



# YOUR TOP 5 QUESTIONS ON SALES GAMIFICATION

Answered

Based  
on the most  
popular  
questions  
asked at  
Dreamforce  
'13



# IT STARTED AT DREAMFORCE '13...

...where we presented in 12 sessions, were featured in a Mobile Showcase, sponsored a post-conference "Cigar Shindig" and ran a booth. And where at each of those events we were asked the same questions on sales gamification.

(We're trying to impress you.)

We figured we'd address the 5 most popular questions in 1 eBook.

Surely the 1,000 or so people we came into contact with at Dreamforce aren't the only ones curious. Or, so we hope.



## BEFORE WE GET STARTED

### **GAMIFICATION IS A BROAD TERM.**

Here's some context, so you can understand exactly what we're talking about here:

LevelEleven has a software product for salesforce.com called Compete, which VP's of Sales use to create energy and focus around the key sales behaviors they need to drive revenue. We do this by socializing performance against the behaviors you need via real-time leaderboards. Salespeople are competitive and crave recognition, and we help you tap into that. And because it's all populated by data in your CRM system, adoption will skyrocket along the way.

← This is our plug. Take note 😊.

So in short, when we say "sales gamification," we're referring to the use of competition and leaderboards to motivate critical sales behaviors.

# I: CHEATING: How do you avoid it?

**EX:** If you're running a competition around making calls, how do you ensure your sales reps aren't making quick, low-quality calls just to get their points?

Our clients typically implement these 2 best practices:

## 1. Keep it public

We recommend keeping competitions, and the rankings that accompany them, as visible as possible to further motivate your team. Publicizing contest data offers benefits beyond the one we talk about most often, though. For one, it helps with data quality assurance.

**Once data becomes accessible to all, sales reps will feel more accountable for the points they're accumulating in competitions.**

And if they don't, sometimes their colleagues will force them to. We often see a certain amount of policing among peers, especially when competitions are first introduced into a work environment.

## 2. Consider filters

Adding filters to the behaviors you're motivating in a contest can help to ensure quality, too.

For example, if you're running a contest where sales reps get a point for each prospecting call, require the call to take place for at least 2 minutes. You could also make it so those calls must be with prospects off a certain list or of a certain job title.

We don't recommend getting too complicated with filters, because one of the keys to creating habit-changing competitions is to keep things simple. That being said, adding a filter or two to behaviors can help to make sure you're motivating the right types of habits.

(That would be motivation.)

Read more in our  
"How to Prevent  
Cheating in  
Sales Contests"  
eBook here.

## One more idea...

We do have one client that also assigns their Salesforce admin to 15 minutes a week of quality checking. During that time, the admin will sort through competitions, checking for anything that looks out of the ordinary.

While typically #'s 1 and 2 work well, if you're looking for a little something extra, you could consider even having your admin commit to 15 minutes a month. In that case, make it clear to your sales team that contest entries will be checked on a random basis.

## II: TIMING: What does it look like in terms of the typical duration of competitions and the length in between competitions? →

i.e., should you take breaks between contests?

### A. Length of competitions:

It's best to take advantage of sales reps' natural sense of urgency by running competitions in short bursts. This will keep the team rallied and focused.

**SUMMARY: long contests = lost interest**

**That being said, we recommend running competitions that are anywhere from 1 hour (e.g., a prospecting "Power Hour") to 1 month in length.**

That's not to say you should never run longer contests, but make those the exception.

### B. Length in between competitions:

It's important to keep competitions fresh, and that may mean taking minor breaks in between them. Or, it may mean running competitions right after one another, but switching up the behaviors you're motivating, the theme of the competition or the incentive, if you're offering one.

**KEY >>> Keep it Fresh.**



## TIP

IF YOU ARE GOING TO RUN A QUARTERLY CONTEST, YOU COULD ALWAYS MAINTAIN PARTICIPANT ENGAGEMENT BY USING THE "PARENT CONTEST" CONCEPT, WHERE YOU RUN MINI COMPETITIONS AROUND ACTIVITIES THAT FUNNEL UP INTO ONE OVER-ARCHING COMPETITION.

