



Thinking Success

Add Fizz to your Sales Team by working on the 'Inner Game'

***Research on Motivation, Resilience and
Ability to cope with Pressure in sales teams***



Bryan McCrae
Sales-Motivations
September 2013

Introduction

The news has been awash recently with the fantastic exploits of sports superstars such as Andy Murray winning the men's singles at Wimbledon, the English Cricket team winning the Ashes again and our record breaking tally of medals at the 2012 Olympics. All of these superb sportsmen and women are highly motivated and have built up their skills, endurance and capabilities over many years of hard work, to help them reach the top of their respective games. But so have all of their competitors! *So what is it that gets them to the top and makes them super-stars?*

Given that all top level sportsmen and women are already highly motivated, there are two more significant factors that come to play; **resilience and the ability to deal effectively with pressure.**

Whilst top sports people such as Murray use a Sports Psychologist who work with them to develop the 'inner game' very often sales people receive little or no help in these critical areas. Yet without the ability to keep bouncing back and keep going under intense pressure, better than the competition, consistent sales success is very unlikely.

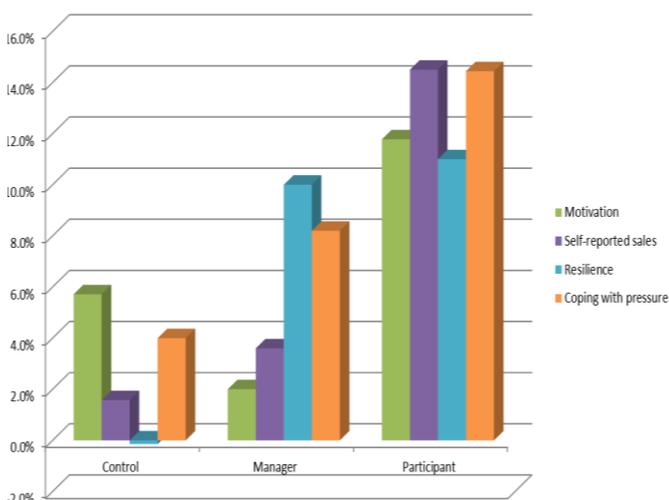
Having identified the importance of these factors, we have been working with sales forces to see if it is possible to systematically help their sales teams become more resilient and better able to deal with pressure, to help them boost sales results. We have been able to collect enough data now to assess what can be achieved with the right tools.

This involved using the [Sales-Motivations program](http://www.sales-motivations.com) (see www.sales-motivations.com), which uses the proven Cognitive Behavioural approach to fine tuning thoughts, feelings and behaviour to bring about the results that are desired. In a carefully constructed trial with a sales team, we measured everybody's levels of motivation, resilience and ability to cope with pressure at the start of the trial then split the group in half, one half using the Sales-Motivations program and the other half carrying on as normal without it.

We then measured everybody's levels of motivation, resilience and ability to cope with pressure again and compared the 'participants' verses the 'controls'. We also had a group of Sales Managers who undertook the program, although we didn't have a control group against which to compare them, as they all wanted to use the program.

So what were the results?

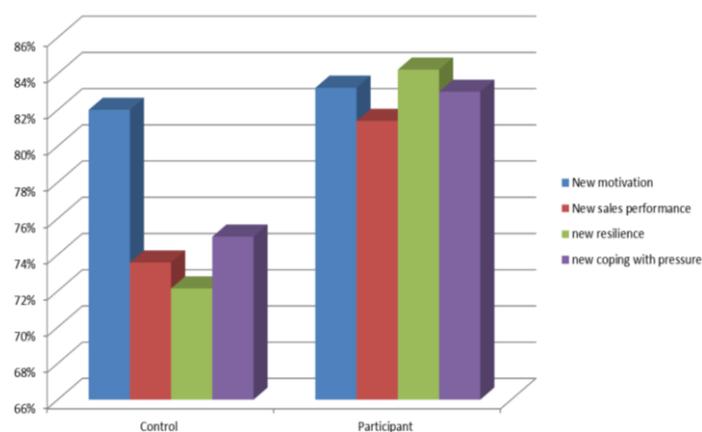
We used the on-line [Sales Motivation and Resilience Questionnaire](#), which consists of forty questions, to measure the results. It asks eight questions for each of these factors, plus 'self-reported sales performance' (i.e. how well do you think you are doing) then calculates a total score for each factor as a percentage from 0% (very low) to 100% (very high). The changes in each factor achieved in each group are shown below;



Relative Effects of Sales-Motivations Program

- Participants made significant gains over the Control group in all factors, with a 10% gain in ability to cope with pressure and a 11% gain in resilience
- Managers made significant gains in Resilience and Coping with pressure
- Control group showed small gains in Motivation and Coping with pressure and a slight reduction in Resilience.

As well the *relative* changes in scores in these factors, we also looked at the *absolute* scores at the end of the evaluation period between the Control and Participant groups, as shown below;



Absolute Effects of the Program

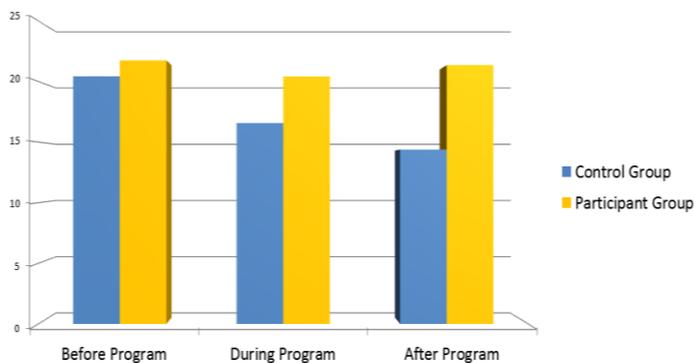
In absolute terms the Participants average scores after the Sales Motivations program exceeded the Control group scores in all dimensions.

