

Don't Tarnish Your Most Valuable Asset: Your Professional Reputation

As the quarter ends and results for the quarter are tabulated, the powers-that-be decide that changes need to be made to impact Wall Street results or the bottom-line profits.

Announcements are made that compensation and incentive plans will be changed immediately to redirect the profit margins upward.

What kind of message does this send to the hardworking sales force that has consistently performed by meeting company quotas and exceeded last year's targets?

A very negative reaction sweeps through the channel and immediately sends your most valuable asset, your reputation, into a downward spiral.

Your sales force sees the handwriting and decides to act; they are busy planning and looking to make changes that will continue to impact your business, they are looking for the company that has planned and prepared for the changes that affect day-to-day business, and they are looking for another lucrative opportunity that will reward them for their expertise.

As this process plays out, your competition realizes that they can recruit some experienced talent at your expense. When the sales people announce their departure, they are immediately told not to expect their earned commissions. What happened here? Were they not your most valuable employee because they brought you new business with large profit margins? Didn't you spend a good deal on their training or even pay them a sign-on bonus to join your company?

Why should this happen to your business? What really happens in those planning and budgeting meetings? Is it really necessary to change the quota and commission structures every 90 days? How much longer do these employees have to continue being beat up?

These scenarios force them to look elsewhere for an employer that values their knowledge. Changes can be positive to a corporation if they are well-planned and executed, without damaging a reputation.