FOR EXAMPLE, IF YOU WERE HAVING A QUARTERLY COMPETITION AROUND DEALS CLOSED, YOU COULD ALSO HAVE MONTHLY COMPETITIONS THAT TRACK PERCENTAGE TO GOAL. THIS WAY, YOU'RE STILL TRACKING ACTIVITIES AND KEEPING YOUR TEAM ENGAGED DAY-TO-DAY, AS YOU WORK TOWARD YOUR ONE QUARTERLY GOAL.

# III: INCENTIVES:

## What kinds have you seen most motivate teams?

The top non-financial motivators for sales reps are competition and recognition. That means you don't necessarily have to attach incentives to your competitions to see results. Sales leaderboards displayed around the office and public recognition aimed at contest leaders can produce serious motivation on their own.

Don't believe us? Here's one great example:

LevelEleven client Kelly Services® ran competitions around 2 different behaviors, using 2 different incentives.

Behavior Competition Motivated:	Incentive:	Overall Win Value (As defined by the percentage of positive sales impact the competition produced):
Quick Wins	\$500	<b>-21%</b>
Face-to-Face Meetings	\$50	<b>65%</b>

Of course, there were several variables in play here, but most would imagine that a \$500 incentive would, at the least, produce a positive win value. And so we arrive yet again at our point: IT'S NOT ALL ABOUT THE INCENTIVES.

You can read more examples of that point here.

On the other hand, incentives don't hurt. They can assist in keeping competitions fresh and participants engaged, and many companies do choose to leverage them. If you'd like to do the same, you can get [15 inexpensive incentive ideas here](#).

If you're interested, [read more about that research here.](#)

## IV: SALES CYCLES: If ours are really long, are competitions still beneficial?

Absolutely. (Predictable, we know.)

We don't encourage only using sales gamification to motivate deals closed anyway. It's all about finding the "magic metric" that works for your team and then motivating that – and for many organizations that means motivating a behavior that leads to sales.

Think about the incentive example we just shared. Kelly found more value in motivating face-to-face meetings than in motivating quick wins. In fact, after using competition to increase face-to-face meetings by 50%, the company saw \$5.8 million in additional revenue.

Find your magic metric, and you'll see added value, too.

That aside, though, motivating the behaviors that lead to sales will help to ensure that your team's interactions with prospects are of high quality.

**Longer sales cycles mean more time for prospects to drop off. Make sure your reps are on top of their game the entire way through.**



**Want to know more?**  
Read the full Kelly story  
in our "Making It Rain"  
eBook!

**TIP**

PARENT CONTESTS ARE A GREAT OPTION WITH LONGER SALES CYCLES, TOO.

# V: TOP PERFORMERS:

The same ones would win every competition at my company – would this really accomplish anything and would it be unhealthy for the rest of the team?

**NOTE:** We actually have an entire eBook that covers this one. Check out “Can Sales Leaderboards Hurt Motivation?” [here](#).

## 1. About the same people winning:

You should consider breaking up competitions by performance levels to maintain participant engagement and motivation.

Ex: When you want to motivate a behavior, create 3 contests around it: 1 for top-level performers, 1 for middle-level performers, 1 for bottom-level performers.

In this case, you don’t have reps at the bottom of the leaderboard staring at the same faces that consistently dominate the top and thinking: *I have no chance to win, so why should I even try?* You have people competing against others on their level, so you’re helping to nudge all of them toward the behavior you’re trying to motivate. **As a result, this collectively raises everyone to levels higher than a one-size-fits-all competition would.**

