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Essential Elements of Effective Partner Training Programs

Discover the essential elements of successful partner training, including sales skills, compliance, and which key performance indicators (KPIs) to monitor for driving revenue success.

01. What is Partner Training?

Partner training aligns all stakeholders with your company's goals and values and equips partners with the skills and knowledge needed to drive revenue

Key benefits
Improved performance, better customer service, and increased revenue.

02. Assess Partner Ecosystem

Partner Types
Identify what types of partners are in your ecosystem: resellers, affiliates, distributors, consultants, etc.

Partner Roles
Clarify partner roles. How do different partner types contribute to the sales process and customer success?

Partner Challenges
Pinpoint common obstacles in partner training (lack of engagement, inconsistent performance, key metrics.)

03. Define Training Objectives

Sales Skills
For new partner onboarding and continuous onboarding, partners need to learn and apply effective sales, negotiation, and deal closing techniques.

KPIs: closed-won rates, customer satisfaction scores (CSATs), customer lifetime value (CLV), time to productivity

Product Knowledge
In-depth understanding of products and services.

KPIs: course completion, assessment scores, number of technical support tickets

Company Culture
Understanding the organization's mission, vision, and key policies

KPIs: Anecdotal feedback, surveys, event or meeting participation rates

Compliance
Knowing and following industry and regulatory compliance requirements

Types of Compliance Training:
Data protection, ethical sales practices, anti-corruption, industry-specific regulations.

Processes and Tools
Specific processes and tools required for compliance training (e.g., online compliance courses, regular audits).

KPIs: course completion, assessment scores and pipeline

04. Determine Training Methods

Online Learning
Opt for a blend of multimedia eLearning resources to target partners with different learning preferences and objectives. Formats can include videos, podcasts, live virtual in-person training (vILT) sessions, webinars, microlearning modules, and just-in-time resources like job aids.

In-Person Workshops
For hands-on training experiences, organize in-person training sessions with live demonstrations.

Gamification & Social Learning
Using leaderboards, points, badges, and levels to encourage friendly competition, enhance partner engagement, and drive course completion.

05. Distribute Content & Resources

Training Materials
Videos, documentation, manuals, guides, and case studies.

Tools and Platforms
CRM systems, sales enablement tools, and learning management systems (LMS).

Support Resources
Access to subject matter experts, FAQs, and community forums.

Compliance Tools
Specific tools and processes required for compliance training (e.g., online compliance courses, regular audits).

06. Implement Incentives

Rewards & Recognition
Certifications, badges, and awards incentivize completion of the most up-to-date partner training modules.

Sales Incentives
Bonuses, commissions, volume discounts, prizes, and other financial incentives will keep partners motivated to sell.

Career Developments
Opportunities for advancement and professional growth such as continuing professional education credits help maintain partners investment in ongoing training.

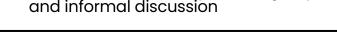**Promote the Perks**
Make partners aware of the incentives your company offers for active participation in partner training and improved sales; consider an internal communication strategy or a training module that details training recognition perks.

07. Integrate Technology

Online Partner Training Tools
Use a scalable LMS that integrates into business systems like CRMs, HRIS, and sales platforms.

Data Analytics
Leverage reporting and data to track partner onboarding and training progress, and identify areas for improvement.

Collaboration Platforms
Encourage social learning and real-time collaboration with LMS integrations for business productivity tools like Teams, Webex, and Zoom.

08. Monitor & Optimize

Partner Program KPIs include

- Partner program enrollment numbers
- Time to productivity for onboarding partners
- Net Promoter Score (NPS) for existing partners
- Total or Average Partner program revenue
- Profitability Index per partner
- Partner pipeline and close rates
- Feedback from surveys, focus groups, and informal discussion

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