



Sales Force Energy and Motivation

How Managers Can Take Action to Affect Them



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Have you ever looked at an important item on your “To-Do” list and then skipped over it for no apparent reason? Most people can answer yes. You might have said to yourself, “I don’t feel like doing that right now.”

Why do people use this skipping-over maneuver? We use it if we face a task we don’t want to do or are uncomfortable doing. We don’t have the motivation, which is the energy needed to jump out of our behavioral comfort zones.

The same thing happens to sales reps, but skipping items on their lists may be dangerous to your company’s revenue. It depends, of course, on what items they skip over. One you definitely don’t want them to skip over is cold calling.

Let’s face it — most sales reps wouldn’t include cold calling on their list of favorite things. To cross into that discomfort zone requires physical and emotional energy. Any small disturbance in their energy field can affect it.

Unfortunately, one single management action can unleash a tsunami on the energy level of your entire organization. Picture yourself changing a compensation plan that reps perceive as being significantly more difficult than the previous plan. If it’s not designed well and communicated to the reps well, it can attack their energy. Time formerly spent prospecting transfers into complaining.

Also unfortunate is the fact that you can’t control the vast majority of factors affecting the energy of your organization. You’re at the mercy of the reps’ own choices and circumstances such as nutrition, sleep habits, partying habits, exercise habits, overall health, sick family members, relationships, self-esteem, etc. When I identify salespeople with low energy — which is measurable — they always know the reason. Causes run the spectrum from divorce-in-progress, to illness, dissatisfaction on the job, insomnia and even outlook on life.

Job habits also contribute to energy loss. One outside ad rep I know was so rushed on his weekly deadline day that he didn’t eat during his 12-hour day. It wiped him out and affected his productivity the rest of the week. He had a great deadline day but lost plenty of business-building

the other days. After realizing his prospecting energy was low, he decided that planning ahead to put food in his car wasn't such a nuisance after all.

Managers can positively influence energy in their department. Here are some examples to try:

- Have group prospecting time first thing in the morning, when most people have their highest energy peak for the day.
- Encourage healthy habits.
- Fix cumbersome processes or illogical policies that are sapping energy. If you can't, at least acknowledge the issue and explain to the reps why the processes and policies are in place — it will still help.
- Don't fill your office with doughnuts. How about big, crisp apples or granola bars for a change? It's even in vogue, folks.
- Build laughter into the day. It lowers stress.

Most sales organizations have decent energy levels, overall. The chances are good that you do, too. But that doesn't mean you don't have individuals who lose sales due to lack of energy or people who use their high-energy time poorly.

Make a difference where you can! It won't be a big task on your To-Do list.

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