

# Culture **Clash** versus Culture **Cue**: 8 steps to sales success

Mark Hirschfeld,  
Vice President,  
Consulting Services

Walter Ruckes,  
Vice President,  
Sales & Channel  
Engagement

BI WORLDWIDE

Being on the front line, your sales team experiences more change than just about any position. Shifting customer expectations, competition from all sides, a never-ending stream of product launches, evolving technologies and a whole array of internal changes require your sales reps to stay nimble, informed and inspired every day.

The ability to embrace change is difficult for even the best performers. But what about reps who aren't top performers? If all these changes challenge the best reps, what about your core and lagging salespeople? They will only fall further behind. And as much as this may seem to be **their** problem, it's really **your** problem.

This problem can become your opportunity. Your core sales performers represent a huge percentage of your overall sales – and they hold your biggest opportunity for growth.

Top-performing sales organizations everywhere are making changes to:

- Create the best customer experience.
- Stay ahead of the competition.
- Take advantage of new products.
- Use technology to the fullest.

To ensure your sales culture is strong enough to meet these challenges, here are eight questions your salespeople are asking themselves. Be aware of them as you navigate changes.

## 1 Where do I start?

Seems obvious, but let's keep it simple. **Start with new reps and your onboarding process.** Set new expectations and communicate clearly from day one.

**Culture Clash** Companies that **don't onboard salespeople effectively** risk losing them to competitors.

**Culture Cue** Companies that **effectively onboard salespeople** keep them longer and get them up to speed more quickly.

## 2 Do I have the skills I need?

For the rest of your sales organization, **use every learning opportunity to drive change.** And don't worry about making huge, sweeping changes on a daily basis; look for ways to nudge your managers and teams in a new direction.

**Culture Clash** Salespeople who **don't feel they are learning** are more likely to leave.

**Culture Cue** Want to keep salespeople? **Make learning frequent and relevant.**

# Culture **Clash** versus Culture **Cue**: 8 steps to sales success

**3** Where do I stand?

Communicate progress frequently at a regular cadence to your managers and give them the tools and results to share with their teams.

**Culture Clash**

Companies who don't align managers to sales incentives are less likely to achieve their revenue targets.

**Culture Cue**

Early, frequent and vivid communications increase engagement and sales.

**4** Are the rewards worth the effort?

Develop strategies for the short, mid and long-term. This will allow you to see and communicate results regularly.

**Culture Clash**

Companies who only have an annual recognition program miss opportunities to engage all of their sales reps.

**Culture Cue**

Companies can get more consistent engagement with annual programs that are complemented with shorter term spiffs focused on key initiatives.

**5** Do I believe I can succeed?

Work with your leadership team to stay confident in the face of any challenges or defeats along the way. Inspire your top salespeople to lead the way and pave the path for core performers to follow along.

**Culture Clash**

Rewarding only top performers demoralizes other performers.

**Culture Cue**

Using different incentives rules structures that engage all levels of performance is a key to greater sales success.

**6** Am I setting the right goals?

As a leader, when you set a goal for yourself, you are also setting goals for your team. Create opportunities for your team(s) to set goals for themselves – self-selected goals are so much more powerful than assigned goals.

**Culture Clash**

You are losing out on sales performance by not allowing salespeople ownership of their sales goals.

**Culture Cue**

Salespeople who can choose their sales goals sell more than those who are assigned goals.

# Culture **Clash** versus Culture **Cue**: 8 steps to sales success

7 Am I one of the best?

Top performers are often driven intrinsically to do everything it takes to stay ahead of the pack and deliver results for themselves – and the organization. They also like new challenges and to be rewarded for their accomplishments.

**Culture Clash**

Ignoring your best leaves them at risk of being recruited by your competition.

**Culture Cue**

Retain your best salespeople by offering them lots of ways to stretch and achieve.

8 What is my next challenge?

Don't view culture change as a one-time effort. It is an ongoing process. Just like a top performing rep who keeps looking for new ways to succeed, your entire organization should constantly be reinventing itself to win deals, enable success and stay ahead of the competition.

**Culture Clash**

A weak sales culture where reps don't see many opportunities in their future leaves you at risk of losing your best and brightest.

**Culture Cue**

Build a great sales culture with an ongoing plan of opportunities to achieve and earn in alignment with company goals.

These eight questions were taken from the **Level Up** sales model created by **BI WORLDWIDE** and are based on our ongoing research into what makes a top performing sales organization.

For more information about the model and how we are helping sales organizations reinvigorate and reinvent themselves, visit: [biworldwide.com](http://biworldwide.com) or contact us at [info@biworldwide.com](mailto:info@biworldwide.com).

