

FOR SAAS FOUNDERS & CEOS

# Sales' *Moneyball* problem.

Your team obsesses over win rate, bookings, and net retention. The one *input* that predicts all three is probably not even on your dashboard.

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Chief Sales Officer, Kinsta • ~30% ARR CAGR over six years

If you're running a SaaS company between \$5M and \$75M ARR, you're measuring the wrong thing. You're not alone. Almost everyone in this band is.

I spent the last six-plus years as Chief Sales Officer at Kinsta, compounding revenue at roughly 30% per year. That is roughly double the growth rate of the managed hosting market over the same period. We were not the biggest budget in our category. We were not the flashiest marketing. We won on one discipline: measuring the input that predicts the output, and coaching it relentlessly.

This is a field note for founders and CEOs. The pattern I'm about to describe shows up in nearly every revenue org I see between \$5M and \$75M ARR.

## The *output* trap

Look at your last QBR deck. Count the metrics. Win rate. MRR. Net retention. Bookings vs plan. Forecast accuracy. Pipeline coverage. CAC payback.

Every one of those is an output. A lagging indicator. By the time your win rate drops two quarters running, the damage is six months old and the people who caused it have probably already left the company.

In baseball, these are RBIs and batting average. They describe what happened. They do not coach what's happening right now.

*The breakthrough in Moneyball was not that the A's found smarter outputs. They found the input that predicted the output. Then they coached it relentlessly.*

On-base percentage was the insight. Strike zone discipline was the coachable behavior underneath it. Everything else was noise.

# Your sales *OPS*

The equivalent of on-base percentage in a B2B SaaS motion is **talk time**. The total minutes each revenue-carrying seat spends in qualified buyer-facing conversation in a given week.

Not dials. Not emails sent. Not activities logged. Not meetings booked. Actual, qualified, buyer-facing talk time.

Once we measured it honestly at Kinsta across AEs, AMs, and SDRs, the correlation to bookings was strong enough that I treat it as causation. The reps who put in the talk time produced the revenue. The ones who didn't, didn't. The variance was not subtle.

This sounds obvious. It is almost never measured.

## Why your *team* isn't measuring it

Three reasons, in descending order of how uncomfortable they are.

- **Your managers don't want it measured.** Talk time exposes underperformance in real time. Managers protecting favorites or tolerating slow ramps quietly resist the metric. If your frontline leaders push back when you ask for it, that's the signal, not the noise.
- **Your CRM doesn't capture it.** Most activity tracking measures volume: dials made, emails sent. It rarely captures qualified conversation time. Teams approximate with logged meetings, which undercounts the real signal by 40 to 60 percent.
- **Your board hasn't asked.** Pipeline coverage and forecast accuracy dominate investor updates. No one has asked what the average qualified talk time per seat was last week. So no one measures it.

## What to do *this week*

Ask your CRO or VP Sales one question, in one sentence:

*"What was the average qualified buyer-facing talk time per revenue seat last week, and how did it compare to the prior four weeks?"*

If they can answer in 10 seconds, they're coaching the right thing. If they have to come back to you, they're not. If the answer is "dials" or "activities" or "meetings logged," they're measuring volume, not conversation. You have a bigger problem than you thought.

## Who you *hire* matters more than what you measure

Measuring the right input only works if the team around you can operate on it. The hardest mistake I see founders make is hiring mirrors instead of complements.

My right hand at Kinsta is an analytical systems operator. Same work ethic I have, completely different wiring. She operationalizes what I see in pattern. I trust her with the mechanics the way Billy Beane trusted Paul DePodesta. I bring the framework, she builds the machine.

My best recent hire is a quiet generalist. Broad surface area, low ego, extraordinary execution consistency. The market doesn't know how to price a person like that. I did. He is load-bearing in ways that do not show up in any org chart. He is my Chad Bradford, the player the market misreads because his value doesn't live in the obvious stat.

Most founders hire the résumé the board recognizes. The ones who scale hire for the gap in their own skillset. Those are different decisions.

# The *whiteboard* summary

If we sat down for an hour, here is what I would work through with you:

- Define the one input metric that predicts revenue in your specific motion. Talk time fits most inside-sales SaaS. It is not the only answer.

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- Instrument it. Measure it weekly. Publish it to the team. Coach it.

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- Audit your next three hires for mirror bias. Identify the one role where a complement would compound your own capacity.

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- Make RevOps the engine. Recruiting is the fuel. The team on the field is the product.

None of this is novel. All of it is disciplined. Most GTM problems in the \$5M to \$75M ARR band are not strategy problems. They are measurement and personnel problems dressed up as strategy problems.

## Want this *applied* to your revenue org?

I'm opening a small amount of advisory bandwidth in 2026 for SaaS founders and CEOs in the \$5M to \$75M ARR band. If the pattern above sounds like your team, let's talk.

Schedule a Conversation