



TURNING LEARNING INTO EARNING



THE GREAT COMEBACK OF SALES COACHING

THE HYBRID SALES TRANSFORMATION PROCESS

Why companies that invest in hybrid sales coaching and learning gain the advantage – and how to scale it in the age of AI



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1 WHY THIS WHITE PAPER NOW?

In a rapidly evolving commercial world, companies face new challenges: longer and more complex sales cycles, a multiplication of touchpoints, heightened performance pressure, and ever-growing expectations for personalization.

In the face of these challenges, commercial effectiveness no longer depends solely on individual skills, but on the collective ability to learn, adapt, and continuously improve.

It is in this context that sales coaching becomes central. It is no longer just about "motivating" or "Improving" a team member, but about supporting their skills development in a structured, contextualized way that aligns with company goals.



BUT A CENTRAL QUESTION REMAINS:



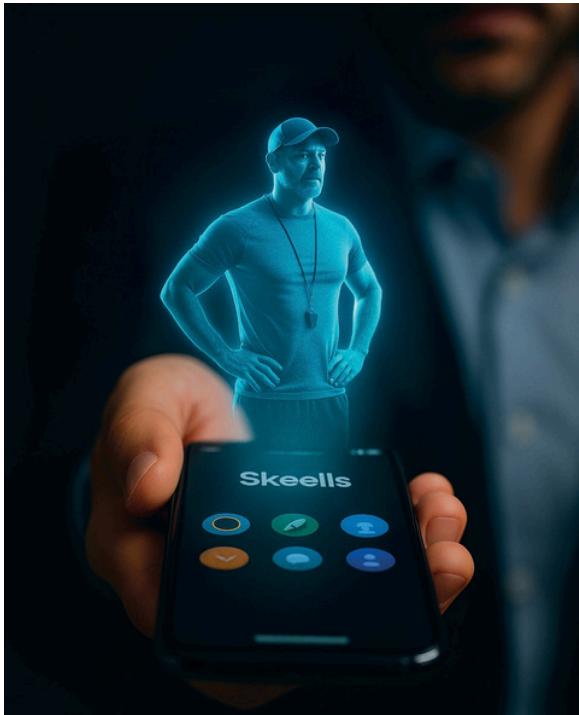
How can we ensure that salespeople truly master these skills?



And above all, how can we embed them permanently into their field practices?

The answer cannot rely on training alone. Companies have understood this well: even with the best content and trainers, the impact is limited if without systemic changes in the field. After a single training session, 80% of salespeople forget 80% of the content.

And that's precisely why The Hybrid Sales Transformation process becomes a strategic priority combining targeted assessment, focussed digital learning, effective coaching (AI as the right hand of the manager) and robust measurement.



So the manager's role must evolve accordingly: they are no longer merely activity drivers or target setters, but become progress facilitators, capable of identifying individual growth levers and turning them into actionable development plans.

Coaching becomes a managerial ritual, embedded in the daily routine, enabling the transformation of knowledge into skills — and skills into results.

At the same time, new technologies — especially artificial intelligence — enhance this dynamic without dehumanizing it. They help structure action plans, analyze practices, personalize training sessions... but remain tools that serve a deeply human approach.

This whitepaper has a simple goal: To help you structure sales coaching that delivers concrete and measurable results.

Whether you are a Sales Director, Head of Sales Effectiveness, or Training Manager, you will find in this guide:

- Clear insights on what coaching is — and what it isn't
- Ways to integrate training and coaching to drive results.
- Common pitfalls to avoid.
- Simple and scalable methodology
- Concrete solution to industrialise coaching within your organization: Skeells now is the strategic moment.

If your teams don't improve today, your competitors will — and they'll do it before you.



2 | WHY SALES COACHING IS OFTEN NEGLECTED — OR POORLY STRUCTURED

Everyone acknowledges the value of sales coaching. Yet in most companies, it remains underused, poorly executed, or ritualized in a purely formal way. Why?

Because even the most convinced sales leadership teams face major obstacles: lack of time, methodology, coaching culture, and tools. But above all, there's a reality no one names: managers are often former top salespeople, brilliant but unprepared to coach others. They know how to close deals. They know how to persuade. But coaching? That's a whole other skill set — being a patient observer, delivering precise feedback, building personalized progression plans, and stepping back to let others grow.

