



CASE STUDY

60 Years of Proven
Sales Training Excellence
Adapts Effectively to
University Sales Programs

THE PROFESSOR

A UNIVERSITY SALES MANAGER PROGRAM DIRECTOR

In 2019, Professor John Kratz was feeling on the top of the world.

Following a successful 18 year career in B2B sales, and transitioning full-time into academia in 1999, Kratz (*as he is known by his students*) helped create the first public university Sales Major program in the state of Minnesota at the University of Minnesota Duluth (UMD.) To launch the initiative, Kratz and his development team got funding from individual and corporate donors. They met their enrollment quota – and then exceeded it – far ahead of their original schedule. Kratz agreed to serve as Interim Director until the University could secure internal funding for a new faculty line.

THE INSTITUTION

Showing remarkable popularity, the sales program became the fourth largest major at the UMD's Labovitz School of Business & Economics less than one year after its launch in the fall semester of 2019. Enthusiastic students formed a Sales Club, which grew to become one of the largest student life organizations on campus.

Labovitz School
OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA DULUTH

In the first year, an influx of employers descended upon campus to interview and hire UMD sales major students for internships and full-time sales positions.

From UMD to Sales Professional: launching sales careers (*Kratz pictured on far right*). Kratz was beloved by students and admired by faculty colleagues. They built momentum and life was good in March 2020, when students left campus for spring break. What could go wrong? Well, the students didn't come back to campus because of the pandemic.



John L. Kratz

Director, University of Minnesota
Duluth Sales Major Program

Labovitz School of Business
and Economics





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THE CHALLENGE

COVID-19 CHANGED EVERYTHING

After spring break 2020, the world reeled from the devastating effects of a global pandemic. Coronavirus swept the world with a sickening scourge. COVID-19 quickly posed the most serious medical threat to human health and global well-being in the past 100 years. As of writing this case study (October 2020) the disease rages on without an effective vaccine.

In the wake of COVID-19, 3 new problems vexed Kratz.

1.

FORMAT. On March 15, 2020, UMD gave Kratz 72 hours to convert his classroom training content to virtual synchronous and asynchronous formats. A sea-level change occurred overnight as academic content providers throughout the world scrambled to transition in-person, classroom teaching styles and content to a new forum like Zoom. Converting content while retaining effectiveness remains a problem.

2.

DELIVERY. Students assessed initial classroom presentation methods in virtual formats as "clunky" (*students' adjective*). Instructors lost the connection and engagement in the rush of translation. Higher Ed students at UMD - and throughout America - were disappointed by virtual presentation methods. Finding new and engaging ways to teach in a virtual world remains a problem for academia.

3.

ENROLLMENT. Students and their parents became disenchanted with virtual delivery "This is what we're paying for?", they asked. Enrollments threaten to drop and students are more likely to opt for a gap semester or gap year, meaning that campuses will possibly re-open to smaller populations. Students consider alternatives to on-campus living that no longer exist. They vote with their feet by walking away. Less revenue from tuition, housing, cafeterias, student fees, etc, poses a BIG new problem for educational institutions.

What did Kratz do? This Case Study reviews his response as Director of the UMD Sales Major Program.

In April, 2020, in a moment of serendipity (preparation meets opportunity), Ron Holm from the Track Selling Institute (TSI) contacted Kratz. For more than 60 years, TSI and its distributors have delivered a sales training communication model, called the Track Selling System, via an on-site, workshop format to more than 250,000 sales professionals to companies of all size in virtually every industry.

[Click here](#) for the Track Selling Institute website, including a Pepperdine University post-training study of 400 Track Selling System graduates.

Survey Excerpt

98% of the participants surveyed are still using the Track Selling skills more than a year after attending the program.

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Are you still using the Track Selling System?

All of the time: 27%
Most of the time: 38%
Some of the time: 33%
Not at all: 2%

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What other sales training courses have you participated in? How did TSI compare?

Comparing other attended programs to Track Selling, participants found Track Selling workshops:
Better than competition: 90%
Equal to competition: 9%
Comparatively disappointing: 1%

90% of our participants rated the Track Selling program as better than any other sales training they had ever attended.



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THE RESPONSE

In early 2020, TSI faced similar challenges as academia: how to pivot from in-person classrooms to synchronous, live, instructor-led, virtual sales training.

When TSI's live virtual launch was ready, co-founders Ron Holm and Mike Thomas proposed a pilot program for Kratz and UMD Sales Major students. Kratz and his group could attend a three half-day Track Selling System Core Skills workshop at a dramatic discount. [Click here](#) for Core Skills course flyer and syllabus.

