topics researched are thus, related to answering them. The theories revolve around strategy and modern sales. There are several lower paragraphs under strategy and modern sales theories.

1.4 Research

The research method in the thesis is developmental research, which is a form of qualitative research. The research is done by comparing modern sales theories with the experiences of export experts obtained by interviews.

1.5 Outline

To provide an overview of the structure of the thesis each chapter is presented and illustrated the figure below (Figure 1). The first chapter introduces the background and the thesis research topic. It also gives insights to the research questions and the purpose of the thesis. The second chapter introduces the organization to which the thesis is done for. It also presents the process of creating a strategy for the organization as a part of the thesis. The Sales Process chapter introduces the concept of a sales process and the sales process of the researched organization. Next, the Modern Sales chapter introduces modern sales theories focusing on the interest of the organization to whom this thesis is done for. This chapter introduces the research theories and tools used for the research task of the thesis. Finally, the Research, Results and Analysis chapter contains the research of this thesis with its results.



FIGURE 1. The overview of the thesis

2 TAMK EDU GLOBAL

2.1 The researched organization

TAMK EDU is a part of the commercial operations of TAMK and thus not a separate company. It is split into domestic operations and to education export. The office responsible for education export is named as TAMK EDU Global. During the research process sales and marketing people, management and support services worked for TAMK EDU Global. The sales team consists of three Customer Relationship Managers and two Planning Officers. The marketing team consists of 1-3 people since two of the marketing people also work with the domestic operations of TAMK EDU. The first commercial project of TAMK EDU Global was done in 2011. In 2019, courses and programs sold and tailored by TAMK EDU Global hosted 471 participants. The figure below (FIGURE 2) does not include short-term introductory visits by international partner.

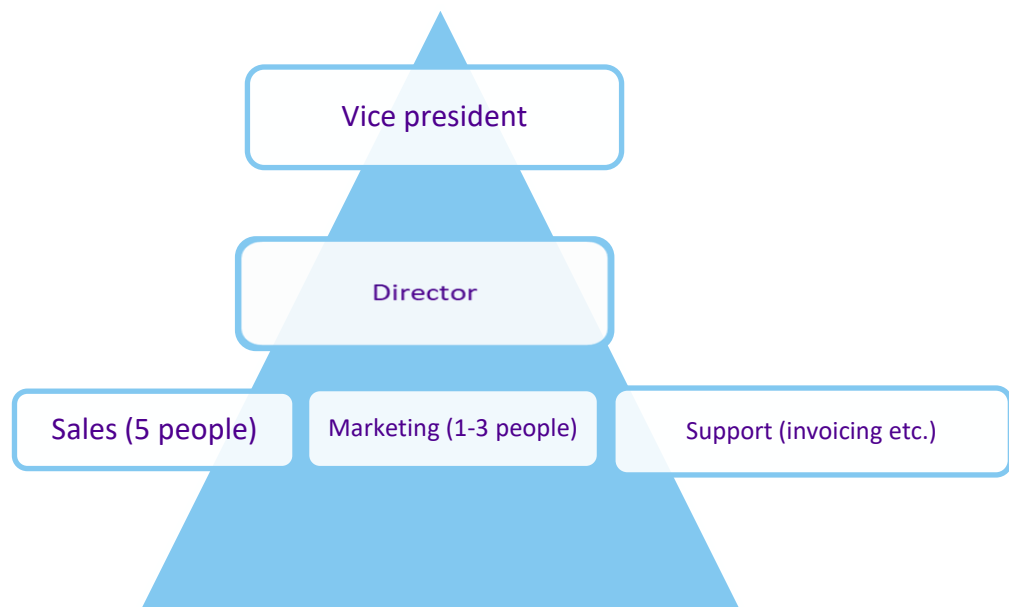


FIGURE 2. TAMK EDU Global's organization chart

This thesis was done primarily for the use of TAMK EDU Global's sales team but the aim is for it to also provide interesting and useful insights for the director and marketing team. The work of Customer Relationship Managers consists of meeting and hosting potential clients in Finland and abroad, tailoring offers and closing deals.

2.2 Strategy

When starting this thesis process, I realized that we do not have our own strategy, and that it should be created as a part of this process. In March 2020, I led a process where the staff members of our unit created a Strategy, Vision and Values for TAMK EDU. The purpose of our unit differs from that of TAMK but because TAMK EDU is not a separate company from TAMK, our strategy cannot be in conflict with that of TAMK's. Kaplan and Norton (2005) emphasize that a company can only execute its strategy well if it aligns its business unit's strategies, support functions and external partners with its wider enterprise strategy. Aligning the previous creates focus even in complex organizations by making it easier to identify and realize synergies. (Kaplan & Norton 2005.)

The definition of a business strategy is that it manages external and internal factors and the interaction between them so that the goals a company has for profitability, continuity and development can be achieved. A strategy is necessary for the existence and survival of a company, since it gives a way to stand out from competitors in one way or another. With a strategy, a company adapts to changes in its environment, affects its environment and chooses its operating environment. (Kamensky 2014, 16–18.) A strategy is a set of decisions and actions that aim to bring success to the company in the future. It is conscious and goal-oriented choice of direction in a changing environment. A good strategy gives a company direction, meaningfulness and it creates the identity of a company and thus brings consistency to the actions of employees. (Vuorinen, 2013, 13.) Strategies exist in different levels of organizations. It is possible to distinguish for example a corporate-level strategy, business level strategy and operational strategies within the same organization. The corporate-level strategy is the top-level strategy focusing on the overall scope of an organization. The business-level strategy is about how different businesses within an organization compete in their particular markets. The operational strategy is concerned with how parts of organizations effectively deliver corporate- and business level strategies. (Johnson, Kevan & Whittington, 2008, 7.)

The mission, vision and values of a company are short and concise descriptions on the company's operations, its future dreams and ideas. The vision statement of a company aims to describe what a company wishes to achieve and what it wants to be like in the future. (Alikoski, Hakonen & Viitasalo 2018, 49–50.) The mission or mission statement of a company is the foundation on which the business is based on. The mission statement should inspire to strive towards the vision and encourage staff to continuous development. (Hyppänen 2013, 49.) The mission statement also defines the direction of a company and tells what the company delivers or sells and to whom (Alikoski et al. 2018, 31). Values are the basic principles of a company, according to which it lives under all circumstances. Values mean a simplified and concreted way to express the culture and way of life of a company. Values are meant to be long-lived but significant changes in the operating environment of a company might lead to changes in them. (Kamensky 2014, 46.) Values guide the actions of a company towards its vision acting as guidelines and rules. Typical values are customer satisfaction, quality of services and trustworthiness. (Alikoski et al. 2018, 52.)

2.2.1 The strategy of TAMK and TAMK EDU



FIGURE 3. The strategy of TAMK (TUNI 2020)

As seen in FIGURE 3, TAMK's purpose is to bring new competence for the working life. This is done through producing high-quality professional higher education and innovations. In TAMK's strategic objectives one point is that TAMK aims to be a forerunner in education export. The critical success factors include among other things growing internationality and target oriented operation. The mentionable operational values in the strategy 2030 are that we work in a globally responsible manner and that we respect diversity in our community. (Tuni: Key Information of TAMK 2020.) A notable amount of focus is put into internationalization and global efforts. This serves TAMK EDU Global well.

The process of creating a strategy for TAMK EDU was led in a coaching way where the staff members of TAMK EDU and their account managers from TAMK's different schools worked for two mornings in small groups doing strategy work through dialogue. Together with our units director Dr Carita Prokki we collected the answers of each smaller team, underlined the common themes and made sure that they were not in conflict with the strategy of TAMK.

One challenge in the process was that the created strategy must serve both the domestic team and the global team of TAMK EDU. The work was continued with the marketing team of TAMK EDU, our director and me. We wrote the mission, vision, values and strategy into a short clear form that will be published in the fall of 2020 when TAMK EDU merges with the continuous education unit of Tampere University. The results of TAMK EDU Global's mission, vision, values and strategy work can be visualised as in FIGURE 4 below.