This is the number one obstacle. A manager's daily routine is packed: meetings, reporting, supporting strategic clients, handling emergencies, team management... Coaching always comes last. Without a clear framework, everyone does what they can. The result: inconsistent practices, negative perceptions, and few measurable outcomes. For salespeople, poorly structured coaching quickly feels like judgment or micromanagement.

Many managers want to coach, but simply don't know how.

1. LACK OF TIME FOR MANAGERS

It's not just a matter of workload — it's about what the organization visibly prioritizes.

As long as coaching isn't scheduled as a key mission, it will remain optional. And "coaching when I have time" eventually means no coaching at all.

When should I observe? Based on what criteria? What should I say during the debrief? How do I set a development plan without being patronizing?



2. NO SHARED METHODOLOGY

Without a culture of practice and repetition, techniques taught during training never stick. And in daily operations, opportunities to practice "for real" are rare. The risk: falling back into old habits, even after excellent training.

If coaching is not planned, equipped, or valued, it cannot have a lasting impact.

3. WEAK FEEDBACK CULTURE

Feedback is the foundation of coaching. Yet in many sales teams, it's rare, clumsy, or perceived as policing.

Giving constructive, behavior-oriented feedback without offending or demotivating someone is a skill. And learning how to receive useful feedback without justifying oneself or shutting down — that's a skill too.

Without a feedback culture, coaching becomes either a dreaded moment... or one to avoid entirely.



4. LACK OF TOOLS TO TRACK PROGRESS

Very few companies have concrete tools to monitor coaching and its impact.

As a result, coaching remains vague, undocumented, and its measurable effect on skills progression is absent.

Effective coaching is a long-term commitment. It relies on:

- Field observations
- Personalized action plans
- Tracking visible progress over time

5. COACHING IS THE MISSING LINK IN TRAINING SYSTEMS

Training departments often invest heavily in salespeople... but forget to invest in managers. **The result: trained teams left to fend for themselves once they're back in the field.**

Coaching becomes the missing link between training and performance. It's neither embedded in learning paths nor officially recognized or supported. It depends solely on the goodwill of managers — and that's unsustainable. Training alone is not enough. What's missing is a culture of practice and continuous training. In many organizations, salespeople are trained regularly, sometimes multiple times on the same topics. Yet real progress is often absent. Why? Because without a culture of practice, without repeated real-world application, the techniques simply don't stick. And in everyday business, the chances to "train for real" are few and far between.

6. TRAINING AND COACHING NOT ALIGNED

The constraints of traditional structured training mean that there has been a delay between the identified development need, the training and the application in the real world. Also, training has rarely been tailored to the individual's needs. The introduction of standardised, stand-alone learning has under-delivered on the promise. It frequently does not engage and the link with real-world selling is often at best unclear. These disconnects hold back the seller, frustrates the manager and means missed opportunities for the business

3 | TRAINING VS. COACHING: THE BIG MISUNDERSTANDING

Training is essential. It helps to acquire knowledge, discover methods, and gain perspective. But on its own, it's not enough. In many companies, there is still the belief that a well-designed, well-delivered, well-received training session will be sufficient to transform commercial practices. Yet the data is clear:

According to Xerox and ASTD, 87% of knowledge gained in training is forgotten within 30 days if not reused or reinforced. A study by Training Industry (2024) shows that skill retention after 90 days is:

- Only 22% after training alone
- versus 88% when training is followed by regular coaching

The Sales Management Association (2024) confirms that training alone has only a marginal impact on commercial indicators, unless it is part of a structured upskilling journey that includes coaching.

Training provides tools. It aligns teams, clarifies expectations, and boosts motivation.

But it does not, by itself, change behaviors.

Because a salesperson does not change their posture just because they understood.

In other words, what drives lasting improvement is continuous, guided, and structured practice:

- practicing in real situations
- receiving feedback
- adjusting techniques
- repeating until the right reflexes are embedded



USING DIGITAL LEARNING TO TRANSFORM HYBRID SALES LEARNING.

