



Sales Leader Survey Research Brief

Sales Team of the (Near) Future: COVID-19 Changes On The Horizon

54%

of Sales Leaders surveyed
say they will be changing
quotas

38%

of Sales Leaders surveyed will be
adjusting compensation to
match lower expectations

51%

of Sales Leaders surveyed
have cut sales
positions

As states ready their post-pandemic reopening plans, and businesses consider the resumption of their march toward their 2020 go-to-market aspirations, it would be a huge understatement to note that big changes are on the horizon.

Predictions of a “light-switch” style resumption of sales activity are not likely to be true – as both sellers and buyers have made substantial changes to ensure survival through the most chilling part of the pandemic.

Many companies will enter the third quarter of 2020 with reduced staff and expectations, and, amid hope that a thaw is on the horizon, cautious optimism for a restoration of activity.

According to the Brooks Sales Leader Survey for the week ending April 24:

- A majority of companies (54 percent) will be re-entering the market with changed quotas;
- 38 percent will be adjusting the compensation of sales professionals to match the lowered sales expectations;
- A slight majority of firms surveyed (51 percent) have shed sales positions, and the same number will be redefining the sales roles of those who remain, according to the sales leaders surveyed for this week’s litmus test of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their sales organizations.

When those sales teams charge back out into the landscape, they’ll be staying closer to home, according to the survey. More than half of those surveyed believe travel will be substantially mitigated for the balance of the year, and slightly less than half don’t expect in-person client meetings to bounce back right away.

Also falling out of favor in the wake of COVID-19 are trade shows (64 percent) and client entertainment (57 percent).

And, though about 50 percent of respondents expect to be back in front of their clients in person this year, 29 percent of our respondents will require salespeople to wear a face mask during client visits. Another 61 percent will allow the seller to decide whether to wear a face mask with clients, according to our poll.

Finally, the biggest challenge noted in this week’s poll facing sales professionals is simply recouping deals. 89 percent of those surveyed (the highest number yet in the six weeks since the survey began) reported that sales velocity was behind plan – and nearly half said that sales were down significantly.

What is your company doing to help provide structure to its sales teams? We’d love to hear from you, email us at research@thebrooksgroup.com.

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