

CASE STUDY 001: The Troubled Sunrise Sales Team

Background

Sunrise Technologies is a mid-sized Ghanaian ICT solutions provider with a 15-member sales force covering Accra, Kumasi, Takoradi, and Tamale. The company recently launched a new suite of digital productivity tools targeted at SMEs, but adoption has been slow. To push growth, management increased monthly activity targets, introduced a new incentive scheme, and hired three additional salespeople.

The Sales Manager, Kwesi Amon, has been in the role for two years. He is well-liked, highly experienced in selling, but still adjusting to the demands of leading a larger team.

Over the last three months, the CEO has become concerned about the performance trends. Kwesi has now been asked to present a turnaround plan—but he is struggling to pinpoint what exactly is going wrong.

The Symptoms

Kwesi's team is reporting the following patterns:

1. High Activity, Low Revenue

The team consistently hits:

- a. Call targets
- b. Client visit targets
- c. Proposal submission targets

However, revenue is *10–15% below target* for three consecutive months.

Most deals stall at the proposal stage. The conversion rate from proposals to close is declining sharply.

2. Sudden Drop from a Star Performer

Ama, the team's top performer for two years, has dropped from closing 7–9 deals monthly to only 2 in the last two months. Her activity numbers still look normal, but clients have complained that she seems “less responsive” and “rushed.” Kwesi has not addressed the issue directly because “she always bounces back.”

3. Rising Customer Complaints

Customer Support has logged a 30% increase in complaints about:

- a. Delayed follow-ups
- b. Conflicting product information
- c. Salespeople overpromising timelines

Three SMEs who previously considered Sunrise as their preferred vendor have not renewed their contracts.

4. Low Team Morale

Informally, team members have been overheard saying:

- a. “We are always chasing numbers that don’t translate into commission.”
- b. “Management changes direction too often.”
- c. “Kwesi doesn’t join us in the field the way he used to.”
- d. “Targets keep rising, but nothing else changes.”

Team meetings have become very transactional—focused on reporting numbers rather than discussing challenges or opportunities.

Additional Context

Kwesi spends most of his time preparing reports for senior management and resolving conflicts between sales and operations. Field coaching has reduced significantly. He reviews the CRM only at the end of the month, and many deals are updated at the last minute.

The CEO has hinted that if sales doesn’t stabilize, the incentive scheme will be reviewed again—creating anxiety within the team.

The Task for Participants

In groups of five (5), your responsibility is to diagnose the real issues and recommend leadership decisions Kwesi must make immediately. Use the guiding questions below to structure your analysis.

Guiding Questions

1. What is the real problem in the Sunrise Sales Team?
 - a. Is it a skills problem?
 - b. A behaviour problem?
 - c. A leadership problem?
 - d. A systems/process problem?
 - e. Or a combination?
2. Name three (3) leadership missteps that have contributed to the current situation.
3. What three (3) immediate decisions should Kwesi make to stabilize performance?
4. What three (3) medium-term actions should he take to rebuild the team’s culture and effectiveness?
5. If you were the CEO, what three (3) things would you expect from Kwesi moving forward?