In the old days, a manager would try to assess a seller's capabilities and then hope to book them onto the next available course, hoping that at least some of the content would address the needs that had been identified.

But imagine if the manager could identify a specific development need based on accurate observation and immediately direct the seller to one or more 4-3 minute interactive learning modules. Once they have worked on the module they can apply the learning through an AI coaching session, access more content for a deeper dive and demonstrate and celebrate the change. If they need to reinforce the learning (say just before a key meeting), they can review the learning and even practice again with their AI coach.



**WELL –
NO NEED TO IMAGINE
ANY MORE BECAUSE THE
FUTURE IS ARRIVING NOW!
THE SALES PERFORMANCE
PLATFORM ALLOWS SELLERS
TO LEARN IN TWO WAYS:**

Just in Time learning using with individual modules suggested by the AI coach and the manager.

Structured Hybrid Learning a directed learning path starting with a face-to-face or remote team session, followed by digital learning modules and micro-cations with gamification and finishing with another face-to-face or remote session.

The role of sales coaching: activate, anchor, realign,

Sales coaching steps in where training ends:

- Helps turn intention into action
- Supports implementation, corrects mistakes, and validates progress
- Embeds learning over the long term

A coached salesperson repeats, adjusts, validates. They improve where and when they need to. Without sales coaching, training often remains a one-time event. With sales coaching, it becomes a process of transformation.

CONCLUSION:

It's the combination of training + sales coaching that creates lasting impact.

So the question isn't about choosing between training and coaching, but about how to intelligently combine them. Training without coaching is like sending an athlete into competition without practice.

- **Training prepares**
- **Coaching transforms**
- **It's the combination of both that creates performance**

5 | STRUCTURING SALES COACHING THAT WORKS IN THE AGE OF AI

The Manager's Role in Skill Development

In most sales organizations, managers are former top performers. They excelled in sales, achieved their goals, and sometimes broke records. Their legitimacy was built on past results. But selling and enabling others to sell are two different skills. Being a good salesperson is not enough to help others progress. Managers must learn to observe, question, guide, and validate.

A Change in Posture That Is Often Underestimated

The transition from "super seller" to "developer manager" is one of the most challenging. It requires letting go of direct action to adopt a coaching posture.

No longer closing deals for the salesperson but helping them gain autonomy. No longer judging a meeting solely by its outcome ("Did you close the deal?") but by what was implemented. No longer correcting mistakes on the spot but building sustainable progress.

The manager becomes a facilitator of learning, not an expert providing ready-made answers.



What Salespeople Expect from Their Manager

Recent studies are clear:

76% of salespeople consider regular feedback to be the number one factor in their development (Sales Enablement PRO, 2025).

The most engaged salespeople are those who feel supported, listened to, and challenged with both high standards and care (Gartner, 2024).

In teams where coaching is ritualized, performance is 25% higher than average (CSO Insights, 2024).

The Key Skills of a Coach Manager

To fully play this role as a catalyst for progress, the manager must develop specific skills:

Observe Without Judging

Take the time to see what is really happening in the field. Listen to a call. Attend a meeting. Identify gaps, but also strengths to build on.

Provide Useful Feedback

Feedback that is targeted, factual, and solution-oriented. No vague encouragement or harsh criticism. A feedback that enlightens and motivates improvement.

Analyze and Structure Progression

Identify root causes. Distinguish between knowledge, skills, and mindset. Prioritize what need to be tackled.

Build a Personalized Development Plan

Define a tailored trajectory for each salesperson. Set clear progress objectives and monitor them over time.

The trap to avoid: confusing sales coaching with control.

Many managers fall into a common trap: using sales coaching as an extension of management.

But coaching isn't about verifying. It isn't about inspecting. It isn't about realign.

It's about helping. Supporting. Empowering.

A coached salesperson feels supported, not judged.

And it's this climate of demanding trust that enables progress.

The Manager, the Primary Trainer of Their Team

In the commercial world where knowledge evolves rapidly and situations become more complex, the manager's role as a skill developer becomes central.

Through their mindset and rituals, the manager creates an environment where people can learn, test, and improve.

The manager is no longer just responsible for revenue.



