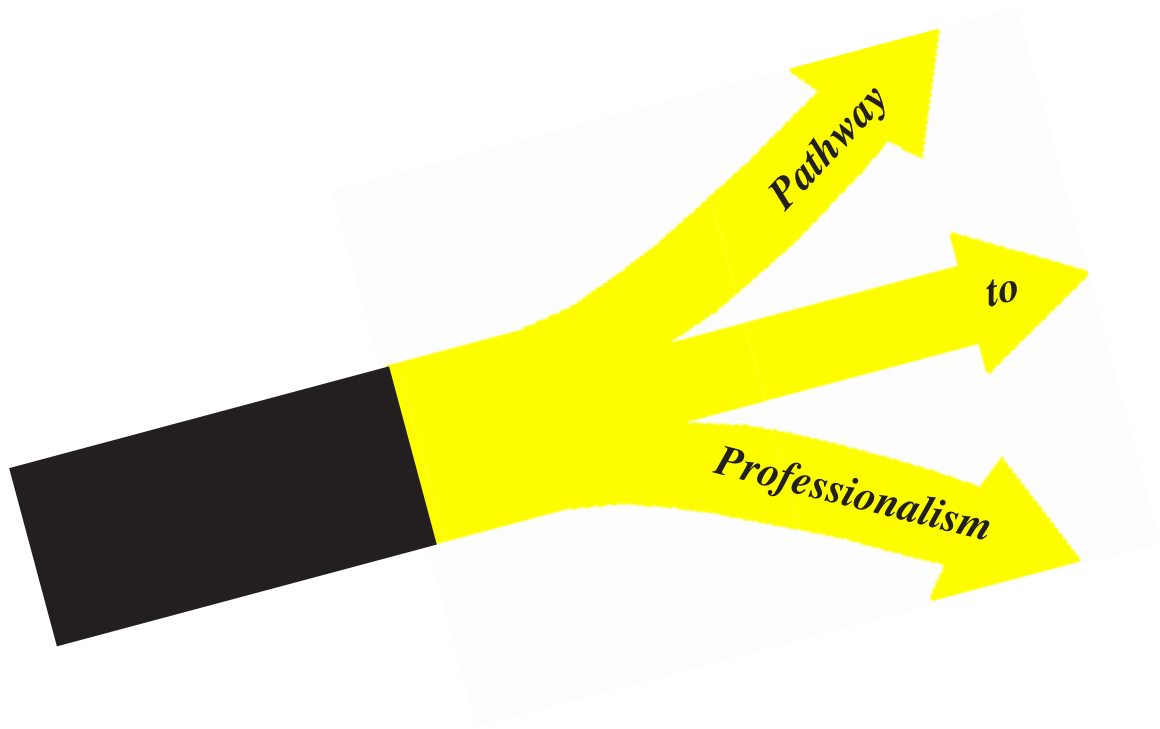


COMMITMENT TO PERFORMANCE



ELECTRONICS REPRESENTATIVES ASSOCIATION

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The best reasons to belong ...

Promote, protect, improve the professional field sales function

ERA

A COMMITMENT TO PERFORMANCE

Multiple-line selling is much more than daily rounds and competition for orders. As manufacturers' representatives, we are professional field sales organizations, and we're proud of our profession. Our personal achievements do make a difference to our customers, our principals and our organizations.

This document offers a powerful statement of purpose, a commitment that we make to ourselves as well as to the community we serve. It also offers a measure of performance that can inspire us to reach inside ourselves to produce our very best.

As multiple-line sales organizations, we stand in a unique position to contribute to both sides of the customer-supplier equation. Unlike direct salespeople with responsibility to a single manufacturer, our multiple-line focus expands the value of the linkage we provide between customer and manufacturer. It broadens our perspective and enlarges our vision.

To our customers, we are trusted partners in the process of bringing products and new ideas to market. We bring solutions to problems and answers to questions. Committed to our territories and the people in them, we are advocates for the local interest.

To our manufacturers, we add the precious ability to translate product features into customer benefits. Through our wide-ranging interaction with purchasers, we find important new applications and markets for our manufacturers' products, and present them with credibility.

With both customers and principals, the professional field sales rep demonstrates the value of synergy on a daily basis: The concept that 1 + 1 can equal 3.

Commitment to Performance is a multifaceted program of the Electronics Representatives Association (ERA). It emerged from a broad-based industry-wide study conducted for ERA by the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. The survey, conducted among principals and customers, scientifically measured the perceptions and attitudes that are important in evaluating a sales professional and in generating a sales force strategy. These survey results were then translated into this action program. Our aim is simple: to improve the perceptions that principals and customers have of multiple-line field sales reps by enhancing the performance realities.