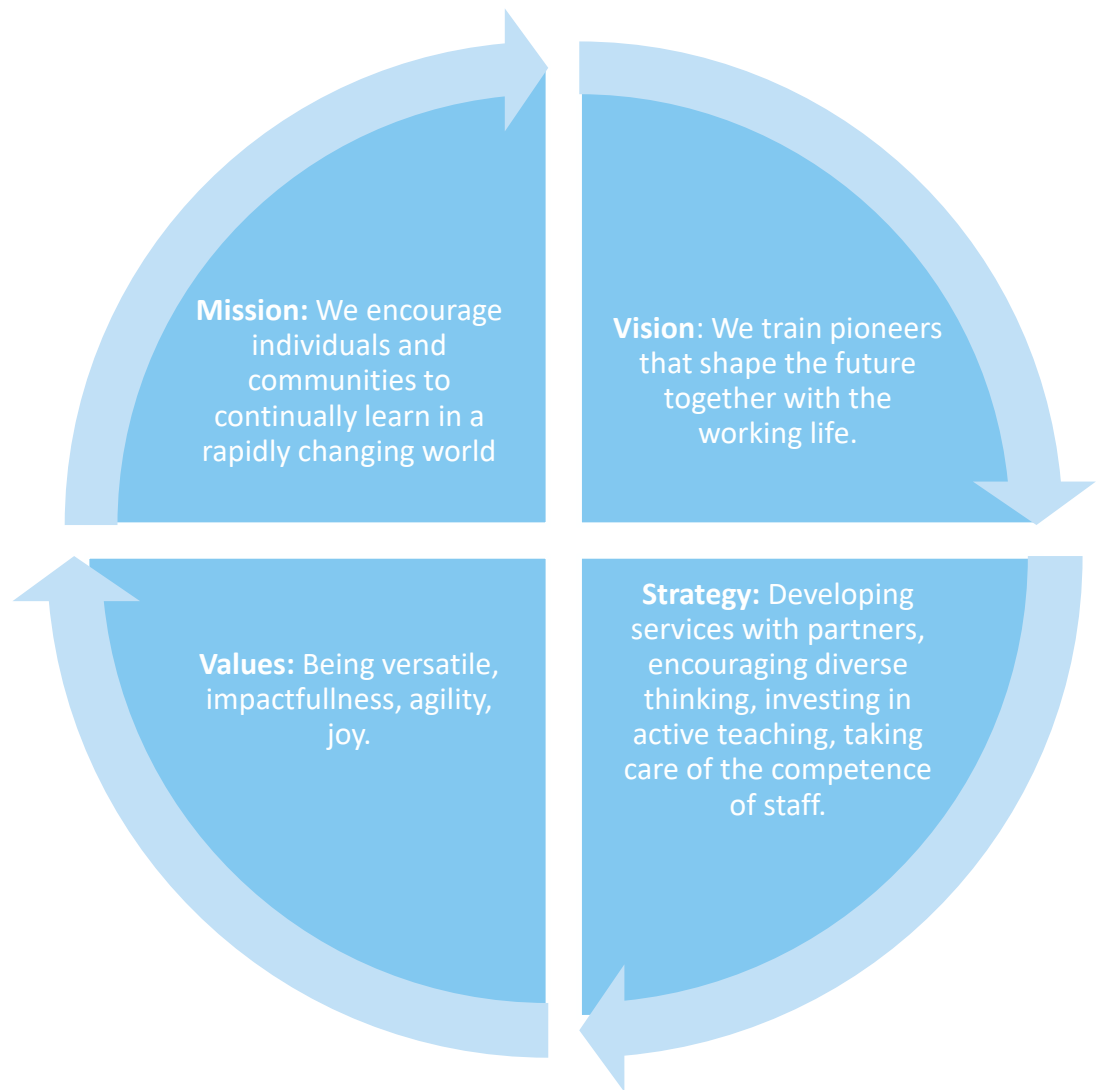


FIGURE 4. THE STRATEGY OF TAMK EDU Global

The strategy of TAMK EDU is not conflicting with that of TAMK and they can be seen as supporting one another. The strategy puts effort into co-creation with clients and this is vital in providing the best possible service for our global customers.

2.3 Projects and Markets

TAMK EDU Global tailors and offers educational services varying from teacher training to complete degree programs. So far, most of TAMK EDU Global's projects have been focusing on teacher training, but a growing demand for international double- and dual degree programs can be noticed. In 2020 TAMK EDU Global also started the sales of complete degree programs with the first project being a nursing group from Kenya. The projects can be offered globally to any markets and currently the biggest markets are China and Brazil. New openings were done in 2019 to for example Chile and Kenya.



FIGURE 3. TAMK Edu Global's client countries in 2019.

2.4 The sales process of TAMK EDU Global

The outbound sales process of TAMK EDU Global can be visualized as in figure 4 below.

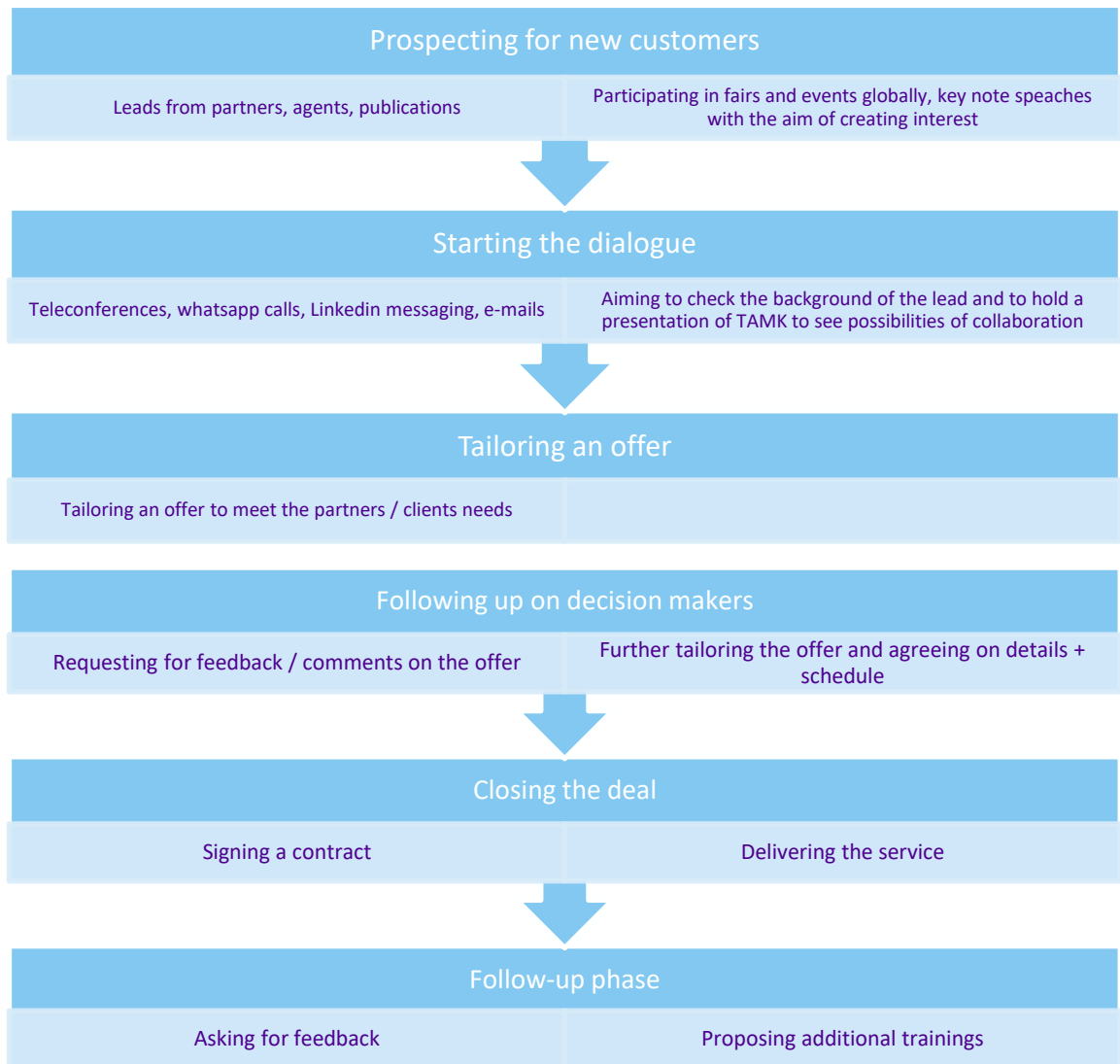


FIGURE 4. TAMK EDU Global outbound sales process

An important notice is that in most cases the sales person from TAMK EDU Global must travel to the customer's country and vice versa, to create trust.

