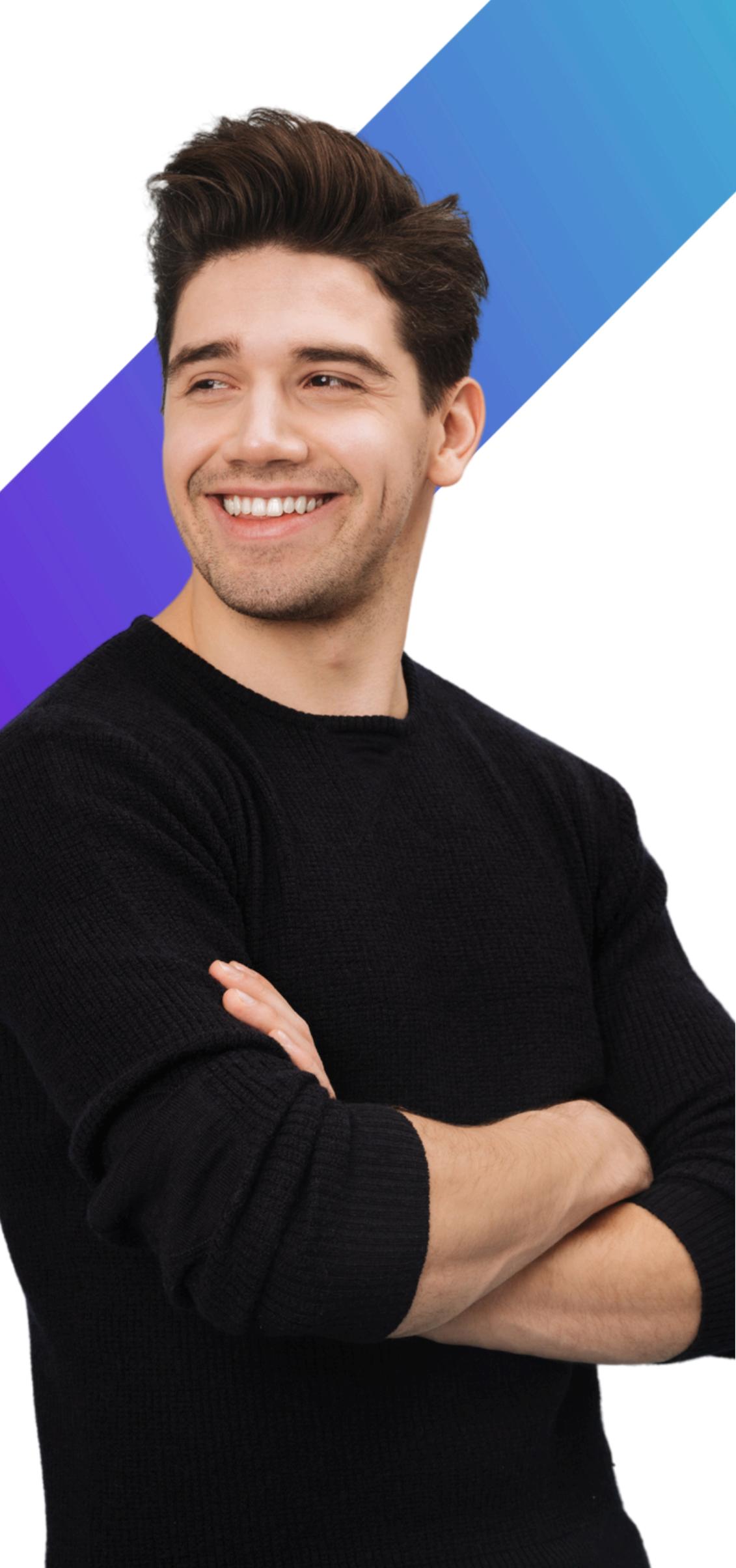




A BIG LITTLE BOOK BY BI WORLDWIDE

THE SALES LEADER'S GUIDE TO INCENTIVE MASTERY





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01. UNLOCK THE SECRETS OF HUMAN BEHAVIOUR



Take a deeper look into the science



By understanding the science behind motivation, you can supercharge your incentive design and drive positive results. Let's look at some foundational theories that explain why incentives work and how you can leverage them to boost performance.

SKINNER'S REINFORCEMENT THEORY



Think of every sales behaviour as part of a loop: a trigger (goal), an action (sales activity), and a reward (recognition or incentive). The key? Make the loop tight and visible. Shape long term habits and avoid just rewarding outcomes by using micro-incentives and gamified nudges to reinforce the right behaviours in real time.



MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

Maslow's pyramid isn't static, it's dynamic. Salespeople move up and down based on life stages, market conditions, and personal goals. The best programmes flex with the individual. Use data to personalise incentives: some reps need stability, others crave status or self-expression.



HERZBERG'S MOTIVATION-HYGIENE THEORY

Hygiene factors keep people from leaving. Motivators make them want to stay and win. Recognition, autonomy, and purpose are the real drivers of discretionary effort. Build programmes that celebrate progress, not just results. Make achievement feel meaningful, not mechanical.

02. MAKE YOUR INCENTIVES IRRESISTIBLE

Tap into the psychological triggers that drive human behaviour. From the fear of missing out to the thrill of anticipation, these triggers can make your incentive programmes more compelling and effective.



Discover more potential triggers

BENTHAM'S PLEASURE AND PAIN

Pursue Pleasure, Avoid Pain

Design rewards that are highly desirable and minimise negative consequences. Make hitting targets feel like winning the lottery!

PROSPECT THEORY

Leverage Loss Aversion

People hate losing more than they love winning. Highlight what they'll miss out on if they don't hit their goals. Fear of loss can be a powerful motivator.

COMBINE TRIGGERS FOR MAXIMUM IMPACT

Create Urgency and Scarcity

Limited-time offers and deadlines can drive action. Tease upcoming rewards to build anticipation and excitement.



03. KEEP IT SIMPLE

BEHAVIOUR = MOTIVATION + ABILITY + PROMPT

For desired behaviours to happen, motivation, ability, and prompt must align perfectly, according to the Fogg Behaviour Model. While motivation and prompts are key, ability is the game-changer. Even the best incentives and reminders won't work if the task feels too hard.

MAKE IT EASY

Focus on making tasks simple and doable. B.J. Fogg highlights that simplicity is about what's easiest for someone at that moment. People love shortcuts and are influenced by their biases, so 'simple' can change from person to person and moment to moment.

BI WORLDWIDE'S APPROACH

We dive deep to understand what makes tasks easy or hard for our clients and participants. Our solutions are smartly designed using gamification, knowledge tests, and cognitive biases to make tasks simpler.



See how to use biases to change behaviour



1. AVAILABILITY BIAS

Break tasks into smaller steps and provide all the information needed to make them feel manageable.

2. FRAMING AND LOSS AVERSION

Show the benefits of new processes and the downsides of not adopting them

3. POSE AN EASIER QUESTION

Use data to understand challenges and reframe tasks to make them seem simpler.

4. TAILORED ADVANTAGE

Highlight each participant's strengths by comparing efforts, boosting their confidence in achieving rewards.

04.INSPIRE RATHER THAN COMPENSATE

Imagine your sales team driven by more than just their pay cheques – motivated by rewards that ignite their passion and creativity. That’s the power of differentiating between incentives and traditional compensation.

If cash were the ultimate motivator, your salesforce would already be performing at their peak. Base salary, bonuses, and commissions are the essentials, often delivered as cash.

But incentives? They’re the cherry on top.

INCENTIVES TO INSPIRE

Recognition, contests, and top performer awards are designed to inspire incremental behaviour changes. They reinforce positive actions, drive brand goals in shifting markets, and help retain your top talent.

Through research, experience, and proven case studies, we recommend using a variety of motivators across the incentive/compensation spectrum:

Cash and cash commissions: The basics that keep the wheels turning.

Manager discretionary awards: Personalised rewards that recognise individual contributions.

Tangible short-term awards: Immediate, physical rewards that provide instant gratification.

Group travel: Memorable experiences that build team spirit and loyalty.



What’s better, incentives or commission?

Top performer recognition

- Engages up to 10% of audience. Very public.
- Symbolic awards and experiences.



Contests

- Focus on moving the middle – engage over 50% of audience.
- Tangible awards and travel experiences.



Recognition

- Engage over 80% of audience with peer-to-peer and manager-to-employee recognition.
- Symbolic and tangible awards.



Variable / incentive compensation

- Available to all team members, usually sales-focused.



Base salary

- Cash compensation that establishes minimum standards for all employees.
- Private and long-term.



05. CHOOSE THE RIGHT REWARDS



Find out how rewards impact performance



When asked, "What kind of reward do you want?" most people will say cash. It's flexible and straightforward. But research shows that non-cash rewards are more effective at creating lasting motivation.

WHY NON-CASH REWARDS WORK:



More justifiable: Non-cash awards are guilt-free spends on wants vs. needs. Cash often goes towards necessities like gas and groceries.



More sociable: Tangible awards are more likely to be shared with friends and family, creating a sense of pride and accomplishment.