Performance facts speak for themselves. Performance is constantly being measured for each rep by individual principals and specific customers. Did the rep reach quota? Did the rep help in delivery of our order? These questions are *quantitative* measures of performance ... but they go hand-in-hand with *qualitative* measures.

The nucleus of this Commitment to Performance program is the statement of qualitative professional standards to which individual members and member organizations may subscribe. As a voluntary organization, ERA can neither legislate nor regulate individual behavior. By providing a credo — a set of standards for ourselves and our peers — we stimulate members (and other reps) to perform to a high(er) level of competence. By committing ourselves to a program of measured peak personal and organizational performance, we will create a new level of confidence in multiple-line field sales reps as *the standard* against which to evaluate effective sales performers.

By developing and disseminating professional standards, we assure our customers and manufacturers that they can expect excellence in performance from us, because it's what we expect from ourselves. Commitment to Performance is no less than a guarantee, a promise that when ERA reps make a call, it is with pride in themselves and respect for their customers and principals. This pride comes from personal commitment. *We challenge ourselves to make consummate professionalism not the goal for the professional field sales rep, but the norm.*

The Program

The Commitment to Performance program has three major components:

1. The Statement of Professional Standards — The patterns of performance that characterize the bond between reps and their principals on the one hand, their customers on the other. First and foremost, this reminds us what we expect from ourselves and provides our commitment to our constituencies.

ERA asks every rep to read and analyze the standards ... and then to make a personal and organizational Commitment to Performance.

2. Distribution of these professional performance standards to our constituencies and to the entire electronics community. As ERA member reps, we are going on record with the promise that we will perform as committed professionals.

We ask each principal and each customer to review the standards, and to hold each rep accountable for meeting them.

3. Continued professional development opportunities to keep ERA members at the forefront of excellence in performance in their chosen field. Through ERA conferences, seminars, publications, Web site resources and other education materials, we will continue to advance the state of our art. Only through performance can we demonstrate the value we bring to the table. Only through standards can we

fully measure performance. Only through knowledge can we perform with competence.

We ask every representative, member of ERA or not, to remember that it's not just us, but the rep system, that is on the line.

A Vehicle for Growth

Standards of performance provide a marketing and sales vehicle for each rep. By publishing these standards, ERA is providing manufacturers and customers a guide by which to measure and evaluate reps.

By the same token, these standards give ERA members a way to measure their own growth and performance. The standards help us successfully compete, grow and perform. When a rep supplies these standards to principals and customers, it's like saying, "This is what you can expect from me. If I perform up to these standards, I will justify your trust in me."

Speaking to a customer, you are saying, "By living up to these standards, I will justify your placing orders through me and my firm."

Speaking to a principal, you are saying, "Because I live up to these standards, I expect that we will have a long and mutually profitable partnership."

When we make this commitment to ourselves, we address the needs of the two client groups to whom we as reps are responsible: principals (manufacturers of electronic products and components) and customers (users and sellers of electronic products). Following are the ERA standards of professional conduct. Accompanying each statement is a brief comment about the specific implications for principals or customers.

Commitment to Performance: What Our Principals Can Expect

As a principal, you can expect these standards of conduct from your professional fields sales rep:

1. Your rep will cover the territory adequately, establish a presence for your line, and accomplish your mutually agreed-upon marketing objectives for strategic customer penetration, market share and growth.

This standard speaks to a planning partnership. Your rep promises to present your product before all potential customers and continually search for new applications opportunities. But value judgment factors like "adequately cover the territory" must be quantified in individual terms. The measurement of top performance cannot be defined unilaterally, either by reps or by principals.

2. Your rep will continually improve his/her product knowledge as well as understanding of your capabilities, directions, strategies, niches, strengths and weaknesses.

Effective selling depends on intimate knowledge of both the product and the manufacturing organizations behind it (i.e., what your company can do and what your company can't

do). Here again, to have a good rep requires that you be a "sharing" principal. That kind of mutual trust and involvement translates itself into a presentation and representation of your line that creates customer confidence.

3. Your rep will know the territory and customers thoroughly, including understanding their application needs, and will effectively represent those needs to you.

Your rep commits not only to understanding your products but also those of your customers, knowing precisely where and how your products fit. The synergy of handling multiple product lines from several different manufacturers places the rep in a unique position to uncover new applications and identify unexpected ways in which your products may meet their requirements.

4. Your rep organization will continually work towards improved selling skills and strategies.

Your rep pledges to make sales training and professional development an essential part of doing business. By making a commitment to ERA, with its wide range of training tools, seminars, conferences and peer interchange, your rep has already demonstrated the first phase of commitment.

