Inside Sales COVID Response

In the first installment of this study, we surveyed C-Suite leaders at Fortune 500 companies on how COVID-19 impacted the sales function and how their inside sales organizations responded. Based on the survey, we uncovered four key insights.

1. It was hard, but we did it

   - **COMPANY COVID PREPAREDNESS**
     - Made adjustments with smooth transition: 72%
     - Responded "very prepared": 16%
   - **REMOTE WORKING MODEL**
     - Transformed all sales roles to WFH (no travel, no customer visits): 72%
     - Transformed most sales roles to WFH (limited field visits by exception): 32%
     - Implemented hybrid model (select teams in office and/or alternating schedules): 6%
     - Continued business as usual: 2%

   **CHANGES TO BE KEPT AFTER "RETURN TO NORMAL"**
   - Increased communication, motivation, training and coaching programs: 78%
   - Increased use of inside sales/remote sales: 78%
   - Adoption of new sales tech/tools: 70%

2. Leadership matters (and so do tools)

   **MOST SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES WE HAD TO OVERCOME**
   - Maintaining employee motivation/morale: 74%
   - Flexible arrangements for parents/caregivers: 52%

   **MOST SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES WE EXPECT GOING FORWARD**
   - Maintaining employee motivation/morale: 78%
   - Challenges with "on the job" training given working from home: 58%
   - Reduced or delayed budget dollars for investments: 46%
   - Flexible work arrangements for parents/caregivers: 34%
   - Employee churn due to burnout/health concerns/revision of incentives/quotas due to uncertainty in the market: 30%
   - Managing costs to preserve margins: 18%
   - Managing customer expectations, re: field visits: 16%

3. The biggest challenge ahead is motivation and training

4. The world will be different (but we don't yet know how)

   - **THE LONG-TERM COMMITMENTS COMPANIES HAVE MADE RELATED TO COVID**
     - We've announced permanent changes/moves (e.g., permanent transition to WFH, closing offices, etc.): 13%
     - We've announced long-term commitment to flexibility (e.g., permanent option to choose between office and WFH): 24%
     - We've announced near-term commitments (e.g., transition to WFH for 2+ months, with defined end date): 30%
     - We are taking it month-by-month (e.g., no firm commitments beyond 2 months): 33%