



How do you keep sales teams motivated after “Elvis has left the building”?

- Jim Lewis, Founder & President, Princeton Sales Partners, LLC

This is the time of year when sales managers try to get a jump on their annual quota by revving up their team. Keeping the momentum going after the trainer/speaker has "left the building" is just as important as the event itself. The traditional Sales Kick-off meeting is intended to motivate the team toward better performance. The problem is that motivation has a half-life of only one week.

So how do you establish and keep the momentum throughout the year?

Here are three best-practices that have the highest impact on creating initial enthusiasm and motivation and making it stick throughout the year.

1. Provide training, not just education and pep talk. Listening to a motivational speaker is fun, but it's not effective in the long run. People who learn new skills and methods and see new ways to perform their job are empowered. Their job becomes manageable and they gain specific capabilities to help them succeed. This helps them *want to do it*.
2. Continue the training, not just conduct an event. To become effective at any skill requires practice. Most sales managers either don't have the inclination or time to maintain the learning process after the training event. Since successful selling requires a process, pick the first major milestone activity in every sales cycle and utilize your external training consultant to inspect and mentor salespeople on that skill. This will reinforce the behavior change that was desired in the first place and it will make sure that the activity is taking place. *Inspect what you expect.*
3. Visibly and regularly award success. Winning a trip to President's Club is great, but it happens only once a year. At least quarterly and certainly after a big win, reward salespeople who used the skills and training you have given them. Simple things such as a night on the town for two, \$1000 cash, or points in an award program are some ideas. It doesn't have to be huge. Positive, visible feedback is always effective. Be sure to link whatever recognition you give to the behaviors and skills you want to reinforce.

By utilizing these best practices together sales managers can boost their productivity and keep their team motivated throughout the year. Best of all, this doesn't require managers to work harder, just smarter.