



E-book

Newsletter #7

Assessing the Self-Motivation of a Salesperson



Counting down my 10 most popular newsletters, here is #7.

A complete library of my newsletters can be found [here on my website](#).

Introduction

Before beginning this Top 10 newsletter project, I set a few guidelines for myself. I would:

- Honor the Squarespace analytics; no matter how surprised I was at which newsletters readers most often viewed – or how disappointed I might be at some of the ones not chosen.
- Post the newsletter on social media and my website as written – no matter how badly I wanted to take an “editing pen” to a few of them (my writing having improved somewhat over the years).

To my mind, this newsletter seems amateurish and poorly written. I don’t even include headings at the beginning of each paragraph. But I’ll stick to my guidelines. Sales and company leaders need strong interviewing skills, visitors to my website download it, and several of the tips remain relevant today.

One of a sales leader’s most important jobs involves uncovering what motivates a salesperson (and it really differs widely from rep to rep) then managing them to those goals. It is not an easy task.

So often I have found that well-meaning company and sales leaders would ask obvious and leading questions of sales candidates during the interview process. In this newsletter I suggest ways to phrase questions in such a way that they were better able to more effectively gauge drive, ambition and money motivation.

Enjoy the eBook!

Suzanne



Newsletter

A client asks, “During an interview, how can I determine whether or not a prospective sales representative is self-motivated, competitive, or hungry?”

Job interviews are challenging because both you and the candidate are trying to present yourselves in the best light possible. This gets further exacerbated when the interviewer makes a common mistake and asks the candidate leading questions.

One way to avoid this problem is to use behavioral questions. These questions will usually take the form of “Describe a time when....” or similar phrasing. Asking, “Can you tell me about a time when you created a sales contest just for yourself?” will give you a lot more information than a leading question such as “Are you self-motivated?” The former question allows them to both tell a story and actually demonstrate their level of self-motivation or competitiveness. The latter question tips them off to the reply you want.

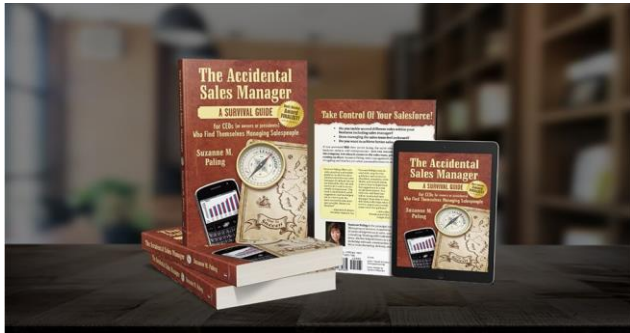
A genuinely self-motivated salesperson understands the importance of frequently setting up both large and small rewards for themselves on an ongoing basis. If a candidate mentions buying a gourmet dessert for their family every Friday if they speak to a certain number of decision makers each week, you know they understand the importance of setting smaller goals. If a candidate mentions buying tickets to a theatre production or sporting event if they open a new account or close a particularly big sale, you know they understand the importance of setting larger goals as well. Salespeople like these are actively engaging in this process.

Good follow-up questions to ask are “Who have you told about these contests?” or “How often do you bring home a gourmet dessert for your family?” Listen for candid and open answers.

Behavioral questions such as these will help you to see beyond the candidates “best manners” and enable you to more accurately determine whether or not they are a driven salesperson.



Additional Resources



The Accidental Sales Manager

Chapter 12: Sponsoring Motivating Sales Contests

[MORE ABOUT THE BOOK >](#)



The Sales Leader's Problem Solver

Chapter 1: The Inconsistent Sales Rep
Chapter 13: The Mediocre Rep

[MORE ABOUT THE BOOK >](#)

Further reading:

Motivation - General

[Add an Extra Month to Your Q4 by Preplanning](#)

[How to Build on Successful Months](#)

[Salesperson Hits and Misses](#)

[10 High Impact Suggestions for 2011](#)

[Show Me the Money!](#)

[Competition Displaces Top Rep](#)

[Counteracting a Summer Shortfall](#)

[Motivating a Superstar](#)

[Maintaining Year-End Momentum](#)

Motivation - Contests

[Sales Contests Motivate Reps and Facilitate Coaching](#)

[Motivating Using Sales Contests](#)

[The Whys and Hows of Sales Contests](#)

[Boosting Summer Sales](#)

