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5 Steps to Managing Independent Sales Reps: Sales Coaching Tips You Can Use by Asherstrategies

Article published on February 21st 2012 | Business

Your bottom line is important, so youâ€™ve determined that one way to help manage expenses is to use independent sales reps. In our previous posting, we talked about how reps can benefit your company. Managing one or more of them poses different challenges than managing an â€œin-houseâ€• sales team.

Set up for success

As with any relationship, having clear guidelines and expectations aids communication and prevents any surprises. Once youâ€™ve got them on board, make sure you have clear expectations for their actions, effective systems for tracking their performance, and appropriate penalties for those who donâ€™t comply with your companyâ€™s standards and regulations.

Go 5 steps further

Enhancing the independent rep relationship and inspiring excellent performance can be accomplished by following 5 steps.

1. Increase their product knowledge: The more they feel confident in their knowledge of your offerings, and feel supported in their efforts, the higher the likelihood your product or service will become a favorite to sell. Donâ€™t leave them hanging, or in a position to have to improvise. Keep them supplied with sales literature and samples and provide selling tools such as sales scripts, selling videos, testimonials, ROI studies.

2. Keep the lines of communication wide open: If your rep has questions, they need to know they can get prompt answers. Donâ€™t make them work too hard, or wait to long for a response. You also donâ€™t want the flow of information from you to get bogged down, or lost in the shuffle. Provide a single point of contact at your company to take care of them at all times.

3. Publicize results: Publicizing performance not only taps into the ego drive of the sales person, but also gives them a sense of where they stand. Send results of any rep organization to them (such as the percent of quota achieved to date) and normalize it to their quotas for easy comparison. Doing this can encourage some reps to sell more, or weed out those that are poor performers.

4. Give something extra: Provide sales training to the reps. It not only increases their abilities, but also can make them more indebted to you. Creating such loyalty in a rep can increase their success with your products. Also try using frequent contests to encourage competition between the reps and offer a nominal prize as a reward.

5. Gather marketplace feedback: Keeping your reps apprised not only of sales results, but also opinions and suggestions from the field is educational and could prompt changes necessary for increasing sales. Implement a rep council to gather feedback from customers. Share what you learn with the rep organizations.

Since reps work with several other products, you want them to focus on your company and its offerings. They may be â€œoutsideâ€• help, but donâ€™t make them feel like outsiders. Educating, nurturi sales coaching, and inspiring them to sell for you will bring better results.

Have you ever used, or are you considering using outside sales reps? Tell us what you think of these tips.

For more on sales coaching and how it can help your company, contact us now.

Article Source:
http://www.articleside.com/business-articles/5-steps-to-managing-independent-sales-reps-sales-coaching-tips-you-can-use.htm - Article Side

Asherstrategies - About Author:
Asher a sales process management and a sales process flow chart increases profits and decreases sales team turnover â€“ a huge cost for even the most successful organizations.

Article Keywords:
sales training, sales coaching, sales process management,sales process flow chart

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