

Motivate Yourself

You can succeed every day.



by Dave Kahle

EVERY SALESPERSON SOMETIMES struggles with the highs and lows of sales. The job of the salesperson produces an emotional roller coaster, and unless you manage those emotions and keep yourself motivated, you'll have a difficult time succeeding.

At the heart of motivation lies a powerful belief: You must believe that you can do better, and that it is your responsibility to do so.

Sounds so simple, and yet the more I observe salespeople, the more convinced I am that most of them do not share this core belief. Rather, they are in the habit of making excuses for their situation. Or, they believe that it's really fate that determines their success, not their actions. Or, they believe that success is for someone else, not them.

Others believe that they can achieve greater degrees of success, but they become content with their situation, no matter what it is, and remain in comfort zones. Or they look at their managers as the person who has the responsibility to motivate them.

Test Yourself

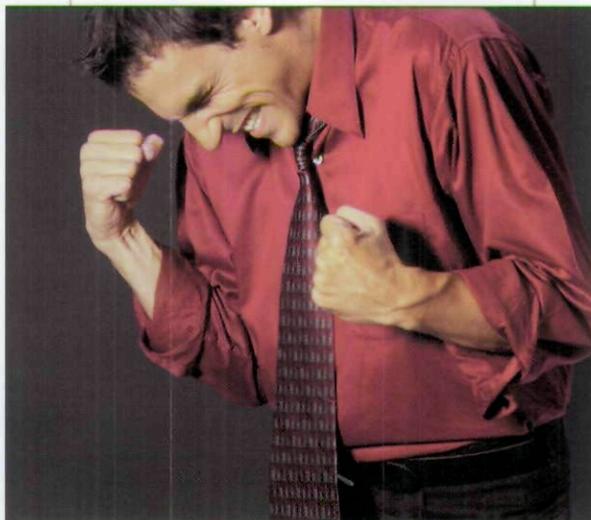
Do you really believe that you can do better? Do you really believe that it is your responsibility to motivate yourself to higher levels of performance?

Once you've accepted responsibility, the question now becomes, how do you motivate yourself? Here are three time-tested ways to motivate yourself.

1. Have some purpose, larger than yourself, for which you are working. As long as your world is limited to yourself, you find it just as easy to rationalize your mediocre results as it is to extend yourself to achieve superior results. One of the most motivating things in the world is the need to provide for a family. That will get you out there on the dreariest days, under the worst of conditions. Love is perhaps the greatest motivation in the world. When combined with the responsibility for the economic well-being of

those you love, it can be an incredibly powerful motivator. I've often wondered what I would have become had I not had a large family. It caused me to step up to the plate when I'd really rather not. The responsibility for a family will, over the years, create a sense of purpose in your life that will spill over and impact your career, and probably bring out the best in you. Along that same line, creating a tangible, worthwhile, exciting goal runs a close second for a way to motivate yourself. That's why spending once a year in a personal strategic planning retreat in which you create motivating goals for the coming year is such a powerful discipline.

2. Consistently expose yourself to positive thoughts. One of my greatest challenges in sales occurred when I



decided to leave one company where I was the number one salesperson, had a good salary, a company car, and great prospects—and accepted a position that paid only straight commission. Moreover, I had to buy my own demo samples and purchase my own sales literature. After six months, I was doing poorly. I owed the company \$10,000, my draw was finished, and I had few prospects.

Then I realized that my situation was pretty much my own doing. Yes, the company had dealt with me unfairly. However, the main reason I wasn't doing well was my attitude. My negative thinking caused my poor performance. I realized that if my situation was my own doing,

then I had the power to do something about it! I wasn't a victim. Then change was in my head! I was once again in a situation where I could influence the world around me and affect my life. It wasn't them, it was me! And since it was me, the power to do something was also in me!

So I determined to take control of my thoughts. I searched out, and wrote down on a set of 3 X 5 cards, all the positive sayings and quotes I could find. I had about a 45-minute drive from my home into my territory every morning. So, I'd hold those cards between my hands on the steering wheel, and flip them over and over, reading them to myself on the way in. It did wonders for my attitude. I began to become more positive, to look for opportunities, to feel more confident. Six months later, I was making more money than I had at any other time in my life.

You can copy positive thoughts onto cards like I did, program them into your PDA, purchase motivating CD ROMs or podcasts, and regularly listen to them. That's a great use of drive time. Try it. Just buy one and listen to it three times. Then notice your own emotional state. You'll find yourself more positive and optimistic.

3. Remind yourself of past success. Keep a journal or scrap book of your past successes. Note that appointment that you finally obtained with the hard-to-get to prospect. Keep a record of that big sale that you worked so hard to get. And note the details of that great presentation that you made.

Save the awards you've earned, the congratulatory emails from your management, the photos of the trips that you've won. From time to time, review your file. You'll find yourself becoming confident and motivated. If you have done these good things once, you can surely do them again.

You can do more, achieve more, earn more and become more. It is your responsibility to become the best that you can be. Implementing any one of these proven practices will help you operate at the highest levels. **SSE**

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ACTION: Practice these three ways to motivate.