AI enables managers to:

- Analyze their teams' strengths and weaknesses more quickly
- Recommend the right training sessions in a targeted way
- Delegate certain learning or training sequences while maintaining control over validation

- Become the manager's right hand, while the manager remains the strategist, coach, and leader. It is not a gadget, but a practical lever
 - Making a phone appointment
 - Reframing a customer need
 - Following up on a pending quote
 - Responding to a price objection
 - Presenting a value proposition...

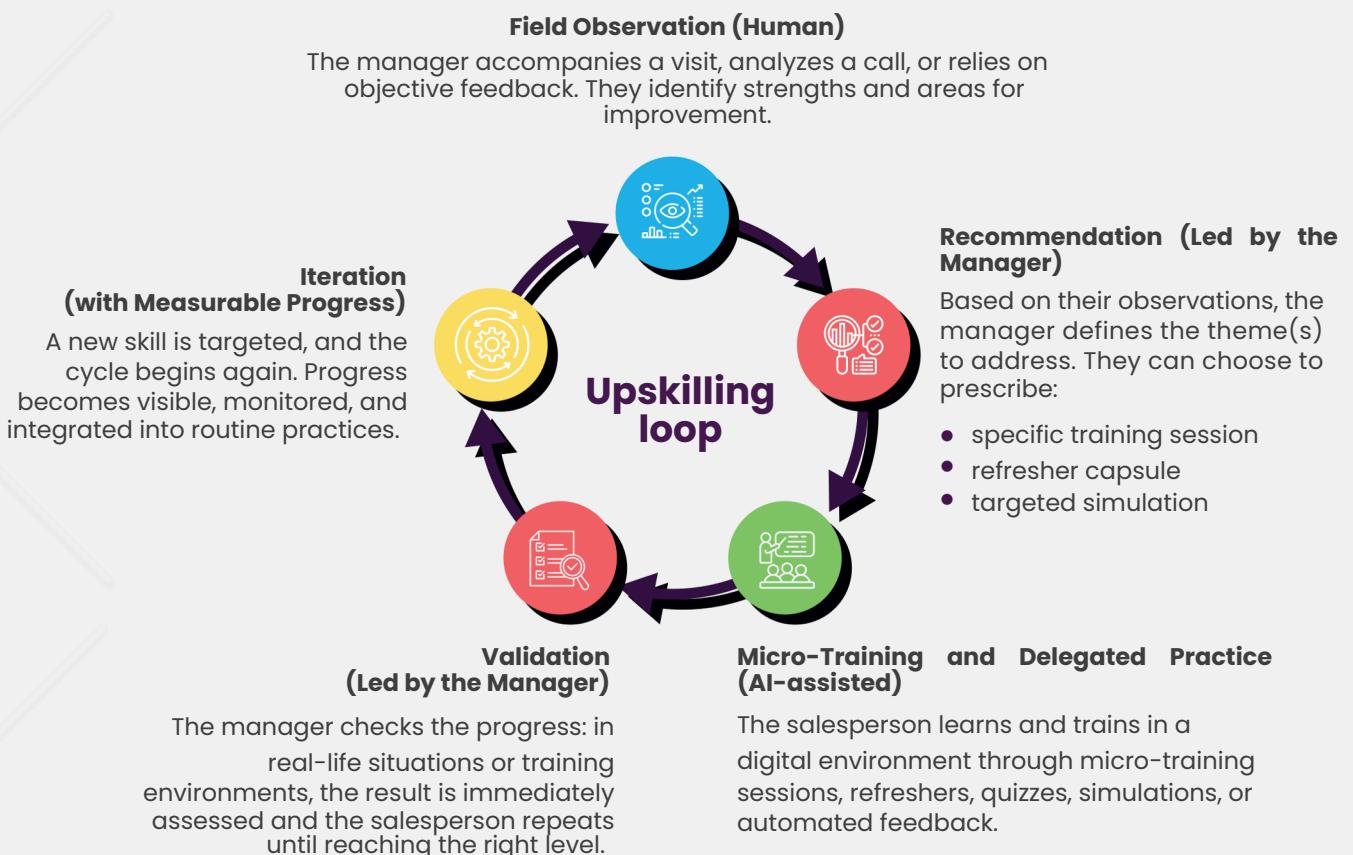
Sales training practical situations

- Training is good. But coaching is better. They go hand in hand with the other. Sales training
- is a salesperson's ability to rehearse, test, and adjust their practices on cases that are very close to the real world. This takes the form of brief, targeted, and regular role-plays on concrete topics such as:

These are true commercial "workout sessions" that help firmly embed the right reflexes.



