



STAYING MOTIVATED DURING COVID-19

How to Keep Your Sales Team Motivated During the Coronavirus Outbreak

The number one issue to consider during this difficult time is to be a person first and a sales manager second. Your sales team needs a leader, but at times like this, they need support, direction, understanding and confidence . . . and you are sitting in the seat to make all that happen!

Remember, during a pandemic that is affecting most of the world, what is negatively impacting your team's sales pipeline and revenue is not the fault of your sales team. Everyone is affected. However, you can be a key component to minimize the damage, as well as support your team when they need it most. You must step up and be the leader your team needs (and expects) you to be. Taking proactive action during these turbulent times will instill confidence in your team. It will also show that you care about them, provide them with a plan to minimize the damage, and perhaps even come out on top.

5 Steps Sales Leaders Should Undertake to Keep Morale Up During Difficult Times

1. Be the calm in the storm.

Not only is your sales team going through turbulent times with their customers and prospective customers, they are likely dealing with difficulty at home. Their children may be home from school for weeks, their daycare may be closed, and their perceived future lack of productivity and income may be weighing on their minds.

2. Be flexible. Look at sales goals and adjust accordingly.

The entire business community is in unrest, so understanding what the impact is on your sales team's ability to reach monthly, quarterly and annual goals is important. Depending on the length of the negative revenue impact, your sales team will likely lose short-term commissions, but they will also sense that quarterly and annual goals are slipping away. That sense will impact their future work effort. If you miss this important component, you risk losing your team's motivation for the rest of the year. Do you or your company want to suddenly forecast a lesser goal for the year? Obviously no, but if that is your reality, then it is the reality of your sales team. Adjust their goals to what is now possible. Make their goals the same proportional stretch that they were originally. Do so and you will keep their focus, energy and commitment at their previously high levels.



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3. Assess how changing goals affects compensation.

It isn't comfortable to pay out the same level of variable compensation at a lower sales level. So why should you? While lowering quotas (and expectations) may impact the bottom-line in the short term, it's ultimately about doing what is right for your sales team. A short-term loss is a long-term gain. Doing the right thing should always be your goal. Your support and compassion will build stronger relationships, and it will provide the peace of mind needed to keep your team moving forward during this difficult time

4. Be patient and understanding.

Remember, the lives of your team members have been turned upside down. Those with children may have schools or daycares closed, others might need to take care of elderly parents – many team members will need flexibility and understanding. You may need to re-evaluate current policies such as vacation time, working remotely or any other company policies that don't seem to apply under these unusual circumstances.

5. Encourage innovation.

Just because your sales team can't make as many face-to-face calls for a while, that doesn't mean they can't conduct "sales calls." Use phone or video conferencing tools. In fact, with less in person sales calls taking place, more of your prospects and customers should be available! Encourage your team to take advantage of this opportunity to connect. Also, conduct a brainstorming session with your sales team and identify innovative ways to sell and move the business forward.

Robert Schuller's quote, "Tough times never last, but tough people do" resonates in a time like this. The Coronavirus will soon run its course, but how you lead your sales team and how you treat everyone as a person will leave a lasting impression. Your team will become much closer through this adversity if you follow the five steps discussed above. You will also find treating your customers similarly will serve to forge deep relationships that will stand the test of time. Showing compassion goes a long way in building trust and loyalty. Be the leader your team and customers need you to be.



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