The workshop would enable Kratz and ten of his students to learn business-to-business selling skills using the Track Selling System sales model. They would also gain interviewing skills that they could use for internships and full-time positions. Kratz and his students would evaluate this proof of concept after they completed the course.

Kratz was curious. He reasoned that to survive and thrive for 60 years in the competitive sales training arena, TSI must have cracked the code with great content and engaging delivery. He needed both. Kratz accepted their offer to attend and evaluate.

By August, 2020, Kratz and his ten UMD students were certified graduates of the Track Selling Institute Core Skills workshop.

Students submitted formal evaluations following the workshop. On a scale of 1 to 4, the average assessment for all participants was 3.56, which is between Very Good and Excellent. Most students provided suggestions on ways to improve the workshop, which have been incorporated into the program.

Here is a cross-section of their evaluation comments and ratings, beginning with Professor Kratz who rated the workshop as Very Good. *"Well-paced, efficient use of time, good content, well managed, good workbook."* Kratz now had the Zoom presentation methods and compelling content he hoped for.

Other comments:

"We were able to reduce selling into a simple and understandable form. If I can practice the seven steps and transitions, I will be well on my way. I also enjoyed how the steps can be applied to a multitude of things. It's truly a universal system."

"The content we learned will be a good asset for me to reference in the future, especially when I begin my job."

"The workshop was laid out really well. I could easily see the order of a sale with examples that made it easy to understand. We also had good opportunities for practice though role plays."

EXCELLENT RATING

Kayla N.



"Throughout every hour of all three days, I was highly ENGAGED and TUNED IN. Every section learned and practiced was built on the previous step, which I really appreciated. The flow of the workshop was highly engaging and efficient in delivery of information. I don't think I could have taken away any more than I did."

EXCELLENT RATING

Chase S.



"The real-life stories and knowledge from the trainers were very beneficial to my growth. The virtual workshop was run very smoothly with only a few hiccups. I have tech professors from Duluth who can't run a Zoom call that smoothly."

EXCELLENT RATING

Molly A



"Thank you so much, Ron! I appreciate your positivity and help along the way!

You have helped me build my confidence in making the sale!"

VERY GOOD RATING

Alex T.



"I thought the role plays were very helpful. It's always nice to practice and get out of your comfort zone."



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THE NEXT STEP

After completing the Core Skills workshop, TSI provided the students with additional material including a weekly email reinforcing the Track Selling concepts called the Tip of the Week. After completing the pre-requisite Core Skills workshop, students are now eligible for the next course in the series entitled, "Selling in a Virtual World." [Click here](#) for a syllabus for that workshop. TSI is in the process of developing other follow-on workshops that build on the Core Skills learnings.

The Track Selling Institute is now pleased to provide a similar partnership to Sales Major programs at other universities.

THE OPPORTUNITY

FOR UNIVERSITY SALES MAJOR PROGRAM DIRECTORS

Creating high-quality, relevant curriculum for academic sales programs is challenging at best. Creating instructor-led curriculum for delivery in an online, real-time format is even more challenging, given the constraint on time and resources in every academic setting today.

We've solved that problem for you. Based on the time-proven principles of the Track Selling System, you now have access to online classroom instruction, a professional, interactive workbook, and numerous sales resources. The online training includes discussions, role-play sessions, and homefun (*our term for homework.*) In addition, participants have an opportunity to tap into three decades of real-world sales experience from workshop facilitators who have used this methodology to sell to companies large and small in dozens of industries.

The social proof results from this workshop are impressive. Business-to-business workshop participants improved their sales results by an average of 30% in their first year after the workshop. Students who attend this workshop will not only be prepared to hit the ground running as they move into new sales roles, they will also be able to use the skills they obtain to dramatically improve their interviewing effectiveness.

The Track Selling System Instructor-led Virtual Core Skills Workshop is a proven, tested, and cost-effective course available for you and your institution to offer.

Until we connect, good luck and good selling next semester!

EXCELLENT RATING

Peyton M.



"I have built my confidence in not only sales, but myself as a person. It completely exceeded my expectations in being educational, and yet fun and personal."

VERY GOOD RATING

Delaney J.



"I feel more confident in selling myself in a job interview and then using this in my sales career. Having a structure to follow will help me adjust into sales a lot easier."

VERY GOOD RATING

Triston G.



"It was really beneficial. I enjoyed how the instructor worked with me one-on-one to specifically cater the content to what I'm going to be doing at my new employer. I liked the content and how we went through it systematically. The workbook was also very thorough."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please send an email to ron.holm@tracksellinginstitute.com or go to www.tracksellinginstitute.com/university-program for more detailed information.

Track Selling
INSTITUTE
TRANSFORMATIVE SALES TRAINING