2.5 Eastern Africa

TAMK EDU Global has started educational export to Eastern Africa by signing a contract of a 3.5 year Nursing Degree with a Kenyan county in 2019.

Other offers are in the negotiation phase, varying from teacher training to degree programs and consulting. TAMK Edu Global uses a Kenyan agent company with a proven record of exporting European services and products to Eastern African countries. I Customer Relationship Manager Peter Perttula am responsible for TAMK's export to the African countries and there is a strong focus on the growing Eastern African market. Based on sent and tailored offers, the biggest demand in Eastern Africa has been towards healthcare services such as training nurses and physiotherapists. TAMK EDU Global has also collaborated with Varala Sports Institute and Tampere Adult Education Centre (TAKK) and is working closely with them in promoting their programs in Eastern Africa and especially Kenya.

It is difficult to describe African culture as one since the continent consists of 55 countries meaning that instead of a culture it has various cultures (Scott 2012, 6). Culture can be defined as the characteristics and knowledge of a certain group of people sharing language, religion, cuisine, social habits, arts and music. Africa is the home to various tribes and ethnic groups. Nigeria alone for example has over 300 tribes. (Zimmermann 2017.) Most sub Saharan cultures have a high power distance. Respect for elders is important as they are seen as repositories of wisdom and knowledge and as examples for the youth. Sub Saharan cultures also have high collectivism because of the extended family social fabric that characterizes most societies in the continent. The collectivism helps in building team spirit, creates loyalty and encourages a friendly working environment. The sub continents people are usually placed in the high context category regarding reactions. This means that their reactions are reserved and indirect rather than direct and explicit. (William, Denise & Charles 2013, 4–11.)

The African cultural characteristics of high-power distance and hierarchy suggest that using personal information sources is at a high value. Word-of-mouth and recommendations of close people and especially elders are respected. Trust is essential in building relationships and thus it is vital for sales representatives to understand that this process takes time to mature in the African context. While western cultures prefer explicit rules and regulations, Africans are comfortable with broader termed agreements. In African cultures, personal relations and goodwill are highly valued and negotiations tend to be slow and ritualistic. (William, Denise & Charles 2013, 4–11.)

Time in Africa is not very accurate meaning that meetings rarely start when planned to, and it is common for meetings to be postponed for the following day. Things tend to happen slower than agreed upon and expected. (Kola-Nyström 2019.) Time within African culture is socialized. This means that time is most important when shared with family and social relations. Schedules and deadlines should not dictate one's life or actions. (William, Denise & Charles 2013, 4–11.)

Many modern publications note that Africa still is one of the slowest places on earth to do business in. Africa lags behind on the developed OECD countries as well as other developing regions when it comes to tasks such as securing contracts, export licenses or for example hiring and firing. There are simply too many bureaucratic hurdles. This included with corruption discourage investment and starting business in Africa. (Scott 2012, 6, 46.) On The World Bank's trading across borders score, Sub-Saharan Africa has the lowest rating. This score helps assess the absolute level of regulatory performance over time. An economy's ease of doing business score is reflected upon a score from zero to 100. (The World Bank 2020.)

Economy	DB 2019 ▼	DB 2020
▼ Region		
Sub-Saharan Africa	53.6	53.6
Middle East & North Africa	60.2	61.8
South Asia	63.9	65.3
Latin America & Caribbean	69.2	69.1
East Asia & Pacific	71.3	71.6
Europe & Central Asia	86.7	87.3
OECD high income	94.3	94.3

FIGURE 5. Ease of doing business by region (The World Bank 2020)

Another mentionable figure is comparing Sub-Saharan Africa to other regions in the field of the ease of getting credit.

Economy ▼	DB 2019	DB 2020
▼ Region		
East Asia & Pacific	57.8	58
Europe & Central Asia	68.5	72.2
Latin America & Caribbean	51.3	52
Middle East & North Africa	36	41.8
OECD high income	64	64.3
South Asia	47.5	53.1
Sub-Saharan Africa	42.2	45.2

FIGURE 6. The ease of getting credit by region (The World Bank 2020)

As seen in Figure 9, it is more difficult to get credit in Middle East & North Africa than in Sub-Saharan Africa. Even though the situation is better in Sub-Saharan Africa this obviously has an effect on educational export operations since, it is more difficult for investors to get credit. According to Scott (2012, 6) the situation has improved since now many African economies have been liberalized and are no more fundamentally hostile towards private activities and commerce. The situation in the continents practitioners of “African capitalism” such as Kenya and Nigeria was no better since they were under currency controls, tight financial regulation and with a lack of access to capital. (Scott 2012, 6, 46.) Infrastructure services can be seen as the key ingredient for economic development. The Sub-Saharan Africa ranks at the bottom of all developing regions in virtually all aspects of infrastructure performance. As an example Sub-Saharan Africa is the only region where road density has declined over the past 20 years. Railroad density has also declined, as is the trend also in South Asia. (The World Bank 2018, 2, 6.) A positive change has happened through democratization in the sub-Saharan Africa. In 1986, there were just 14 democratic or partially democratic countries in the area but by 2007, the number had increased to thirty-three of the forty-seven countries of the sub region. For Africa’s business community this has increased the opportunities to engage with parties and governments. Democratization has also helped businesses against political interference through transparency and regularization. (Scott 2020, 58-59, 94.)

The collapse in economic activity that is caused by the COVID-19 pandemic containment measures and instability will increase poverty and endanger lives and livelihoods. It will cost the Sub-Saharan Africa 37-79 billion USD in estimated losses, reducing agricultural productivity, increasing trade tensions and limiting job prospects. Growth will weaken greatly in the two fastest growing areas, one of which is the East African community. (The World Bank 2020.)

3 MODERN SALES

Power has shifted from the seller to the customer. The seller was previously in a key position in providing information to the customer but now the customer has access to more knowledge than ever before. The role of a seller is more of an expert who offers insight to buyers. (Kurvinen & Seppä 2016, 13.) Marketing and sales organizations will be challenged more and more by their customers, who want counterparts of high quality (Andersson, Axelsson & Rosenqvist 2018, 309). Instead of the traditional seller-initiated process sales has turned into a process of joint value creation with the buyer. Selling has evolved into a strategic function within companies where its professionals are required to develop a broad range of skills and competencies. (Cuevas, Donaldson & Lemmens 2016, 13.) Modern sales is first and foremost, value creation for customers. The process moves from blissful ignorance to a need created. Then it goes into solving the need or problem, comparing different options, going through the sales process into recommendation and further purchases. Building trust with customers has never been so cheap, yet in many cases companies would not even dare to buy from themselves. Fortunately, the rising costs of sales are forcing companies to change and to become customer-oriented. (Kurvinen & Seppä 2016, 13.)

The importance of geographical locations of buyers and sellers has decreased because of digitalization. Nowadays buyers have easy access to a wider supplier network and to different channels through which products and services can easily be ordered from. This makes it easier for buyers to change between suppliers and to change between them. (Aminoff & Rubanovitsch 2015, 13, 24–25, 37.)

Sales is changing because of three key trends: customer behaviour and evolving expectations of buyers, the new opportunities and disruption offered by new technologies, and the ever growing trend of globalization and thus increasing competition. Market forces and internal pressures of businesses' to improve sales force effectiveness mean that professional selling and sales management are also changing in a major way. (Cuevas 2018, 1–2.)

A good way of comparing the traditional and new sales processes is to compare the activities that salespeople and teams needed to undertake in the past and need to undertake in today's world. In 1986, William Moncrief developed a listing of selling activities and he updated the listing with Greg Marshall and Felicia Lassk 20 years later in 2006 (Cuevas, Donaldson & Lemmens 2016, 95).