With AI, the manager is no longer alone. They become a conductor, able to help each salesperson progress at their own pace, on the right topics, with an intensity that would be impossible without technological support. This Upskilling Loop is not an overcomplicated system. It is a simple, actionable loop that will be at the heart of tomorrow's sales management.



THE COMPANY'S ROLE: CREATING THE CONDITIONS FOR COACHING

No manager can coach effectively if:

Their objectives don't include coaching

Their management routines don't allow for it

And their own manager doesn't support them

For coaching to be effective, it must be:

Expected

Recognized

Ritualized

and Monitored

A company that invests in training but not in coaching... is only investing halfway.

6 | ORGANIZING A SALES COACHING SYSTEM AT SCALE

Many sales leaders are convinced of the value of coaching... but remain stuck when it comes to implementing it concretely.

Where to start? How to engage managers? How to measure impact?

Here are the keys to structuring an operational coaching system, even within a complex or multi-site organization.

Step 1 Set a Clear and Measurable Goal

Before thinking about tools or training, you need to define what the coaching should produce.

- Which critical skills do you want to develop?
- Which behaviors do you want to strengthen in the field?
- What indicators do you want to track (frequency of sales coaching, observation rate, skills development, business impact, etc.)?

A good system starts with a clear vision, shared with managers.



Step 2

Equip the Managers

Coaching is not improvised.

Managers need guides, templates, debriefing sheets, or simple apps to help them structure their observation and feedback.

Without this, coaching remains vague and often limited to "how did your meeting go?".

Sales coaching relies on concrete observation grids and simple conversation frameworks to structure the discussion.



Step 3

Define an Appropriate Management Process

Coaching must be managed like any other key activity.

Which indicators should be tracked?

Number of coached visits per month

Skill progression for each salesperson

Number of individual improvement plans in progress

This management logic anchors the coaching process sustainably and enables measuring its long-term impact.

Step 4

Support Managers in Their First Coaching Sessions

For many managers, coaching doesn't come naturally. They too need practice.

Ideally, a specific support system should be planned:

- Co-coaching sessions with their own manager or an external expert
- Role-plays to practice observing, questioning, and guiding reflection

This is key to establishing the coaching posture and ensuring the first field sessions run smoothly.



Coaching only works if it is done regularly.

Rituals need to be established:

- One coached visit per month per salesperson
- Structured debrief after each meeting
- Monthly check-in between manager and salesperson on progress made

These meetings form the foundation for continuous skill improvement.

7 | COACHING DURING ONBOARDING: ACCELERATING TIME-TO-PERFORMANCE

Coaching is often discussed as a tool to improve current salespeople. But its impact is even more decisive when applied from the very start of a new hire's journey. In a context where recruiting is difficult – and retaining talent even more so – onboarding is a strategic moment. This is when the speed of skill acquisition, confidence, motivation... and often, the employee's longevity within the company are determined. Additionally, offering onboarding coaching serves as an attractive feature for recruitment.

The Limits of Traditional Onboarding

The data is clear: many companies offer:

- Dense and theoretical initial training
- Occasional "joint meetings" just to observe
- Then... fieldwork, solo

This leads to:

- Salespeople lost between theory and reality
- Managers "too busy to provide daily support"
- Poorly calibrated objectives
- High risk of disengagement within the first weeks



What the numbers say

According to Salesforce (2024), a salesperson takes an average of 6.2 months to reach full performance – up to 9 months in complex sales cycles.

A Gallup study (2025) shows that employees who experience quality onboarding are 2.6 times more engaged after 6 months and 40% more loyal after 2 years.

Companies that integrate active coaching into their onboarding process reduce ramp-up time by 30 to 50%, while also improving retention.