5. Your rep will be accessible and responsive to you and your customers before, during and after the sale.

As your spokesperson in the marketplace, your rep must demonstrate that both the factory and the rep are interested in the customer, not merely in the order. Thus the liaison your rep provides to secure the order must continue with both of you committed to follow-up and follow through.

6. Your rep will provide you thorough input, including sales forecasting, market reporting, sales analysis, lead follow-up and reporting.

A key part of what your rep brings you is thorough knowledge of the territory. The important information about conditions and opportunities, customers and competition will not only help you make reasonable judgments about your position in the marketplace, and with specific customers and prospects, but also to jointly develop reasonable action plans to maximize your results.

7. Your rep will maintain a compatible roster of principals and a compatible customer base in order to provide substantial multiple-line synergy.

The multiple-line rep magnifies the results you can achieve through the rep's portfolio of complementary product lines. Only the synergy inherent in the multiple-line sales call makes it economically possible for you to always be in the right place at the right time.

8. Your rep will maintain an organization characterized by thoughtful financial management, fair employee compensation and motivation, and plans for business continuity.

Your rep can only be effective for you by being effective both as a salesperson and as a businessperson. Dedication to sound management of his/her own organization benefits you today and tomorrow. It provides stability and incentive that ultimately enhances your relationships with customers in the territory.

Commitment to Performance: What Our Customers can Expect

As a customer, you can expect these standards of conduct from your professional field sales rep:

1. Your rep will make well-organized, effective sales calls.
Your rep respects the value of your time. By knowing your application requirements, your rep can present timely and effective solutions to fit your needs and interests. You benefit when you can cover many different product requirements in a single session.

2. Your rep will have a thorough and practical knowledge of the suppliers represented, their products and operations, and will speak and act with appropriate authority.
You need to know what you can expect from a supplier and when. Your rep pledges to provide accurate, up-to-date product, price, delivery and performance information, with immediate answers where practical, and always with prompt factory liaison and sincere advocacy on your behalf.

3. Your rep will understand your needs, your operation and the proper application of the supplier's products.
Your rep commits to understanding how your product requirements mesh with the applications of the products being presented to you. Your rep's ongoing relationship with you depends on thoroughly considering all the factors that are important to you before making a recommendation on a supplier's product.

4. Your rep will be effective, accurate and timely in representing your requirements to your supplier.
Your rep is your voice at the factory, sharing your questions and concerns. Your rep is your advocate in representing not only your product needs but also your price and delivery requests.

5. Your rep will be accessible and responsive before, during and after the sale.
Service doesn't end when you sign the order. You can expect your rep to be sure your needs are being met for delivery, quality and product support.

6. Your rep will bring you value by being committed to your needs.
The most important part of the rep-customer partnership is the confidence that your rep will consistently offer you the best possible solutions. Your rep's involvement with you, covering the products of multiple suppliers, provides a

particular incentive to put and keep your best interests at the forefront.

7. Your rep will be absolutely trustworthy and will exercise good judgment, flexibility and competence on your behalf.
Your business is important to your rep and you can expect the highest level of integrity in every dealing with you and with others. Your rep is in the territory to stay, and your assessment of his/her reputation is a major asset.

An Ongoing Promise

Commitment to Performance is more than just a promise. It's a totally professional approach to selling electronic products. The rep who makes the Commitment to Performance is pledging to be at the cutting edge of industry development. That rep, and that rep's principals, have joined to assure customers of up-to-date information about supplier capabilities. That rep, and that rep's customers, have joined to assure principals that they are getting full information about the needs of the territory. The committed rep is on a constant quest to perform as a competent professional.

By placing copies of these standards in the hands of customers and principals, we go on record. We invite each customer and each principal to ask each rep:

Have you made the Commitment to Performance?

The Electronics Representatives Association (ERA)

ERA was formed in 1935 to promote, protect and improve the outsourced professional field sales function in the electronics industry. The association offers its members a broad range of opportunities for the development of professionalism, practical product knowledge, business management, effective communication and marketing skills. Through such programs and informational services as targeted seminars, national and regional conferences, *The Representor* magazine and the ERA Web site at www.era.org, reps, manufacturers and the industry at large are kept abreast of important issues.

Ongoing research programs and informed dialogue help ERA to provide a measured platform of what the industry requires and demands in terms of sales professionalism. This helps our members perform accordingly. Performance is what it's all about — and ERA and its members have made a Commitment to Performance in all our activities and relationships, with fulfillment of performance standards that are meaningful to buyers and sellers.

Information Gained = Knowledge
Knowledge Used = Competence
Competence Practiced = Performance
Performance = Results

Knowledgeable, Competent
Performers are the Professionals!

A COMMITMENT TO PERFORMANCE IS THE PATHWAY TO PROFESSIONALISM!