Traditional taxonomy	Contemporary taxonomy
Selling functions, e.g. make sales presentations	Relationship selling, e.g. building trust
Working with orders, e.g. write up orders	Promotional activities and sales service, e.g. at the point of purchase
Servicing the product, e.g. performing maintenance	Product support, e.g. expedite orders
Servicing the account: e.g. performing the inventory	Prospecting, e.g. responding to referrals
Information management, e.g. providing feedback	Computer-related tasks, e.g. checking email, entering data
Attending conferences/meetings	Training/recruiting, e.g. coaching new sales representatives
Training and recruiting, e.g. new sales staff	Educational activities, e.g. attending sales training
Entertaining clients, e.g. at social events	Entertaining, e.g. dining with clients
Travel	Travel
Distribution	Channel support, e.g. establishing relationships with distributors
	Office, e.g. completing expense reports
	Delivery, e.g. product samples

FIGURE 7. Sales activities (Cuevas et al. 2006, 95)

3.1 Sales Channels

In modern sales, companies having a multichannel approach achieve a 40 per cent higher return of investment than companies that only use a single sales channel. These channels can be for example inside sales, agents, resellers, retail stores, wholesalers and distributors. (Baumgartner, Hatami, Valdivieso de Uster & Benioff 2016, 56.) Sales channels can be divided into private channels and independent channels. Private channels mean the traditional model where salespeople work for a company as its own staff. These models have many strengths that all relate to the issue of control. The company has direct control and influence over its staff. The most substantial weakness of this model is that it can be very expensive. The independent channels mean private sales force that work as a company's partner.

The strength in these channels is their networks and they help in accessing closed markets through expertise. The downside of using independent channels is the low control over these operations. There is little or no customer data and many private channel representatives are constantly looking for other providers offering a better deal. (Wollan, Jain, Heald 2013.)

Buyers do not want or need a physically visiting sales representative coming to a meeting just to make an order that could have been, easily made online or on the phone. The best sellers must know how to enable customers to “surf” between offline and online sales channels easily that. This aims to provide customers with what they want instead of focusing on what a singular sales channel could alone provide. Channel choices can-be-shifted based on a products or services life cycle. The direct sales team of a company can sell a new product and later in the products life cycle, it can be handed off to partners. Leading sales organizations combine their various experts such as customer-service people into supporting sales functions to supplement sales or to provide leads. (Baumgartner, Hatami, Valdivieso de Uster & Benioff 2016, 57–61.)

An agent is a representative that is hired to find customers in the overseas market and they usually charge a commission at a prearranged rate for all customers that they have brought the company. The key benefit of agents is that they have extensive knowledge of the target market and the company can avoid recruiting and training staff to enter the intended market. (NIbusinessinfo.co.uk.) TAMK EDU Global has been using agents in many markets with success.

One of the new ways of selling is called H2H (Human-to-Human). In this modern approach, selling and building trust happens between people and not between companies as in B2B (Business-to-Business). Between the 1920s and 1950s, findings in psychology started to shape selling. After 1960s the ways of selling shifted to a more complex direction and in the 1970s, emotional sales started to pave path. Within the next decades, sales went through phases in customer-centred sales, value based-sales and now the newest phase is called social selling. (Pääkkönen 2017, 8.)

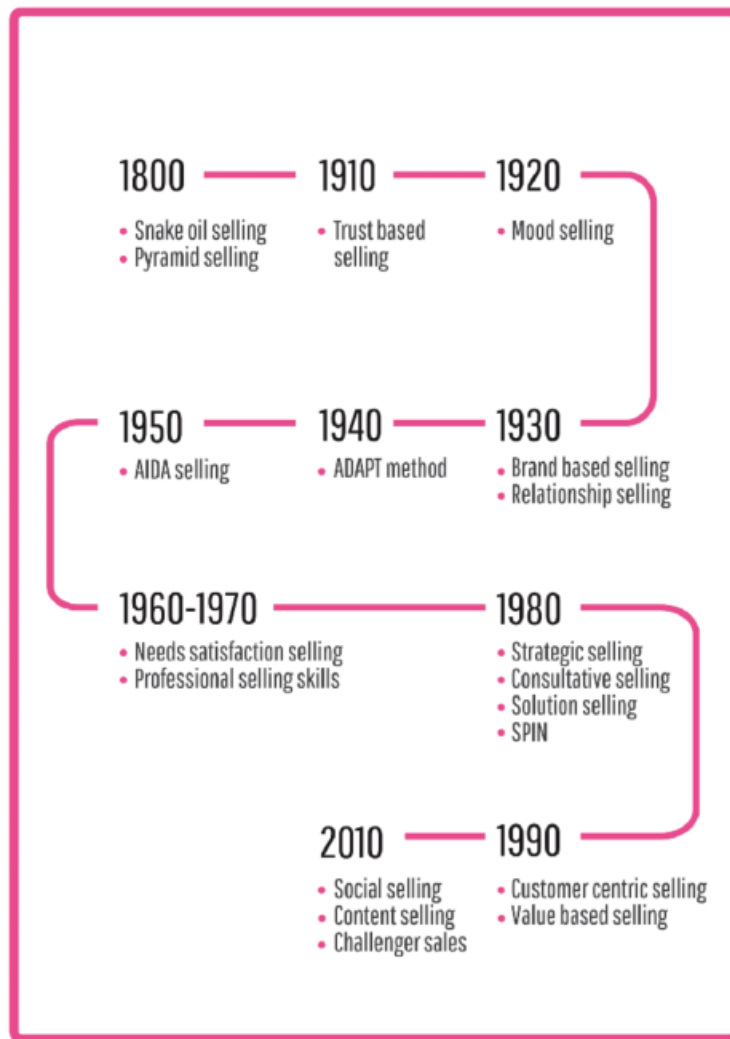


FIGURE 8. Evolution of B2B sales (Pääkkönen 2017, 8)

In the past, it was more viable for companies to count on gaining customers and revenue by lowering prices. This is no longer a viable strategy in sales since; competitors nowadays so easily match prices. This is a fact especially in fields where competitors are able to have lower cost structures. Instead of going for the competitive price reduction strategy, it is better to aim for a strategy where gaining customers comes through bringing additional value to them through tailored services. (Wollan, Jain, Heald 2013.) The importance of pricing is vital when considering sales channels for TAMK EDU Global. Is a sales channel such as using an agent makes the end cost too expensive for customers it can lead to a decrease in sales, and guide leads to competitors.

3.1.1 Expectations of the buyer and seller

Latest research shows that the expectations in sales and buying organizations do not match. Buying organizations feel that sales organizations are not aiming at building long lasting partnerships. Buyers also feel that sales organizations do not have enough insight and deep knowledge of their business or operating environment. Buyers also feel that the approaches of sales organizations and their personnel is not at a professional level since they do not offer well enough tailored solutions or follow-ups on meetings. (Kaski, Hautamäki, Pullins & Kock 2017, 5.)

Nowadays only communicating with customers that your company has superior products with impressive features is not enough. A global market manager at Sandvik stated that it is often already too late to approach a customer who already knows what it wants. Customers have good market knowledge and specifically defined needs and thus they might simply choose the supplier with the lowest prices. Competing on prices is not a sustainable approach for corporations investing a lot into research and development activities. Nowadays sellers should be out in the market as early as possible and to be able to get a sense of the situation before competitors do. This enables to capture and influence customers in their decision-making processes. This strategy is referred to as selling insights instead of selling solutions, aiming at influencing and developing relationships with customers instead of just delivering solutions. (Andersson, Axelsson & Rosenqvist 2018, 187–188.)

Consumers nowadays want more than just rewards and recognition. While consumer loyalty is diminishing, consumers remain interested in loyalty programs and recognition, which erode the profitability of sales. (Wollan, Jain, Heald 2013.)

3.1.2 The future of sales

Costs in personal face-to-face sales meetings and calls are rising and this trend has triggered changes in ways how companies interact with customers. Large amounts of information can nowadays be handled electronically and computers can analyse data to create valuable customer insights and to redesign work.

Data enables to achieve optimal selling time and face-to-face interaction with customers. With data, it is also easier for sales managers to measure the variance between salespeople or against another metrics enabling responses that are more effective. (Cuevas et al. 2016, 154.)

Megatrends are general trends of various phenomena. They are often happening at a global scale and their trends tend to be continuous. They are usually not surprising, but instead familiar changes that are already happening and will happen likely in the future. (Dufva 2020, 8.)

