

Peer-based and team-based competition belongs in your sales kick off

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Sales kickoffs are great at creating energy. The real question is whether **that energy** turns into **changed behavior** once sellers leave the room.

Too often, SKO momentum fades. Not because the strategy was wrong, but because **inspiration alone doesn't drive execution**. Sellers need **clear goals, visible progress, and enough productive pressure** to move from **excitement to action**.¹

That's where structured peer-based and team-based competition earns its place in the sales kickoff environment.

Sellers need **clear goals, visible progress, and enough productive pressure** to move from **excitement to action**.

Competition helps sellers learn by watching each other

One of the biggest myths about competition is that it distracts from learning. In reality, it can accelerate learning when it's designed well.

Salespeople are social learners. When performance and progress are visible, people adjust faster. Behavioral science supports this: social comparison, goal proximity, and public commitment can all increase effort and follow-through.^{2,3}

When reps can see who's mastering new messaging, completing certifications, or applying learning in real scenarios, they don't wait to be told what "good" looks like. They adapt.

Well-designed competition also activates the goal-gradient effect: effort increases as people see themselves getting closer to a goal. That visibility matters at SKO, where new strategies and messages need to move quickly from concept to confident execution.¹

From a business standpoint, the payoff can be meaningful. Organizations that use competition tied to specific selling behaviors often see stronger productivity and faster time-to-competency than teams relying on classroom-only SKO models.⁴

What high-impact SKO competition looks like

The most effective sales kickoff competition programs follow a few simple rules.

Reward behaviors, not just outcomes.

Certifications, role-plays, demo readiness, and early adoption of new messaging all help drive downstream revenue while keeping more sellers engaged.



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Blend peer-based and team-based challenges.

Individual competition creates urgency. Team competition creates collaboration and peer coaching. Together, they help move the middle.

Keep challenges short and visible.

Daily or weekly sprints with clear scorecards can outperform long, end-of-quarter contests because sellers can see progress while there's still time to act.¹

Scorecards and communication drive results

Competition without clarity creates confusion. Clear scorecards answer the questions every seller is already asking: What counts? Where do I stand? What should I do next?

Live dashboards, mobile updates, and visible recognition make progress tangible. When goal clarity is paired with continuous feedback, short-term energy has a better chance of becoming repeatable execution.¹

**Your SKO isn't just a meeting.
It's a performance environment.**

**When competition is intentional, it turns kickoff energy
into measurable execution that lasts.**

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Sources

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