

REDISCOVER YOUR MOJO

STEVE BAVISTER suggests eight great ways to give yourself a boost if you find yourself flagging

You've banged out the calls all day and not had even a sniff of business. Or maybe you've come away from the last 10 meetings with nothing. Are you losing your touch?

It's easy to stay motivated when things are going well, but hard when they're not. One month you smash it. The next you're struggling to make your numbers. You have a few bad calls and it gets harder to pick up the phone. The last couple of meetings don't come to anything, so you're reluctant to book any more.

Before long you're caught up in a vicious downward spiral. Because you're lacking in motivation you don't put in the effort - and because you don't make any effort you don't achieve the sales.

This reduces your motivation even more - which makes it even more difficult to drive your sales up.

If you get into this situation, you need to find a way to break out of this negative cycle. Here are eight great tips for keeping yourself motivated:

1 ASK WHY

Suppose you visit your doctor with a headache and she hands you a prescription the moment you enter the consulting room. Something wrong surely? Before you can determine the cure for your lack of motivation you need to diagnose the cause.

For Oliver, it was all about his new targets. Last year his numbers were good - so this year they've been doubled. His boss called it a 'stretch' target. Thinking about next year, he sees a lot more effort leading to much lower commission. No wonder his motivation was dropping like a stone.

Sophie, on the other hand, was in a rut. Four years of calling the same people, and having largely the same conversations and outcomes, was taking its toll. She was getting stale - and needed some kind of stimulus to get her juices flowing again.

For Hitesh, the problem was his new area manager. They just didn't get along. Hitesh was used to having the freedom to just get on with his job - and, being a self-motivated type, he had been doing well. His new boss was the worst kind of micro-manager who wanted regular updates and didn't seem to trust Hitesh to do anything. Having been used to running free, he now felt

like a caged animal - lethargic and lacking drive.

And Kate? Well, she just didn't seem to be able to close any more. She'd have calls that led to meetings - and meetings that went fantastically. Then nothing. Back in the day, she'd been the number one closer and now she didn't seem to be able to score even when she was standing in front of an open goal. Had she lost her touch? Would it ever come back?

If you've been used to consistently putting the ball in the back of the net, it's frustrating when you can't do it any more. What about you? If you're not as motivated as you'd like to be, you need to ask why. Maybe you're like Oliver, Sophie, Hitesh or Kate. Or perhaps it's something different in your case.

If the answer doesn't seem obvious, briefly close your eyes and ask why. Then wait. Give your unconscious mind a chance to provide the answer. It will.

2 KNOW YOU'LL HAVE PEAKS AND TROUGHS

Don't panic when your motivation tanks. It happens to everyone. Unless you're a guru like Tony Robbins, you're bound to have times where your get up and go has got up and gone.

Knowing this means you'll keep a sense of perspective when you have a couple of days in which picking up the phone seems impossible. If your lack of motivation lasts longer, you obviously need to take action.

Of course, your motivation issue may not be sales related. You might be hitting your numbers but not hitting it off with your boss. Or you just feel like you need a change in your life.

3 TAKE ACTION

Once you know what's demotivating you, it's not so hard to re-motivate yourself. Motivation is all in the mind. It's an attitude - just a way of thinking about things.

What would it be like if you could switch on your motivation at will? Well you can. Motivation is not something that happens to you - it's something you make happen. The fact is, you're not going to make any sales just sitting around moping because you're not feeling motivated.

Your destiny is in your own hands. Thomas Edison

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famously observed that “genius is 99% perspiration and 1% inspiration” – and the same is true of success and motivation. So take action. Don’t wait till your mojo comes back. Do something to get it back. Get stuck in. Step up your pace.

4 MOTIVATE YOURSELF WITH GOALS

Knowing clearly what you’re working towards, by defining and specifying your goals, unlocks your motivation. When you really, really want something, you naturally take action to achieve it.

“Goals provide the energy source that powers our lives”, says motivation guru Denis Waitley. “One of the best ways we can get the most from the energy we have is to focus it. That is what goals can do for us – concentrate our energy.”

Setting yourself some short-term goals can often help. Don’t just focus on your monthly target. How many calls can you make today? Most salespeople are competitive by nature. Use that to your advantage. What can you do faster or better than you did yesterday, last week, last year – or faster and better than your colleagues?

If you lack motivation, it could be because your goals aren’t compelling enough. Or you don’t have any. Your goal should be to have plenty of really worthwhile goals – then you’ll be motivated!

5 USE THE POWER OF YOUR BODY

There’s a lot of research that shows what you do with your body affects the way you feel.

It turns out that smiling can make you happy, because it floods your body with feel good chemicals. Standing like a confident person can make you feel more confident and powerful.

So why not stand and smile when making calls to get the double benefit of feeling happy and confident – which can go a long way to banishing problems with motivation.

Lack of activity, not enough sleep or eating stodgy food can reduce your energy. Having a healthy lifestyle can improve your motivation. When you’re active you create a virtuous circle – the energy motivates you to get things done, and achieving goals increases your energy and motivation.

6 BE YOUR OWN CHEERLEADER

What you say to yourself matters. If you’re down on yourself (“I’m rubbish!”) you’ll demotivate yourself even more. Keep your internal dialogue positive. Self-belief (“I can do it!”) will help you push through barriers.

When you think “I’m not going to make a sale today”, that’s exactly what will happen. It’s a self-fulfilling prophecy. Be your own cheerleader. Expect success. When you believe in yourself fully you’ll turn a negative situation round much more quickly.

7 STAY ‘YES’ FOCUSED

It’s easy to get discouraged when you’ve had a string of “no’s”. The secret to staying positive is to count every “yes” instead. Focusing on the “no’s” will only get you down – and can lead you into a negative spiral.

If you make 40 calls and only one sale, consider that a success – not 39 failures. When you’re demotivated, celebrate every success, however small. This builds positive associations in the brain that encourage you to keep going and persevere in the face of adversity.

8 REFRESH AND REVIVE

If you’re feeling stale, refresh and revive yourself with some new ideas. Read a book. Watch some videos on YouTube. Try out some new techniques.

It’s all too easy to get into a routine and then into a rut. And the only difference between a rut and a grave is the depth. When you shake up what you’re doing, you’ll suddenly feel more invigorated and more motivated.

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