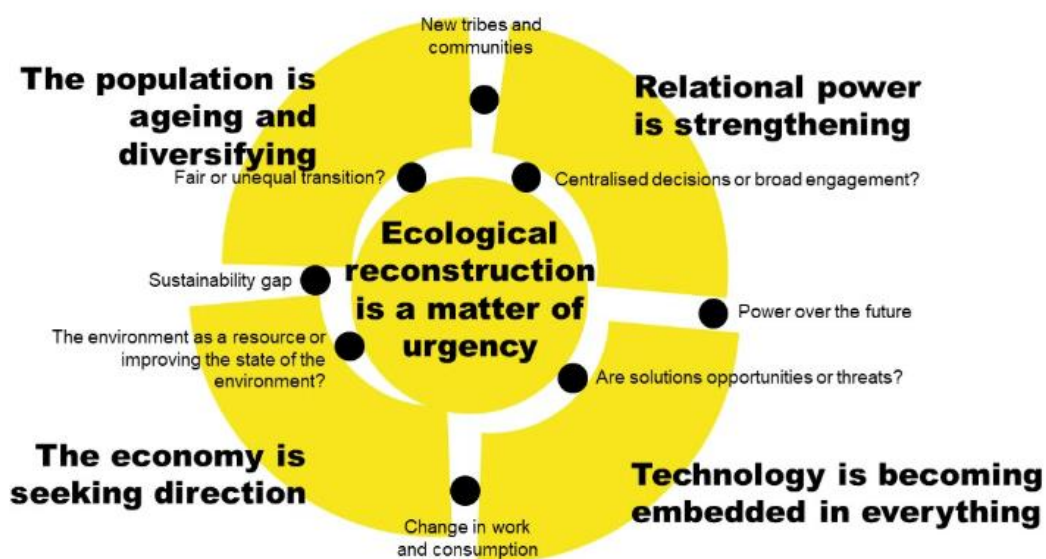


FIGURE 9. Megatrends 2020 (Dufva 2020, 10)

Based on the research by Sitra, relational power is strengthening and technology is becoming embedded in everything. The meaning of networks is becoming more and more valuable. According to Dufva, the constant flow of information creates suspiciousness around all information, and thus people are trusting information coming from within their own networks. (Dufva 2020, 32.)

Technology is evolving rapidly and new applications are taken into use on a fast phase. Artificial intelligence will make a similar impact on society as the internet did when it was introduced. There is more and more data available and through evolving algorithms, it can be refined into usable data in sophisticated ways. (Dufva 2020, 37–39.)

With technology, sales will get tools that will ease routine work and even change sales roles. Artificial intelligence will change the nature of sales by creating “sales assistants” such as chat bots to help with sales funnels. (Pääkkönen 2017, 139.)

4 SALES PROCESS

The process where sales representatives reach out to prospects and deliver sales pitches is called outbound. Cold calling is a traditional example of this but modern sales people also use e-mails and other means of communication. This process is defined by the fact that sales people are reaching out to leads instead of leads contacting sales people. The strengths of this approach is that it provides a highly targeted outreach, immediate feedback, personal contact and quick results. (Efti.) Inbound sales is a sales strategy and methodology that prioritizes in the challenges, needs, goals and interests of customers. In this approach, it is not about closing the deal as soon as possible but instead about guiding the customer through their decision-making process. In the inbound process, the seller develops a consultant-user relationship and turns the traditional sales process into a buyers journey. (Moyle 2019.)

In modern days, meeting quarterly expectations is more important than ever before meaning that companies are constantly looking for ways to improve sales performance. To survive in the fiercely competitive global marketplace of today, it is critical to have a high performing sales organization that can outsell the competition. In order to improve sales performance companies must have the following:

- The right sales strategy
- A compelling value proposition
- A well-defined sales process
- The right sales talent
- Effective sales tools. (Zappulla, Justin & Kane 2016).

One strategy for an effective sales process comes from Steve Andersen and Dave Stein and their book *Beyond the Sales Process*. The strategy is called “Explore the Possibilities: Giving your customer a reason to engage.” In this strategy the focus is in initiating a dialogue with your customer to get to know what they most care about and what are potential areas of interest. One should do background research for this to get a wide-ranging knowledge of the world of your customer. (Andersen & Stein, 2017).

In the process of enhancing the sales process of TAMK EDU Global, the first step was to research modern sales theories, describing the current state and comparing it with the information gained from interviews with experts. The done research is thus a comparison of modern theory, learnings from practise and consulting from experts with a proven record of expert sales to the Eastern African market. TAMK EDU Global set the following theories into a focus with the aim of enhancing the sales process:

A summary of modern sales

Sales channels

Expectations of the buyer and seller

The future of sales

Eastern African characteristics

5 QUALITATIVE & DEVELOPMENTAL RESEARCH

Developmental research is driven by an organizations development needs or desires to change the current state of things. This states that developmental research often includes solving practical issues and implementing new ideas, practices, products or services. The purpose of developmental research is typically to sketch, develop or implement solutions. In other words, developmental research does not just describe the state of things but instead it looks for alternatives and takes things into practice. The biggest difference between developmental research and scientific research is in their purpose. Scientific research focuses on creating new theory on phenomena whereas developmental research aims to create new practical developments or solutions. (Ojasalo, Moilanen & Ritalahti 2015, 19.) The difference between a developmental-and research thesis is that in a developmental thesis the researcher creates a “product” such as a model or brochure whereas in a research thesis the goal is to create new information usually in the form of a research report (Salonen 2013, 5–6).

A basic analysing method in qualitative research is content analysis. With good reason, content analysis can be considered as a singular method but also as a loose theoretical framework. Most analysing methods related to qualitative research are based on content analysis, when it is considered to be the theoretical framework of written, heard or seen content. With content analysis, documents can be analysed in an objective and systematic way. The aim of this method is to get a description of the researched phenomena in a general form. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2017, 78, 85.)

5.1 Ethicality

As a generalization, one can say that human rights form the basis of the ethicality of research. The subjects of research should be aware of the goals, possible risks and methods of the research. They should also give voluntary consent and be able to suspend taking part of the research at any time. It is also important that research information must be confidential. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2017, 115–116.)

The researcher and the participants of a research cannot have a dependence relationship such as the relationship of for example a teacher and a student. It is important to notice that if participants are told, that their identities will not be revealed when publishing a research it will not be compromised. (Alasuutari 2011, 41–42)

5.2 Theme interviews

Interviews are a highly flexible method that suits different research purposes. In an interview, the researcher is in direct verbal contact with the interviewee making it possible to direct data inquisition on the moment. One of the downsides of interviews is that especially in the case of unstructured interviews it creates a lot of irrelevant information. It is also rather expensive when comparing to a research using fillable forms. The interview is also criticized, since anonymity is challenging to achieve and the interviews are demanding for the researcher. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2008, 34.)

One form of interviews is the half-structured interview method called the theme interview. In this method, the most essential thing is that instead of detailed questions the interview revolves around centralized themes. Even though the theme interview does not require detailed questions, the interviewer is not completely “free” such as in the in-depth interview. While planning a theme interview it is more relevant to focus on the phenomena, its qualities and features than focusing on the verification of preset hypotheses. One of the most important factors when planning a theme interview is planning the themes. The theme interview seems more as a conversation than as of an interview. The interviewee can prepare questions that aim to get the interview started, in case the interviewed is reserved. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2008, 47–48, 66, 103.)

In this thesis, theme interviews were used to help solve the set research tasks. The interviewees were all experts in sales to the Eastern African Market. All of the interviews followed a similar structure around five parts also known as themes. The COVID19 pandemic cancelled planned flights to Kenya so the interviews happened through Zoom meetings app and they were recorded using the programs inbuilt saving function.

The interviewees did not know the themes in advance although they did know the general theme around expert sales in the Eastern African market. Figure 10 below illustrates the theme interview of the thesis.

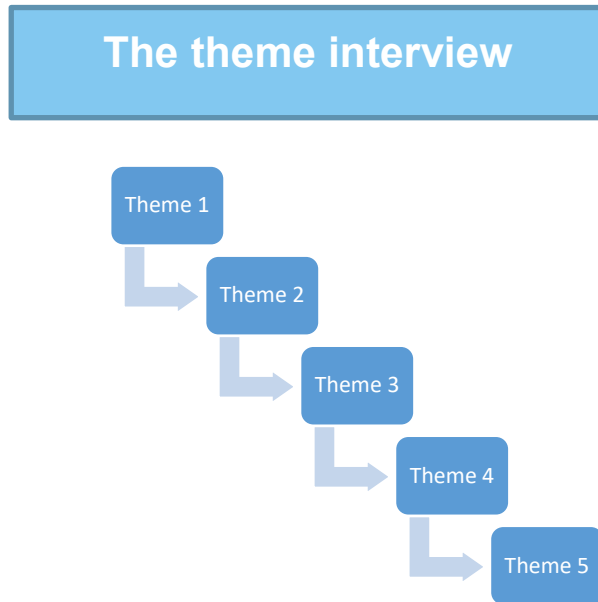


FIGURE 10. The theme interview

The interviews started with general introductions and the interviewer asked the interviewee about their background and experiences regarding the topic of the interview. This general part worked as an “ice-breaker” for the interview.

