

7 Guidelines for Creating a High-Performing Lead Generation Team

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1. Communicate Openly

New team members start their positions energized and curious. If you can channel that enthusiasm, they'll quickly be able to gain valuable ground-level insight into the work they are performing. You can maintain their engagement by creating an environment for open two-way communication between your team members and management. Let them know what factors into your decisions, solicit their feedback and benefit from the “wisdom of crowds.”

Of course, projects don't always follow a straight trajectory. You learn as you go. Budgets shrink and expand, deadlines move, and priorities shift. Keep your team informed of the twists and turns — not just what's happening, but why and how it

impacts their work. When your team understands the decisions affecting their work, they are more likely to feel valued and keep a high level of engagement with the project.

2. Provide a Sense of Purpose

If an employee doesn't think the role they play makes a difference to the project's success, they are unlikely to find meaning in what they do. You don't want them to put in the hours just because it helps pay the rent and puts food on the table. Since work must offer intrinsic rewards, you need to ensure that everyone understands how his or her efforts contribute to the success of the project and the business. In one-to-one meetings, show them not only their target achievements but also the impact their work is having on the goals and vision of the project or company as a whole.

3. Check-in Frequently

Generating leads isn't an easy job — the tasks involved can be repetitive and tedious, requiring persistence and positivity. To keep team members motivated, check-in with them, give them a pep talk when you see their motivation waning and create a sense of shared accountability. Don't just talk business. Your reps are human beings. Find out who your people are in their lives beyond the office walls. Discover what makes them tick and where they want to go next in their careers.

Employees who feel cared about will reciprocate — they will care more about the goals of the company, and the potential customers they engage with. More positive interactions with prospects will yield higher level conversations and ultimately better outcomes.

4. Grant Autonomy When Deserved

Your team members want you to show them the way, but they also yearn for some room to be creative and use their instincts to do their job well. Your team comprises diverse personalities with varied experiences; each works best in different ways and has something unique to contribute. Processes are important to organize work and keep it consistent, though too much structure creates monotony and inhibits creativity. Once you feel confident in an employee's abilities and knowledge, give them some autonomy to do it their way and develop greater ownership for the process.

5. Celebrate Success

It takes a lot of legwork, energy, and perseverance to succeed at lead generation. Given that, your reps live for the reward that comes from developing leads that are ripe and ready to turn into sales opportunities. When that happens, celebrate. You can offer incentives, but it's just as important to provide recognition. A kind word or a pat on the back goes a long way. Doing this will ensure your reps understand what success looks like beyond just the numbers, and will reinforce positive behavior that's aligned with company goals. They need to know they've done a good job and that their hard work is being noticed.

6. Develop Your People

You need a consistent level of skills among your team, which goes far beyond simply offering on-boarding training. Even the most experienced reps will develop gaps in their knowledge as markets shift. You need to monitor changes in the competitive landscape, new legislation, product innovations, and sociocultural shifts, to name a few factors, and your team needs to know how these issues impact their work. This means training is not a one-and-done thing. A regular schedule of training sessions will help employees advance their skills and business expertise. Beyond overall market knowledge, you need to develop skills through coaching sessions. Do practice calls and offer constructive criticism.

Let reps know how their performance metrics stack up. How many calls are they making compared to other reps and what they've previously achieved? What are their results and what behaviors are contributing to those outcomes? When they're doing well, celebrate and approach weaknesses as opportunities for improvement. Provide some tips on how they can up their game.

It's also a good idea to assign a mentor to new hires to help them learn the lay of the land. For new hires, the amount of knowledge and skills needed to be successful can seem daunting — having a peer they can turn to for support will help guide them along the learning curve without getting discouraged.

7. Make it a Team Effort

A little competition is healthy, but it's essential to foster a cohesive and supportive team atmosphere. Make sure you provide opportunities for them to learn from each other. If one member is achieving outstanding results, find out what they are doing

and ask them to share it with others. By providing training and insights to their co-workers, they'll reinforce their skills and enjoy the recognition. And, of course, the other team members benefit from discovering a successful new approach to a shared challenge.

In addition to improving each other's performance, creating opportunities for team members to build solidarity and trust will mean a more enjoyable work environment. The result? Higher engagement, increased cooperation, less turnover, and better results.

There are many ways to improve the performance of your team, but you can't tackle them all at once. Start with one or two ideas from this list. Focus on them first and measure the results. Once you've mastered these techniques and instilled them into your way of doing business, add a couple more. You're sure to improve your team's performance and your business success.

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