We also know from the Feedback survey conducted that every single Participant who has taken the Sales-Motivations program believes that their sales will be higher in future.

Getting more active

Finally we also measured number of face to face sales calls per week, which was already a part of the sales teams' normal reporting metrics. The calls per week were measured before, after and during the pilot program, which provides a comparison of the activity levels between participant and control groups.

The control group showed a steady decline in average weekly calls, dropping from twenty to fourteen calls per week. The entire period measured corresponded to an unseasonably cool and wet spring, which always results in lower than normal demand for the main product being sold. However in contrast the Participant group almost maintained their activity levels, dropping just one call per week on average.



Activity rates - calls per week

The Participant group became 30% more active than the control group, which would equate to around two hundred and seventy more calls per person each year.

So what does this all mean?

Having completed the program, we are now monitoring sales performance in both groups. As the techniques are applied to more opportunities we fully anticipate significant and long lasting improvements in sales results in the Participants group, based on a previous large scale study which utilised the same Cognitive Behavioural approach as the Sales-Motivations program and saw a 20% improvement in sales.

It is well known that attitude and self-belief are crucial in sales success. This is especially true in current market conditions when budgets are stretched and competition is fierce.

“In essence, we now have empirical evidence that that it is possible to systematically grow motivation, resilience and ability to cope with pressure by using a cognitive behavioural development system specifically designed for sales people, such as the Sales-Motivations program”

How does the program work?

Sales-Motivations is a unique self-coaching learning system that builds motivation, resilience, and ability to deal with pressure and as a result, sales performance. The core concept is that everybody can learn, through specific researched and proven techniques, to take more control over what they think, how they feel, and how they subsequently behave in challenging situations, establishing more helpful habits in the process.

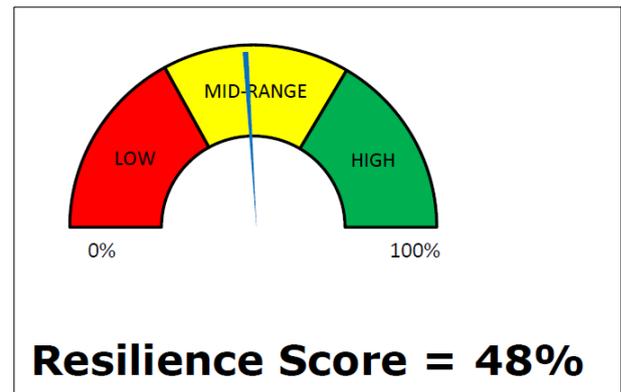
The program is used on a ‘drip-feed’ basis over a period of six weeks, which gives lots of opportunities to try out then practise the techniques on normal day to day selling activities.

It can be delivered either as face to face workshops, advanced e-learning, or a combination of these approaches. The e-learning is fully interactive, has over 40 videos, lots of quizzes and on-line activities. Including the exercises the program is equivalent to two days training, but is used over a period of at least six weeks.

Users start by benchmarking themselves by taking the Sales Motivation and Resilience Questionnaire, which measures their current levels of motivation, resilience and ability to cope with pressure. They receive a personalised six page report which gives them some insight into ‘what good looks like’.

Generally people who work in sales are already highly motivated, but we see a much wider and usually lower range of scores for both resilience and ability to cope well with pressure.

Each factor is presented as a ‘speedometer’ type graph showing the percentage as well as a low, mid or high range indication, as shown below;



Patterns of thinking

They then learn how to capture details about their thoughts, feelings and behaviour around challenging sales situations, followed by learning how identify any common unhelpful thinking patterns (we all acquire them from time to time) that are getting in the way of them achieving their goals. One very common unhelpful thinking pattern is known as ‘catastrophising’, where a relatively small set back is interpreted as a sign that everything is going wrong and that things will spiral out of control.

This might, for example, be along the lines of;

- A prospective client not responding as quickly as usual to emails or phone calls, then
- Thinking that you are being deliberately ignored, then
- Thinking that the prospective client must be spending time with a competitor instead then

- Feeling and believing that that they plan to give the business to the competitor instead of to us, then
- Losing confidence and motivation to keep working to win the deal interest, then
- Giving up and the competitor winning it because you've backed off and are working on something else instead.

Being able to recognise these unhelpful thinking patterns, knowing what to do to break them and replace them with more helpful thinking patterns is very powerful and usually results in greater sales success.

Creating New Habits

Once these new skills are becoming habits, they then can be subtly used with prospects and clients to challenge and overcome sales objections in a constructive way. The last section of the program focuses on different ways of dealing constructively with pressure by using the new skills to be able to analyse and fine tune the thoughts feelings and behaviour that happen when things start to feel too stressful to cope with. Finally the Sales Motivation and Resilience Questionnaire is taken again to discover what has changed as a result of the program.

As well as sales people taking the program, we recommend that their sales managers also take it. This helps them to understand what their staff are learning, benefit personally from the program directly themselves and to be able to use it as a framework and resource for coaching and mentoring their teams.

Managers who have used the program report many personal benefits including a reduction in stress, being able to sleep at night, better decision making and a greater ability to coach their staff to produce a more positive attitude.

So if you want to be the next sales superstar yourself, or would like your team to be, maybe it is time to start to work on the 'inner game' too?

For more information and to explore how we could help add more Fizz and boost results in your sales team;

visit www.sales-motivations.com,

email info@sales-motivations.com

call 0845 531 4125

Cognitive Enterprises Limited
T/A Sales-Motivations
2, Arborfield Grange
Reading Road
Arborfield
Berks RG2 9HW
© 2013 Cognitive Enterprises Limited