Theme 1:

Modern sales

Theme 2:

Sales channels

Theme 3:

Expectations of the buyer and seller

Theme 4:

The future of sales

Theme 5:

Eastern African characteristics

The interviewer used the researched theory from chapter 4. as background information for the interviews.

5.3 Content Analysis on the Material

It is possible to start qualitative research without any previous assumptions on the researched topic. In its simplest means this means building theory from empirical data, as is from the bottom up. It is important to delimitate the data available so that analyzing it is expedient. The data can be coded meaning splitting the material into parts that are easier to interpret. This makes it possible to go through the material systematically. The aim of the process is to gather information about a researched topic for a closer look. (Alasuutari 2011, 15, 111.)

5.4 Reliability

When talking about the reliability of a research it is important to note the systematic suspicious attitude of the scientific community. From this perspective it is above all important to convince this audience through different signs in the research text and through chosen wordings. The basis of qualitative research is that the researcher is openly subjective and the admittance that the researcher itself is a key research instrument. It is said that the interpretation of the material is reliable when it does not contain contradiction. It is important to ponder the adequacy of the data and the coverage of the used analysis. The research analysis must also be repeatable meaning that another researcher can make the same conclusions from the same material. (Alasuutari 2011 151–156)

5.5 The research

The research of this thesis was done by interviewing three sales experts with a vast knowledge of the Eastern African market. The interviews were done during the last week of May 2020 and the details of each interview can be seen in figure 11 below.

Date	Method	Duration	Role (Interviewee)
25.5.2020	Zoom interview	28 min	CEO (A)
26.5.2020	Zoom interview	22 min	CEO (B)
30.5.2020	Zoom interview	24 min	CEO (C)

FIGURE 11. The interviews

The initial plan was to fly to Kenya for a sales trip and conduct the interviews at the same time. This was impossible because of the Covid19 pandemic that cancelled flights so the interviews were done via the Zoom platform. Zoom was chosen instead of Microsoft Teams since previous experience has shown that Zoom has less technical challenges for Eastern African counterparts.

6 RESULTS

The results and findings of the research based on theoretical findings and interviews have been divided to the researched themes below.

Theme 1. Modern sales

The results from the interviews highlighted what Kurvinen & Seppä wrote in their book “B2b –markkinoinnin & myynnin pelikirja. Buyers have more and more information on the offerings of different sellers and word on experiences spread fast. Aminoff and Rubanovitsch stated that digitalization has made the importance of geographical locations less important (Aminoff & Rubanovitsch 2015, 13, 24-25, 37). This trend could also be found in the answers of interviewees.

Power has shifted from the seller to the buyer. This is due to numerous reasons but one of the major reasons is the fact that everything is online nowadays. This makes comparison of services providers easier for buyers. From TAMK EDU Global's perspective, this means that we must be more aware of the offering and pricing of foreign competitors. For example, universities from the UK have a long history of providing education to Eastern Africa and in many places the education system is based on their educational model. We must be able to penetrate the market with superior quality and reasonable pricing so that it is convenient for customers to switch their educational partners. The trend of digitalization has also lowered costs for sellers and decreased the importance of geographical locations. From the perspective of TAMK EDU Global this means that we must be more aware of the offering of our domestic and foreign competitors. This can be achieved by more dialogue on the topic with our agent. Since they are working locally in Kenya they have access to finding out where our customers buy educational services.

Interviewee “B” pointed out how mobile payment platforms have changed the way business is done in Eastern Africa.

“The growth in the payment platforms, especially the e-payment platforms and mobile payment platforms. Maybe 10 years ago we either had to use a card or cash, but today in our business we do not do cash. All our payments in our website are for the majority mobile payments.” While travelling to Kenya I have noticed this firsthand since there everything from groceries to taxis are preferably paid by a phone app instead of cash or card. It is vital to make paying as convenient as possible for clients, and maybe in the future TAMK EDU Global should also have a mobile payment platform possibility especially towards the Eastern African market.

Theme 2. Sales channels

The sales channels that one should adopt highly vary depending on the service or product that is sold. An interesting finding that interviewee “C” introduced was the channel of auction. Tea in the Eastern African market is sold in Mombasa Kenya, at an auction physically and online where the price is formed on bids. Coffee is sold in the Nairobi exchange so also there the price is highly decided by the current demand and supply.

As stated in the theories of chapter 4.1 in this thesis, buyers do not want nor need a physically visiting sales representative coming to a meeting that could have easily been done by phone or online. The best sellers know how to enable customers to “surf” between different sales channels meaning that as a seller one must be flexible in offering different ways of keeping in touch. From personal experience I have noticed that it is vital to meet Kenyan clients at some stage of the sales process to build trust, but it is also equally as important to keep a constant dialogue via Whatsapp and e-mail at the same time.

From the perspective of TAMK EDU Global this means that we should focus social media marketing and links to our websites to the Eastern African market more than what we have been doing. Having a multichannel approach is what works nowadays and should be aimed at.

Theme 3. Expectations of the seller and buyer

Expectations of sellers and buyers do not match. It is important for sellers to be in the market as early as possible to be able to beat competition.

It enables capturing and influencing customers in their initial decision making process. The expert interviews highlighted that in the Eastern African market there are gaps between stability issues, pricing, quality, consistency and logistics. Interviewee "A" stated that when selling to Europe "many sellers don't know really what is the final price on the market." From the buyer's side the same interviewee stated, "stability issues is another big problem, though many times there are efforts to solve this with certifications." Efforts have been made by for example certification to reduce the risk of misunderstandings in the quality of a service or product but they do not remove the problem completely. Interviewee "B" noted out that social media has made dialogue with buyers much easier thus enabling sellers not provide what buyers actually want instead of providing what sellers think they want.

According to the research done by Kaski, Hautamäki, Pullins & Kock buyers feel like sales organizations are not aiming at building long lasting partnerships (Kaski, Hautamäki, Pullins & Kock 2017, 5). TAMK EDU Global can start tackling this by starting to use customer relationship management (CRM) tool in a way where it reminds of sending follow-up proposals to potential clients. Personally I have to admit that the sheer amount of leads from different countries has made following up inconsistent, meaning that some leads get excessive attention, while some highly potential ones do not get enough. This is vital since potential customers will then contact us instead of competitors when they get a need, if we keep the dialogue consistent.

Theme 4. The future of sales

Costs of face-to-face meetings are rising and this has pushed buyers and sellers towards online sales. Developing technical solutions are on the rise. The interviewed experts also saw this trend.

They are expecting new digital solutions to make their sales efforts even more effective. Interviewee “C) stated the following: “Initially sales used to be face to face, so there is a big change. Actually the culture of business even from the academic side, the students, the people starting business most of them are putting a lot of materials onto a digital platform. So it forms a culture of digital belief.” This means heading to the similar direction that the theories within this research back up.

From the interviews there can be seen a need for digital databases to Eastern Africa where customers can find sellers more effortlessly. Africa is waiting for its own Alibaba / Amazon platform. Interviewee “B” noted that environmental issues are a quickly rising trend also in Eastern Africa and thus being ecological can give one a competitive advantage.

In my own experience, I have seen that Eastern African buyers prefer face-to-face meetings when initially being in touch, and that online sales channels can be used merely as tool to continue discussions. We Finns must remember that Finland is still very exotic for many in Eastern Africa and especially Tampere and the concept of a University of Applied Sciences are rarely known about.

Theme 5. Eastern African Characteristics

There is a high power distance in the Eastern African cultures. Personal relationships and goodwill are highly valued meaning that sales processes often take a long time. Africa is also said to be one of the slowest places on earth to do business in. The concept of time is also very different to the western world and in Africa, for example starting times for meetings are not meant to be understood as punctual. The Eastern African industry is seen as an agricultural industry based on the expert interviews. This is due to the need of a rapidly growing population. Infrastructure such as flights and road networks are seen as challenges for business. The infrastructure is nevertheless evolving and there are efforts in building joint oil pipelines and railways to Eastern African countries such as Kenya and Rwanda. The Eastern African community is also moving towards a trade union similar to the EU. This will highly increase the probability of TAMK’s educational projects to spread even faster to neighboring countries.