Coaching from Day One: A Performance Accelerator

With early coaching:

- 1**
Salespeople build confidence faster
- 2**
They feel supported, not judged
- 3**
They develop solid reflexes from the start
- 4**
They adopt a culture of continuous improvement

An effective onboarding system is built on short, coached cycles:

- Structuring expectations week by week
- Observing very frequently
- Providing clear feedback
- Being available for both formal and informal training
- Monitoring the ramp-up with visible indicators (skills, autonomy, results...)

The Manager's Role in the First 90 Days

During this phase, the manager plays a central role:

- Rapid observation of the first meetings, without pressure
- Structured debriefs with an initial micro-action plan
- Targeted training on one skill at a time (e.g., opening posture, offer presentation, qualification...)
- Visible measurement of progress over time



The Added Benefit: Embedding a Feedback Culture

Starting the managerial relationship with coaching also means:

- Establishing mutual trust
- Creating a habit of constructive feedback
- Making skills development the norm, not the exception

A well-coached salesperson from the start climbs faster, climbs higher – and stays longer. It's an investment that pays dividends well beyond onboarding.

SKEELLS: INDUSTRIALIZING SALES COACHING WITHOUT WEIGHING DOWN THE ORGANIZATION

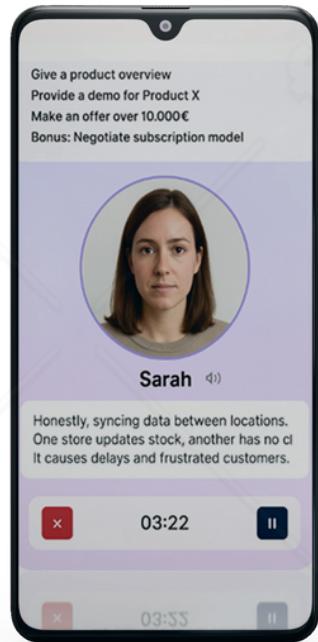
Sales leadership teams want to structure regular, targeted, and measurable coaching... but without overburdening managers. Without complicating processes. And above all, without relying solely on individual motivation.

That's exactly what Skeells enables.

Skeells: A simple system to build the best sales forces.

Skeells is based on a core belief:

For coaching to become a true performance lever, it must be simple to deploy, easy to use, and measurable over time.



The Upskilling Loop, Driven by the Manager

With Trainer Sessions and Skeells, skill development is neither random nor left to the whims of occasional training. It follows a structured, individualized, and manager-led cycle in four steps:

Observe (Skeells Coach)

The manager conducts a structured observation during a field visit or a meeting. They identify strengths and areas for improvement in the salesperson's key sales competencies.

Prescribe (Skeells Coach)

Based on identified gaps, the manager prescribes a targeted path:

- A Skeells Talk to learn or refresh a technique,
- One or more Sales Performance Platform sessions for autonomous oral practice.

Train (Learn and Practice)

Sales Performance Platform : Learn the best practices with our learning platform.

Skeells train : Practice with your Skeells AI trainer.

Validate and Track (Skeells Coach)

The manager confirms progress, validates the competency, and moves on to the next one. The cycle continues.

This loop enables every manager to actively drive the upskilling of their sales teams, with simple and practical tools. Each salesperson progresses where they need to, at their own pace, within a collective framework.

Specifically, Skeells Enables:

1. Observing Field Practices

Structured and customizable observation grids

Qualitative evaluation of key competencies

Follow-up after meetings, calls, or virtual sessions

2. Defining an Individualized Micro-Action Plan

Selection of concrete improvement areas

Automated suggestions linked to observed practices

Alignment with the company's commercial standards

3. Offering Targeted Training with AI

Short, contextualized training sessions via Sales performance Platform

Simulations 100% aligned with the salesperson's real situations

Guided repetition until mastery of the sales technique

4. Tracking Progress Over Time

History of competencies worked on

Dashboards by salesperson, team, and region

Visualization of progress and prioritization of coaching topics

For Managers: Coaching Without Complexity

With Skeells, managers can:

- effectively observe meetings
- provide useful feedback
- build a clear action plan
- track progress without extra tools

They gain efficiency, legitimacy, and impact.

