

High-Impact Sales Kickoffs

Sales kickoffs (SKOs) are among the most visible—and expensive—investments in sales enablement. Yet too often, they fail to produce lasting impact. Use this checklist as a planning guide to ensure your SKO creates momentum and leads to long-term business outcomes.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

- ☐ Define a single, unifying SKO theme (the “golden thread”)
- ☐ Align all sessions and activities to the theme
- ☐ Limit keynotes to concise, strategy-driven messages
- ☐ Provide clear seller action plans tied to strategic goals

MOTIVATION & TEAM CONNECTION

- ☐ Allocate dedicated time for team-building and morale focused activities
- ☐ Include cross-functional challenges or peer bonding experiences
- ☐ Use structured breakouts or team coaching groups
- ☐ Recognize personal and team achievements

INTERACTIVE EXPERIENCES OVER PASSIVE CONSUMPTION

- ☐ Include role-plays, simulations, or sales practice
- ☐ Use peer panels and customer success stories to contextualize learning
- ☐ Encourage live Q&A, polls, breakout rooms, and gamified exercises
- ☐ Cap passive sessions (e.g., long keynotes) to 10-15% of total time

PRACTICE AND ROLE-PLAYING

- ☐ Dedicate real agenda time to practice selling scenarios
- ☐ Include manager feedback as part of role-plays
- ☐ Use AI or video-based simulations to scale
- ☐ Create certification or checkpoints post-event

CURATED, CREDIBLE GUEST SPEAKERS

- ☐ Vet speakers for credibility, relevance, and ability to connect to your theme
- ☐ Prioritize customers, industry thought leaders, or experts in sales performance
- ☐ Ensure speakers link their message back to seller behavior and outcomes
- ☐ Prep speakers to engage the audience vs. straight presenting

PRE- AND POST-EVENT REINFORCEMENT

- ☐ Provide pre-work (surveys, assessment, videos, knowledge checks)
- ☐ Establish a post-SKO coaching and learning plan
- ☐ Incorporate AI-based simulations or gamified learning
- ☐ Assign accountability partners or coaching groups

MEASUREMENT AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- ☐ Set clear success metrics tied to sales behavior and results
- ☐ Use post-event surveys and performance data (e.g., adoption, revenue impact)
- ☐ Collect manager and peer feedback on skill application
- ☐ Conduct a formal SKO review to capture lessons learned

CADENCE TO SUSTAIN IMPACT

- ☐ Plan for at least 2 SKOs per year (full or mid-year “boosters”)
- ☐ Build a quarterly rhythm to reinforce SKO themes
- ☐ Use internal campaigns to refresh messaging
- ☐ Track progress and learning between SKOs