



LET'S MOTIVATE

If you think increasing the \$\$\$ or wielding a big stick will motivate your sales team - think again!

YOU might have the most wonderful product in the world but until somebody sells it, nobody gets paid. Nothing happens until somebody sells something. A company's success is determined by its ability to keep salespeople happy, productive and motivated.

So often managers try to motivate sales teams by increasing their immediate commission or dangling carrots with great monetary rewards in front of them... then sit back to wonder why it did not work? Granted this approach can work in the short term for some people but it will not sustain long-term motivation.

Motivation comes from within. It cannot be given or driven by an outsider. Managers can set the scene for a positive environment geared for success by helping their teams find what motivates and drives them as individuals.

The big stick approach, 'If you don't sell more, you will be looking for a new job...' instills fear and reduces people to their survival mode, also known as the neuro limbic chemical reaction of the 'fight, flight or comply' position. For humans, there are no creative or productive solutions in survival mode. If you are forcing your sales people to operate this way, they may act inappropriately or take shortcuts to get a sale which could hurt your reputation or long-term business objectives.

Finding out what motivates your salespeople can be as easy as asking them. Some of them will already know, but others may need prompting. Ask them to grade the needs below from what is the most important to the least important:

- To feel they are contributing in a meaningful way to the business
- To be thanked and appreciated
- To help the community move forward

- To have more fun at work
- To be allowed to express new ideas
- To be recognised in front of their peers when they achieve good results
- To have sales based competition
- To feel part of a cohesive team
- To learn or increase their skill level in an area
- To know the long-term vision for the business
- To be rewarded with financial incentives

Their answers will provide a valuable insight to how to implement strategies to help your sales team stay motivated. People generally have a need for all the above but will rate their importance differently. As the manager, once you understand the priorities, it will be easier to help them on a professional level by setting business objectives to meet their needs.

Salespeople need to understand the actual impact of their sales performance and how it affects the business. When people understand both the positive and negative bearing their achievements have on the bottom line of the business, they will take more ownership. Sharing the relevant profit and loss information with the staff helps keep teams motivated.

Sales people need to "belong". They also need to "take ownership" and most of all, they need to be proud of their product or service. Your job is to give them confidence in their company and to prove to them, as sales manager, you are the best in your field. You must sell them, first. No-one will put their heart into selling a product if they are not convinced.

Focus on the positive actions of your sales team to help build their confidence. Nothing can de-motivate people quicker than

IN SALES

with
Tracy Benson



a manager who only seems to see what hasn't been done right rather than all the good things achieved.

Salespeople are also motivated by trust and recognition. Look at the real estate industry. It is always recognising who the top salesperson is – this particular week, month, year, office or category. Some top salespeople just thrive on that photo in the paper or certificate on the wall of their office or a public place.

Create top sales status by initiating levels of achievement recognition for high-performing sales based on achievable goals. For example, 100 points = silver level, 150 pts = gold, 200 pts = diamond. Give salespeople something tangible to recognise their achievement – a plaque for the wall, a sales figurine for their desk or a status level on their business card or name badge.

High performing sales businesses, such as The Flight Centre, have shown for decades this type of status-driven sales work well.

Trust in the product and company, recognition of results and an 'open book' policy will go a long way to create "self-motivation" teams. Combine this with helping them discover their own individual drivers, you have a recipe for a truly successful, self-motivated sales team. A team of professionals who'll love selling.

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