From personal experience, I have noticed the power distance in Eastern African cultures. This can be seen in meetings and e-mails where people are addressed by their title, meaning that for example doctors are referred to as their title. It is a huge difference to what we are used to in Finland, this must be acknowledged in the new sales process of TAMK EDU Global. In some countries, it might be a deal breaker to address a person without the correct title. We are fortunate that our Kenyan agent partner has coached us into local habits and they have for example made us understand that when potential clients are late to meetings they do not mean any offense.

6.1 Ethics and reliability

The interviews in this research were done and recorded with the consent of the CEOs interviewed. Their identities cannot be traced based on this thesis and the ready thesis will be sent to them after grading. This research was done for one organization so the results may not be applicable to other organizations. Every organization is an individual entity and copy pasting a model will not necessarily provide similar results. Even though research analysis is supposed to be objective, it is inevitable that the researcher's previous experiences and assumptions affect the research. The researcher works at the researched organization and thus has insights and understanding on the topic. This can also be harmful in the form of having presumptions about the researched topic and results.

7 THE NEW SALES PROCESS

The updated sales process for TAMK EDU Global to the Eastern African market can be seen in figure 12 below.

1. Prospecting for new customers

2. Starting the dialogue

3. Tailoring an offer

4. Follow up on decision makers

5. Closing the deal

6. Follow-up phase

FIGURE 12. Updated outbound sales process to Eastern Africa

7.1 Prospecting for new customers

The biggest change for prospecting new customers is that now there should be a stronger focus on online presence. I lived under the assumption that online sales is not very relevant in the African context, since e-mailing and teleconferences have seemed to work well enough. This also puts pressure on the marketing team of TAMK EDU Global since they are the ones responsible for much of the needed online activities. The interviews proved that even though physical meetings are very important, it is possible to foster projects also via online tools. A focus on recommendations should also be in aim since this is of great importance in the aimed market. Another change is that now we should consult our agent on competitors and studying their offering to the market and actively seeking for leads from our existing customers that means putting focus on recommendations. As Aminoff and Rubanovitsch (2015) stated, nowadays buyers have easy access to a wider supply network and to different channels through which products and services can be easily ordered from (Aminoff & Runanovitsch 2015, 13, 24–25, 37).

7.2 Starting the dialogue

For the “starting the dialogue” -phase there needs to be more focus on maturing the relationship with the buyer. Finnish companies and sales people tend to try to be too fast and efficient in closing deals, and this might not be the best approach in the Eastern African culture. Based on the findings of this research it is important to let things “take their time” within the Eastern African context. The sub continents people are placed in the high context category regarding reactions, meaning that their reactions are reserved (William Denise & Charles 2013, 4–11). This is something to remember whilst building relationships with clients. From experience, I can say that the change in reactions (for example bodily) are completely different with new potential clients and one that I have been meeting several times. It takes time to build trust to get to see the true reactions regarding for example a sent proposal and to be able to have open dialogue regarding it, instead of “politically correct” discussion that often leads to a slow and long process. Time within African culture is socialized, meaning that it is most important when shared with family and social relations (William, Denise & Charles 2013, (4–11). From a sales perspective, this means that it is important to get to know your clients also personally in order to deepen relationships.

7.3 Tailoring an offer

When tailoring offers to the region we must have more dialogue with the customers to avoid critical misunderstandings. It is important to continuously, ask for feedback from the local agent with strong relationships to leads and clients to consult on the offer process more actively. As mentioned before there also needs to be a more consistent focus on maturing relationships with potential leads instead of aiming for sales with only the most potential leads. As Scott (2012) stated Africa lags behind developed countries in securing contracts since there is so much bureaucracy (Scott 2012, 6, 46). This can only be tackled through trusting the expertise of local agents with proven records of success.

They are able to help avoid long bureaucracy by for example arranging meetings with the correct people and tailoring offers to fit certain criteria. One interviewee stated that stability issues are a big problem. In the educational export business, this can be tackled by providing deadlines that are always kept.

7.4 Following up on decision makers

When following up on decision makers the new approach means putting more focus on taking a “top to bottom” approach. This aims to get approval from the decision maker instead of the negotiator or contact person from the customer entity. This tends to speed up the very slow phase within the context. Requesting for feedback and comments on offers have been in the sales process of TAMK EDU Global and it seems to be working well. Leading sales organizations combine experts such as customer-service people into supporting sales functions to supplement sales or to provide leads ((Baumgartner, Hatami, Valdivieso de Uster & Benioff 2016, 57–61). In the perspective of TAMK as a whole this is something that needs to be worked on. TAMK EDU Global must make efforts to ensure all other staff members of TAMK understand the importance of customer service. From the customers perspective they see TAMK as a service provider and all of our departments and operations should consider this in their daily work.

7.5 Closing the deal

When closing the deal, new efforts must be put into adding value for clients by hosting pre-purchase discussions on expectations and saving these for future reference. The newest phase in selling is called social selling (Pääkkönen 2017, 8). One aspect of this is to make customers feel like they are doing the best possible choice when ordering a service provided by TAMK. As one interviewee stated, a majority of payments are done via mobile payments in Eastern African markets. I have noticed this first hand during my travels, and I believe that in the future we should provide other payment methods than just an invoice.

7.5 The follow-up phase

The follow-up phase does not require major changes. The follow-up phase of negotiations should push to get answers from decision makers that will have a greater impact in moving things forward than their assigned employees. It is also important to correctly address people in high power positions. It is important to keep a continuous feedback with clients in case of future needs. As a part of building trust and continuing / increasing cooperation there must be additional discussions after closing a deal to have a constant dialogue on expectations and how they are managed. As Dufva (2020) mentions, the meaning of networks is growing and becoming more valuable (Dufva 2020, 32). This means that we must consider our customers as vital parts of our local network in the Eastern African market through which we can achieve more partners and sales.

This new sales process was presented to the experts interviewed and they gave a suggestion on the "Tailoring an offer" part. The suggestion was that before sending the offer, **it is important to ensure the quality, quantity and lead time of the project**. This helps to match the expectations of the buyer and making the offer best fit the buyers need. In my opinion, this must be documented clearly.

8 CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this thesis was to enhance the sales process of TAMK EDU Global to the Eastern African market. It succeeded in the task by creating a strategy, mission, vision and values for TAMK EDU Global as well as creating a proposed enhanced model of sales to the Eastern African market. The development process helped summarize relevant modern sales theories and the opinions of experienced experts into a useful short package. Time will show the results of the development process. Even though the theories and interviews presented throughout this thesis did not focus specifically on the education exporting industry, there is reason to believe the insights and processes from other industries are in many cases similar to it. The strategical guidelines made as a part of this thesis provide useful guidance for the marketing team of TAMK EDU Global. This is not just for the units operations to Eastern Africa, but for the unit as a whole.

This thesis can also be handed out to a new employee of TAMK EDU Global to help in the orientation process especially regarding the Eastern African market. The biggest impact of this thesis was to its writer who is responsible for TAMK's sales to the African and Arabic countries. Having more than just self-witnessed experiences from clients in Africa will help in the ongoing and future sales processes to the region.

As a whole, the researcher believes that this thesis answers the set research questions as it proves the accuracy of theoretical information with the opinions of experienced experts. The topic for this research was chosen because the researcher is studying international sales and sales leadership and works in the researched organization as a customer relationship manager with a responsibility for sales to the African market. While planning this thesis the starting point was to choose only relevant and reliable theoretical information to support the process. The researcher tried to always use the most recent publications and sources while searching for information.

Theme interviews were used as a tool for this thesis, because the researched organization set up certain themes regarding modern sales as the area of interest. The results are consistent and interviews did not have mentionable contradictions.

8.1 Feedback and Further study ideas

This thesis was just the beginning of creating a complete sales playbook for TAMK Edu Global. A similar research can be done to the big markets that TAMK EDU has to Latin America and China.

The sales playbook describes your company's process of lead finding and moving them through the sales funnel until they sign a contract. It should include all the content salespeople need to close a deal, such as message templates and scripts. It also has information on a company's sales strategy that aims to keep employees on the same page, moving to the same direction. (Zwicker, 2018.)

In other words, the sales playbook is a document that includes all the content and strategies salespeople need to close a deal. The benefits of a sales playbook are that training new sales people gets quicker and it frees up time for selling. Without a sales playbook, salespeople must learn everything ad hoc. (Frost, 2018.)

