

I used to carry \$25 gift cards in my pocket. I'd catch a salesperson walking into the building and I'd stop him (or her) and ask something like, "What are two great questions to open a sales call?" or "What's your elevator pitch?" If the salesperson delivered a good response, he got a card — an instant reward.

(4) Microlearning — Break down training content into bite-sized, easily digestible modules. Deliver these minilessons periodically to reinforce key concepts and prevent information overload. For example, in my own two-day course, we spend two hours on sales questions. You don't need to do that. Instead, do an exercise to develop one question of a specific type. Rotate the topics appropriately.

(5) Role-Playing Exercises — I know, I know, nobody likes role-playing. So, why do we do it? Because it works. Role-playing is actually more difficult than real selling. I always liken it to "resistance training for salespeople"; if your people can be effective when role-playing, they will be strong in the field. Organize role-playing exercises that mimic real sales situations. The key to this type of role-play is to make sure that the salespeople are implementing the lessons taught, not "making a sale." My rule in role-playing is simple. I usually play the customer, and if the salespeople are implementing the lessons correctly, I'm a fairly easy customer. If not, I get tougher.

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Reward the behavior that you want and you'll get more of it.

(6) Performance Metrics and Goal Setting — Set clear performance metrics and goals for salespeople to track their progress. This helps align their efforts with the training objectives and motivates them to consistently apply what they've learned.

(7) Leverage Technology — Use digital platforms and e-learning tools to facilitate ongoing learning and reinforcement. These platforms can provide interactive quizzes,

resources and reminders to keep training concepts fresh in the minds of salespeople.

Remember that the goal is not just to have a training program, but to ensure that your salespeople genuinely learn and apply the concepts taught to drive improved sales performance. With a consistent post-training reinforcement strategy, your sales team will be better equipped to win more customers and keep the ones they have. ■

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