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## Guerrilla Sales & Marketing

### Igniting Your Sales Team's Performance

By **Lori Turner-Wilson** Updated 3:01PM

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Lori Turner-Wilson

Selling is tough. It's hard on the ego and requires exceedingly high energy levels. That's why it takes more than money to keep salespeople fired up and on target.

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When performance falters, managers often struggle with how to proceed. Many tolerate mediocrity to avoid making waves or having to recruit.

Turning a blind eye to those who aren't putting in the effort sends a dangerous message to your top players about your company's tolerance for underperformance. It can create a ripple effect of poor performance throughout your organization, spreading like a virus.

So how do you light a fire under your low performers? First, determine if the issue is a lack of skills or effort by spending time with them going out on calls. If the issue is the former, provide the training they need, pronto – either from a high-performing peer or an external resource.

If the issue is the latter, dig more deeply to understand the underlying issues. If it's a lack of motivation, determine why.

Just like with a prospect, conduct a needs assessment with your sales rep, asking: What do you enjoy most about your job? What else, besides a bigger paycheck, would make you feel like you're more successful at work or in life? What would you like to do more of or less of to make your job more interesting?

It's important that each member of your sales team feels valued. Show them you are as interested in helping them achieve success and reaching their goals as they are.

Equally vital is understanding what motivates them. It's not always about the money. Prestige, peer recognition, job satisfaction, scheduling flexibility, time off or unique development/exposure opportunities could also be strong motivators.

Accept that most sales reps need to be on top, feel unique and win. In many sales organizations, there are a handful of superstars, with the rest of the pack figuring they can't compete and simply giving up. Create a program that allows everyone who puts forth the required effort to win at some level.

Also consider building winning teams with an incentive for each member to mentor and encourage others on their team. Frequency of recognition is also essential. Small but regular tokens of your appreciation, such as free lunch or the ability to leave early on Friday when targets are met, will go a long way.

Reinforce positive behavior often, and when you do, slow down, focus on the conversation, look them in the eye and be specific about what they did

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BANKRUPTCIES	61	233	520
BUSINESS LICENSES	20	72	188
UTILITY CONNECTIONS	77	296	729
MARRIAGE LICENSES	9	30	101

### FRONT PAGE NEWS

- [Wednesday, Jan. 11, 2012](#)
- [Tuesday, Jan. 10, 2012](#)
- [Monday, Jan. 9, 2012](#)
- [Friday, Jan. 6, 2012](#)
- [Thursday, Jan. 5, 2012](#)

[« Back](#)

Go to date:

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- [Tuesday, Jan. 10, 2012](#)
- [Monday, Jan. 9, 2012](#)
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[« Back](#) | [Forward »](#)

Go to date:

Search Records:

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- [Wednesday, Jan. 11, 2012](#)
- [Tuesday, Jan. 10, 2012](#)
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[« Back](#)

Go to date:

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well. Bear in mind that salespeople thrive on public recognition.

At the end of the day, you must lead by example. If you're down about the market or company, your team will follow your lead. Walk the talk.

*Lori Turner-Wilson is an award-winning columnist and managing partner of RedRover Sales & Marketing, [www.redrovercompany.com](http://www.redrovercompany.com). You can follow RedRover on Twitter (@redrovercompany and @loriturner) and Facebook (facebook.com/redrovercompany).*



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