The Sales Playbook consists of various components such as a customer analysis, buying process, best practices and sales methodology (Patterson, 2013). In this thesis, the focus is on the modern sales methodology and best practices regarding the East-African market. In a sales playbook template, the first section is your business overview. The purpose of the section is to explain why your company exists and how it makes a difference to customers and the market. In the overview, it is necessary to describe the service(s) offered by a company and its key value propositions. (Granatch, 2019.) Since the concept of a sales playbook is so wide, this thesis focused on what will give TAMK EDU Global practical information for fast results regarding sales in the Eastern African Market and thus enhance the current sales process.

9 REFERENCES

Alasuutari, Pertti. Laadullinen tutkimus 2.0. 4. uud. p. Tampere: Vastapaino, 2011.

Alikoski Risto, Marika Hakonen, and Jari Viitasalo. Yritystoiminnan taitajaksi . 7., uud. painos. Helsinki: Sanoma Pro Oy, 2018.

Aminoff, Jukka, and Mika D. Rubanovitsch. Ostovallankumous . 1. p. Helsinki: Imperial Sales/Johtajatiimi, 2015.

Andersson, Per, Bjö Axelsson, and Christopher Rosenqvist. Organizing Marketing and Sales : Mastering Contemporary B2B Challenges . Bingley: Emerald Publishing Limited, 2018.

Andersen, Steve (Stephen S.), and Dave Stein. Beyond the Sales Process : 12 Proven Strategies for a Customer-Driven World . New York: American Management Association, 2017

Baumgartner, Thomas, Homayoun Hatami, and Maria Valdivieso de Uster. Sales Growth : Five Proven Strategies from the World's Sales Leaders . Second edition. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, 2016.

Darley, William K, Denise J Luethge, and Charles Blankson. "Culture and International Marketing: A Sub-Saharan African Context." *Journal of Global Marketing* 26.4 (2013): 188–202.

Dufva, M. 2020. Megatrendit 2020. Sitran selvityksiä. Helsinki: Sitra. Read 2.4.2020 <https://media.sitra.fi/2019/12/15143428/megatrendit-2020.pdf>

Efti, S. Guide to outbound sales: Best strategies, tools, and tips. Close. Blog. Read on 27.4.2020. <https://blog.close.com/outbound-sales/#1>

Frost, A 2018. The Ultimate Guide to Creating and Using a Sales Playbook. Hubspot. Blog. Read on 15.4.2020. <https://blog.hubspot.com/sales/sales-playbook>

Granath, E. 2019. How to build a Sales Playbook for the 21st Century. Blog. Read on 15.4.2020. <https://www.vainu.com/blog/sales-playbook/>

Hatanpää, A. 2019. Afrikka – tulevaisuuden manner. Chamber of Commerce. Release. Read on 9.4.2020. <https://kauppakamari.fi/2019/07/01/afrikka-tulevaisuuden-manner/>

Hirsjärvi, Sirkka., and Helena. Hurme. *Tutkimushaastattelu : teemahaastattelun teoria ja käytäntö* . Helsinki: Gaudeamus Helsinki University Press, 2008.

Hyppänen, Riitta. *Esimiesosaaminen : liiketoiminnan menestystekijä* . Helsinki: Edita, 2013.

Johnson, Gerry., Kevan. Scholes, and Richard. Whittington. *Exploring Corporate Strategy : Text & Cases* . 8th ed. Harlow: Prentice Hall, 2008.

Kamensky, Mika. *Strateginen johtaminen: menestyksen timantti*. 4. tark. p. Helsinki: Talentum, 2014.

Kaplan, R and Norton, D. 2005. Harvard Business Review. The Office of Strategy Management. Read on 28.4.2020. <https://hbr.org/2005/10/the-office-of-strategy-management>

Kaski, Timo Arvid et al. "Buyer Versus Salesperson Expectations for an Initial B2B Sales Meeting." *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing* 32.1 (2017): 46–56.

Kola-Nyström S. Rohkeasti Afrikkaan. 2019. Business Finland. Blog. Read on 15.5.2020. <https://www.businessfinland.fi/ajankohtaista/blogs/2019/rohkeasti-afrikkaan/>

Kurvinen, Jarkko, and Mikko Seppä. B2B-markkinoinnin & myynnin pelikirja : yritysjohdon opas myyntiin ja markkinointiin . 1. p. Helsinki: Kauppakamari, 2016.

Marcos Cuevas, Javier, Bill Donaldson, and Régis Lemmens. Sales Management : Strategy, Process and Practice. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.

Marcos Cuevas, Javier. "The Transformation of Professional Selling: Implications for Leading the Modern Sales Organization." *Industrial Marketing Management* 69 (2018): 198–208.

Moyle, D. 2019. Inbound Sales 101. Business 2 community. Read on 27.4.2020. <https://www.business2community.com/sales-management/inbound-sales-101-02225684>

Nibusinessinfo.co.uk . Entering Overseas Markets. Read on 28.4.2020. <https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/content/advantages-and-disadvantages-using-overseas-agent>

Ojasalo, Katri, Teemu Moilanen, and Jarmo Ritalahti. Kehittämistyön menetelmät : uudenlaista osaamista liiketoimintaan . 3.-4. painos. Helsinki: Sanoma Pro Oy, 2015.

Patterson, L. 2013. How to Write a Killer Sales Playbook. Nimble. Blog. Read on 15.4.2020. <https://www.nimble.com/blog/writing-a-killer-sales-playbook/>

Pääkkönen, Laura. Social Selling : henkilöbrändi, verkostot ja sosiaalinen media B2B-myyntissä . 1. painos. Helsinki: Noblea, 2017.

Salonen, Kari. 2013. Turun ammattikorkeakoulu. Näkökulmia tutkimukselliseen ja toiminnalliseen opinnäytetyöhön. Opas opiskelijoille, opettajille ja TKI-henkilöstölle. Tampere: Suomen yliopistopaino – Juvenes Print Oy.

Schatz, M. 2016. Education as Finland Hottest Export. Faculty of Behavioral Sciences. University of Helsinki. Research report. Read on 9.4.2020. <https://helda.helsinki.fi/bitstream/handle/10138/161277/EDUCATIO.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

Serenius, M. 2018. Afrikan kehitys vaatii investointeja ja innovaatioita. Business Finland. Blog. Read on 9.4.2020. <https://www.businessfinland.fi/ajankoh- taista/blogs/2018/afrikan-kehitys-vaatii-investointeja-ja-innovaatioita/>

Taylor, Scott D. *Globalization and the Cultures of Business in Africa From Patrimonialism to Profit*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012.

The World Bank, 2020. Publication. Read on 13.5.2020. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/region/afr/overview>

The World Bank, 2014. Press release. Read on 13.5.2020. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2014/04/07/africas-growth-set-to-reach-52-percent-in-2014-with-strong-investment-growth-and-household-spending>

The World Bank, 2018. Document. Read on 13.5.2020. [http://docu- ments.worldbank.org/curated/en/866331525265592425/pdf/Infrastructure-de- velopment-in-Sub-Saharan-Africa-a-scorecard.pdf](http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/866331525265592425/pdf/Infrastructure-development-in-Sub-Saharan-Africa-a-scorecard.pdf)

The World Bank. Data. Read on 13.5.2020. [https://www.doingbusi- ness.org/en/data/doing-business-score?topic=getting-credit](https://www.doingbusiness.org/en/data/doing-business-score?topic=getting-credit)

Tuomi, Jouni, and Anneli Sarajärvi. Laadullinen tutkimus ja sisällönanalyysi . Uudistettu laitos. Helsinki: Tammi, 2018.

Tuni: Key Information Of TAMK. Tampere University of Applied Sciences. Read 25.3.2020. <https://www.tuni.fi/en/about-us/tamk/key-information>

Vuorinen, Tero. Strategiakirja: 20 työkalua. Helsinki: Talentum, 2013.

Wollan R, Jain N and Heald, M. *Selling Through Someone Else: How to use Agile Sales Networks and Partners to Sell More*. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, 2013.

Zappulla, Justin, and Nick Kane. *Critical Selling Skills: How Top Performers Accelerate the Sales Process and Close More Deals*. Wiley-Blackwell, 2015.

Zimmermann K. What is culture? 2017. Livescience. Read on 13.5.2020.
<https://www.livescience.com/21478-what-is-culture-definition-of-culture.html>

Zwicker C. The 8 Essentials of a Successful Sales Playbook. Blog. Read on 29.5.2020. <https://www.proposify.com/blog/sales-playbook-free-template>