For Sales Leadership: Managing the Upskilling Process

Skeells offers complete visibility into:

- the reality of field coaching activities
- the evolution of key competencies over time
- the coaching dynamics within each team

Coaching becomes a true strategic lever – no longer an HR blind spot.





In Summary: Skeells Structures Sales Coaching Around What Truly Matters.

It transforms an informal practice into a robust managerial system without adding organizational complexity.

Skeells Trainer is supported by learning content on the Sales Performance Platform.

9 | CRM INTEGRATION: SKEELS, A CONNECTED COMPONENT OF YOUR SALES PERFORMANCE

So, does Skeells integrate with your CRM?

| Yes. And it is actually one of its greatest strengths.

The data collected from field coaching (observations, micro-actions, progress on key skills) can be linked to your CRM to enhance sales management.

What this enables:

| **Visualize sales skills per opportunity**

See for each deal where the salesperson stands on key stages (qualification, closing, handling objections...)

| **Automatically trigger improvement plans**

If an opportunity stagnates, Skeells can suggest a targeted micro-action (e.g., refining the value proposition).

| **Cross-reference actual performance and skills development**

Understand whether the most coached salespeople are also the top performers – and why.

| **Strengthen your management routines**

Managers can access in your CRM the latest coaching sessions, defined objectives, and observed progress.

Result:

A connected, managed, and scalable coaching process.

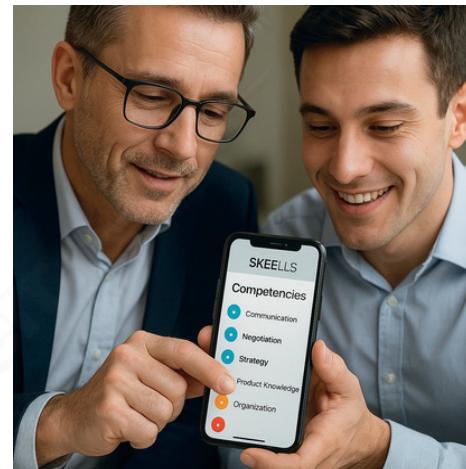
Skeells becomes an operational component of your sales strategy – not just another standalone tool.

Continuous Training with Skeells Trainer

The Hybrid Sales Transformation process offers you a sales training application powered by AI, designed to allow every salesperson to practice whenever they want, as many times as they need, on situations they encounter in the field:

- Selling value to a seasoned buyer
- Following up on a quote without sounding pushy
- Handling a price objection confidently
- Conducting a discovery meeting without missing key questions
- Digital training resources – micro-learning and directed learning

In every session, the salesperson is placed in a realistic context, practices orally, receives immediate feedback, and starts over. In addition to managerial coaching, Skeells Trainer creates a structured training culture, at scale and with autonomy. It's the "training gym" for sales skills.



10 | CONCLUSION: WHAT'S NEXT?

In an increasingly demanding sales world, companies can no longer settle for just training. Those that truly and sustainably transform their performance are those that coach.

They observe, they support, they help their teams progress – and they do it with method.

Sales Coaching: A Proven Lever

+17% increase in sales performance for regularly coached salespeople (CSO Insights)

Up to 39% reduction in turnover in teams where managers actively coach (Gallup)

+88% skill retention after training followed by coaching, compared to 22% after training alone (Xerox / ASTD)

4 times more likely to achieve targets in coached teams (Sales Executive Council)

Moving from Acknowledgement to Action

Skeells offers you a comprehensive program to make coaching a pillar of your commercial performance:

- Diagnostic of your current practices
- Rapid deployment of the managerial efficiency loop
- Provision of a simple, structured, and measurable tool
- Training and coaching of your manager-coaches
- Monitoring the impact over time

Want to talk about it?

- If you want to structure an effective sales coaching approach,
- If you're looking for a concrete lever to boost your teams' performance,
- If you'd like to professionalize field practices without complicating your organization...

Let's meet.

A 30-minute exploratory call to:

- Understand your challenges,
- Share feedback and experiences,
- And see if Skeells can help you.
- Digital training resources – micro-learning and directed-learning

To schedule a meeting or ask your questions, simply leave your contact details via the download form. We'll get back to you within 48 hours.



**Because good coaching is not an option.
It's a strategy.**

GET IN TOUCH

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