



the inside track on telesales from Communiqué Associates

Dear Website Visitor

Motivation is something that we all need, but it is especially important in the world of telesales. How do you maintain the motivation of your staff and your managers? Do you have the tools you need to keep your own motivation high? This issue of Outside Line gives you some ideas for boosting morale and motivation.

Best wishes,

Natalie

How Do You Maintain Motivation?

A study by the Institute of Manpower Studies states that the word 'motivation' is among the six most used words in company documents. It goes on to say that just because the word is used, it doesn't mean it is understood.

The foundation of motivation is hope. If you really don't believe that you can be successful in your next telesales call, then you probably won't be. When you lose hope, lethargy takes over and you lose your motivation.

More often than not, you will find yourself talking about staff motivation when it's absent. For example, you've probably tried to analyse the reasons why a salesperson isn't hitting target, but do you ever take a look at your top performers and wonder what it is about them that makes them such great salespeople?

I've had a number of conversations with telesales people about what motivates them to do their job. Some of their answers included, **money, status** ("I love being the top salesperson here"), **contact with people** ("I enjoy working with my colleagues"), **material possessions, helping others** and **a feeling of belonging**.

When going through a rough patch, it's helpful to remind yourself why you started selling in the first place. Reminding yourself of your goals can sometimes have a strong motivating impact. If your dream is to buy a Spanish villa and wake up every morning to the sun, sand and sangria, then put a picture of a beautiful Spanish villa on your wall to remind yourself every day what you're working towards. This will help keep you focused.

Other things that help might include a memo from your line manager complimenting you on a job well-done, a 'thank-you' card from a satisfied customer or even a photograph of you and your team receiving a prize at the sales conference. Put these somewhere you can see them, too. Anything that gives you a strong, positive feeling and that helps to dispel the negativity and

Motivation and Morale

The telesales unit of a large telecomms company was under performing. They had a 120 seat call centre with a flat management structure – one supervisor to forty agents. Their targets were high and massive commission payments were offered but this didn't appear to be motivating many of the staff. Each agent received one week's training when they started and then nothing more. Morale was pretty low.

To help improve motivation and performance, we divided our task into two areas. One consultant focused on the day-to-day running of the call centre, with sleeves rolled up, listening to calls, briefing the teams every day, keeping everyone focused and managing the appalling attendance situation. The other consultant focused on the strategic element of the call centre, taking an overall view as to what changes needed to be made in order to facilitate growth – and how to make these changes.

Some of the changes that were made included creating team leaders who managed teams of only fourteen people.

feeling of 'no hope' has to be a good thing!

For more advice on how to increase motivation within your sales team, please get in touch by calling **01628 400 603** or e-mailing natalie@communiqueassociates.com.

Selling in Stages

Stage 4 - Fact-finding

Each month we look at another stage in the selling process. So far we've covered **Planning & Preparation, Prospecting & Lead Generation** and **Making the Call**. If you've missed any of the previous stages, do get in touch and we'll send them to you.

This month - Fact-finding.

- Prior to making any call, always have a list of questions that you want to ask your prospective customer. Never 'wing' it, in the vain hope that the conversation will lead somewhere, as you'll come across as disorganised – and no one wants to deal with a disorganised supplier!
- Ask open questions. These are questions that begin with Where, What, How, Why, Who or When and are the types of questions which will elicit the most information in response. For example, "What criteria do you use in selecting a supplier?" will give you a different answer from "Do you use any specific criteria in helping you select a supplier?" The first question will provide you with some useful information which you should be able to use in your pitch; the second will just give you a yes or a no!
- Remember that you can find out facts from any number of individuals within an organisation – it doesn't have to be a decision maker. Don't disregard a receptionist just because he or she doesn't make the final decision. They could provide some useful information which can be used when pitching to your prospect.
- Try to find out a little about your prospect before making the call. The vast majority of companies now have websites. Use them to arm yourself with useful information as this will help you sound professional and give you more confidence when making a call.
- Don't try to ask too many questions. Nobody likes to be interrogated, so decide what information you genuinely need at this stage in order to help you with your sales pitch and keep the rest for another time. Always remember to respect other people's time!

Next month we'll be looking at Establishing Customer Needs.

This allowed a greater level of support for those who needed it and more encouragement to meet targets. Staff could also see promotions they could work towards.

Operating hours of the call centre were changed. It was easier to contact prospects in the evening, so shift patterns were altered accordingly.

The increased cost of the team leaders' salaries was met by reducing the massive commission payments to staff. Although initially this was met with derision by a small number, the vast majority welcomed the increased training time given to them and the feeling of belonging.

There was a marked improvement in attendance and as a result of the increased training, and the fact that agents were now working during the hours that potential customers could be contacted, sales began to grow. The department achieved the sales target for two months running, giving the staff a massive confidence boost. Now they know what real success feels like, they are working harder to achieve their targets!

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