## 2. About the idea that leaderboards can be unhealthy:

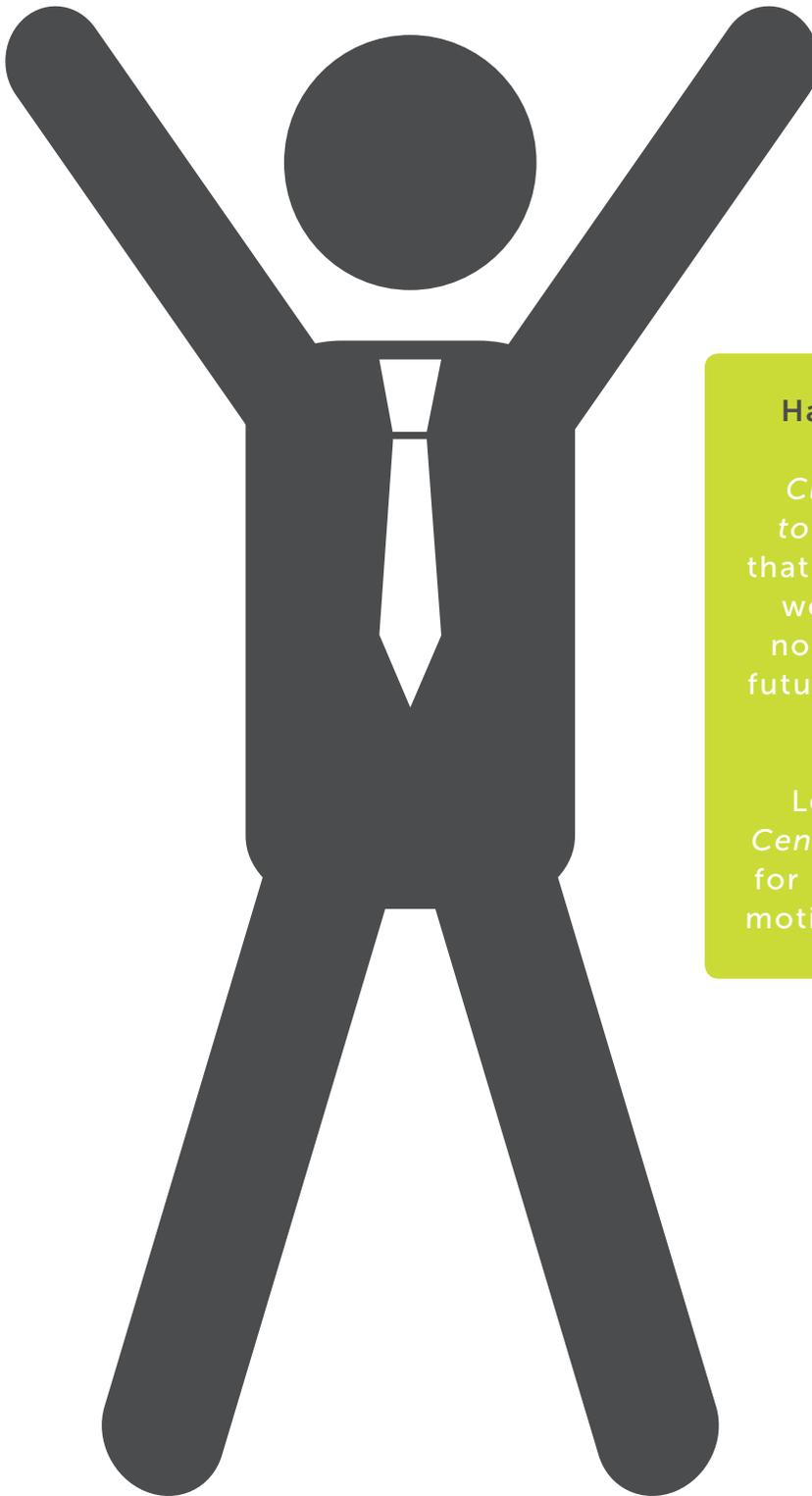
Sometimes they can be, if you’re not taking advantage of the suggestion above, and if you’re constantly pitting people of completely different performance levels against one another. It can lead to frustration and burnout.

But then sometimes it’s just the opposite. One all-encompassing contest can be healthy, since it shows your sales reps where they stand in relation to their peers. For those on the bottom of the leaderboard, this doesn’t only let them know what they should be working toward, but who they can approach for advice on getting there. Time and time again, our clients share stories about peer mentoring increasing when leaderboards go live. Participants are approaching those on the top of the leaderboard for advice on how they can better their own sales habits, too.



[Read more about that here.](#)

# THANKS FOR READING!



**Have more questions on sales gamification?**

*Click here to send them to us.* If we have content that answers your questions, we'll send it your way; if not, we'll look at creating future content around them.

You can also visit *LevelEleven's Resource Center* and *Sales Game Blog* for more resources on sales motivation and gamification!