Re-consumable: Every time we see the award, we get a visual reminder of how we earned it.



More promotable: Non-cash awards stimulate visualisation and evoke emotion.

A GLOBAL CASE STUDY

A global telecommunications firm, with support from BI WORLDWIDE, aimed to boost sales in its call centre division, which was facing declining revenue. The study tested various incentives, including non-cash (merchandise) and cash rewards.

IMPACT ON SALES:

Control group: **4% decline**

Merchandise rewards & self-selected goals: **87% increase**

Merchandise Rewards & Assigned Goals: **13% increase**

Cash Rewards & Self-Selected Goals: **3% decrease**

Cash Rewards & Assigned Goals: **35% decrease**

The study concluded that non-cash rewards were more motivating than cash. Understanding what employees truly want, rather than what they think they need, is crucial for driving behaviour change and performance.

REWARD EFFICACY CONTINUUM.



LOW EFFICACY

Based on research by Ran Kivetz, PhD Columbia University

HIGH EFFICACY



06. EMBRACE REGIONAL DIVERSITY

In a global workplace, one-size-fits-all incentives just don't cut it. To truly motivate your diverse team, you need to embrace their unique cultural backgrounds.



THINK LOCAL, ACT GLOBAL

Offer rewards that resonate with your salespeople's regional preferences to boost motivation. Ensure the best experience with local customer support and in-region fulfilment.



SPEAK THEIR LANGUAGE

Translate your incentive communications into local languages to maximise engagement and make everyone feel included.



UNDERSTAND WHAT DRIVES THEM

Different cultures are motivated by different things. For example, in Japan, group recognition and team-based rewards can be a big hit, while in the United States, individual achievements and personal rewards might be more effective. Understanding these nuances helps you design incentives that truly inspire.



NAVIGATE REGIONAL COMPLIANCE

Implementing incentives across multiple regions can be challenging due to varying legislation and compliance regulations. Tailor your approach to meet these local requirements and ensure everything runs smoothly.



LEVERAGE TECH THAT CONNECTS

Leverage local technologies to bring your incentives to life across your global workforce. For instance, integrating with WeChat in China can significantly boost engagement and make your programme a success.

07. ENHANCE ENGAGEMENT THROUGH THOUGHTFUL DESIGN



Boosting engagement is more than just offering monetary rewards. Thoughtful incentives can enhance a sales person's well-being, foster a sense of belonging, and drive higher performance.

Here are some top tips to consider when designing incentives that will truly engage your sales team.

1

EMBRACE SIMPLICITY

Complex programmes can be overwhelming. Design straightforward incentives that are easy to understand and participate in. Ensure participants have access to all the tools they need to succeed.

2

ASK FOR PARTICIPATION COMMITMENT

Don't assume automatic engagement. Encourage sales people to commit to participating in the incentive programme.

3

REWARD BOTH RESULTS AND ACTIVITIES

Recognise both the outcomes and the efforts that lead to achieving sales goals. This ensures a holistic approach to motivation and sustainable results.

4

SET ACHIEVABLE GOALS

Structure incentives so each sales person has a reasonable chance of achieving the award criteria. Personalised goals motivate the broader audience, not just top performers.

5

INCLUDE EDUCATIONAL COMPONENTS

Whenever possible, incorporate educational elements into your incentive programmes. This can enhance skills and knowledge while motivating performance.

6

MAKE IT MEASURABLE

Ensure that the goals and achievements are measurable. This helps in evaluating the effectiveness of the incentive programme.

7

GO BEYOND CASH

Non-cash rewards, like aspirational merchandise and exclusive experiences, create lasting memories and amplify the impact of incentives, turning achievements into something truly special.

8

MOVE THE MIDDLE

Focus on engaging the middle performers, not just the top achievers. By motivating the majority of your team, you can significantly boost overall performance. Use contests and recognition to encourage incremental improvements across the board.

9

AVOID UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

Be aware of other concurrent initiatives, conflicting policies, and external factors that might impact the incentive programme.



How to design structures that work





Inspiring **people.** Delivering **results.**

RECOGNITION | INCENTIVES | REWARDS | LIVE EVENTS

BI WORLDWIDE helps organisations solve critical business challenges by driving positive behaviour change and engagement. By applying our talent and expertise in behavioural economics we deliver complementary recognition, rewards, incentives and live event solutions.

Our full-service portfolio offers clients a unique blend of consulting expertise and proprietary technology solutions that drive value from programme design to implementation and beyond.

Working with over 2000 organisations worldwide, across 183 countries, BI WORLDWIDE has been inspiring people, partners, and customers since 1950.



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