

The background features several circular gauges and arrows, suggesting a technical or data-driven theme. The gauges have numerical scales, and the arrows indicate a clockwise direction. The overall color scheme is a gradient of dark blue and purple.

# SALES MEETING AND CONTESTS

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# CONTENT OUTLINE

- Introduction
- Sales meeting: planning and staging
- Type of sales meeting
- Sales contests
- Objective of sales contest
- Formats of contest
- Summary
- Self assessment questions
- References/ suggested reading

# INTRODUCTION

- The sales personnel/salespeople strive for the better performance in the sales organisation beyond routine fair work. Some of them are
- The real self-starters, whose achievement is self-motivated and no extra push other than the challenge of the job itself is required.
- on the other hand,
- most of the sales personnel do not strive for performance beyond routine fair work without additional motivation.
- For the purpose of motivation among the salespeople; sales management uses two main mechanisms for stimulating them: sales meetings and sales contests.

# SALES MEETING

- Meeting is the session of sharing ideas, notion, facts and experiences from one to another colleagues.
- In the sale organization, the meeting on sales and related matters are to be held. The sales meetings are important both for communication and motivational purposes among the sales people at the top or lower level in the management. When sales personnel are on the road without the day-to-day opportunity for employer communication and supervision, periodic group meetings are valuable for exchanging information and idea. They also provide occasions for motivating individual sales personnel through group pressures.
- Most important, they provide occasions for management to stimulate the group to raise its standards as to reasonable and acceptable performance.

## SALES MEETINGS: PLANNING AND STAGING

- For the purpose of planning for a sales meeting; the five major decisions:
- (i) defining the specific training aims;
- (ii) deciding meeting content;
- (iii) determining methods of conducting the meeting;
- (iv) deciding how to execute (hold) the meeting; and
- (v) deciding how to evaluate the results; are taken.
- Thus, once again, the A-C-M-E-E approach also assures that sales meetings, like sales training programs, are fully planned and effectively staged.

# Aims

- Aims of meetings include
  - (i) improving the quality of sales force reports;
  - (ii) orienting sales personnel on the advertising program and showing how they can tie in their efforts with it;
  - (iii) increasing the effectiveness with which sales personnel use their time' and
  - (iv) introducing new services (such as inventory control assistance) for customers.
- Purpose of sales meeting
  - a) Recognize accomplishments
  - b) Brainstorming
  - c) Market changes
  - d) product updates

# OBJECTIVES OF SALES MEETINGS

- **Introducing New products**
- **Ideas for higher sales**
- **Reward and recognition**
- **Revenue generation**
- **Sales skill development**
- **Communicating changes**
- **Best practices**

# Content

- The contents of a meeting mean to plan the agenda of meeting. All agenda, by definition, is a list or an outline of things to be considered or discussed during the meeting.
- The content derives directly from the meeting's specific aims. For example, there is an industry rumor that a strong competitor is about to introduce a far-fetched new product and company sales personnel have high levels of apprehension.
- Thus, a meeting may be planned with the specific aim of reducing apprehension through informing sales personnel on what the company knows about the competitor's forthcoming new product and the company's plans for neutralize it. In this situation, content might include:
  - (i) what we know about the far-fetched new product;
  - (ii) what we think the trade's reactions will be and why;
  - (iii) what your company is doing; and
  - (iv) what you should do and how?

# Method

- The methods used in conducting a sales meeting depend upon
  - the aims
  - content,
  - time availability and
  - meeting place.
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- Most local sales meetings, held rather frequently, are short and participative in nature. Regional and national sales meetings, held less often, run for two or more days, have more ambitious aims and wider content, so they utilize a mix of methods.

# Execution

- The execution phase is of key importance to meeting success.
- Decisions are reached on speakers, seminar leaders, meeting site, and time. Still other execution decisions, outwardly trivial, contribute significantly to a meeting's success or failure. Among these seemingly trivial decisions is room arrangement. Most sales meetings, because of their underlying purposes of communicating and motivating, require active participation by attendees.
- The conventional classroom, as found in most educational institutions, is setup for the lecture method; seats in rows and columns.
- The workshop is appropriate when smaller groups are to hold buzz sessions on particular topics and report round tables are preferred, but rectangular ones are also used.
- The inverted V-shape and the seminar or "British square" are used where considerable participation by the attendees is important.
- Among other seemingly trivial execution decisions are those on audio visual equipment and supplies, provision of materials to attendees (including pads and pencils), timing of breaks and refreshments, and starting time and closing time.
- Inappropriate decisions on any of these detract from a meeting's effectiveness.

# Evaluation

- The meeting planners often neglect the evaluation phase. If management desires to improve meeting effectiveness then it is very much important aspect. The basis for evaluation should be whether
- The meeting accomplished its aims.
- To determine this, participant feedback is necessary.
- For this purpose the meeting planners may develop a sales meeting evaluation form.
- The best practice is to design a new form to evaluate each sales meeting held.

## TYPES OF SALES MEETING

- The following are the types of sales meeting:-
- National sales meetings
- Regional sales meetings
- National and regional sales meetings: executive resistance
- Local sales meetings
- Traveling and remote-control sales meetings

- **National sales meetings**

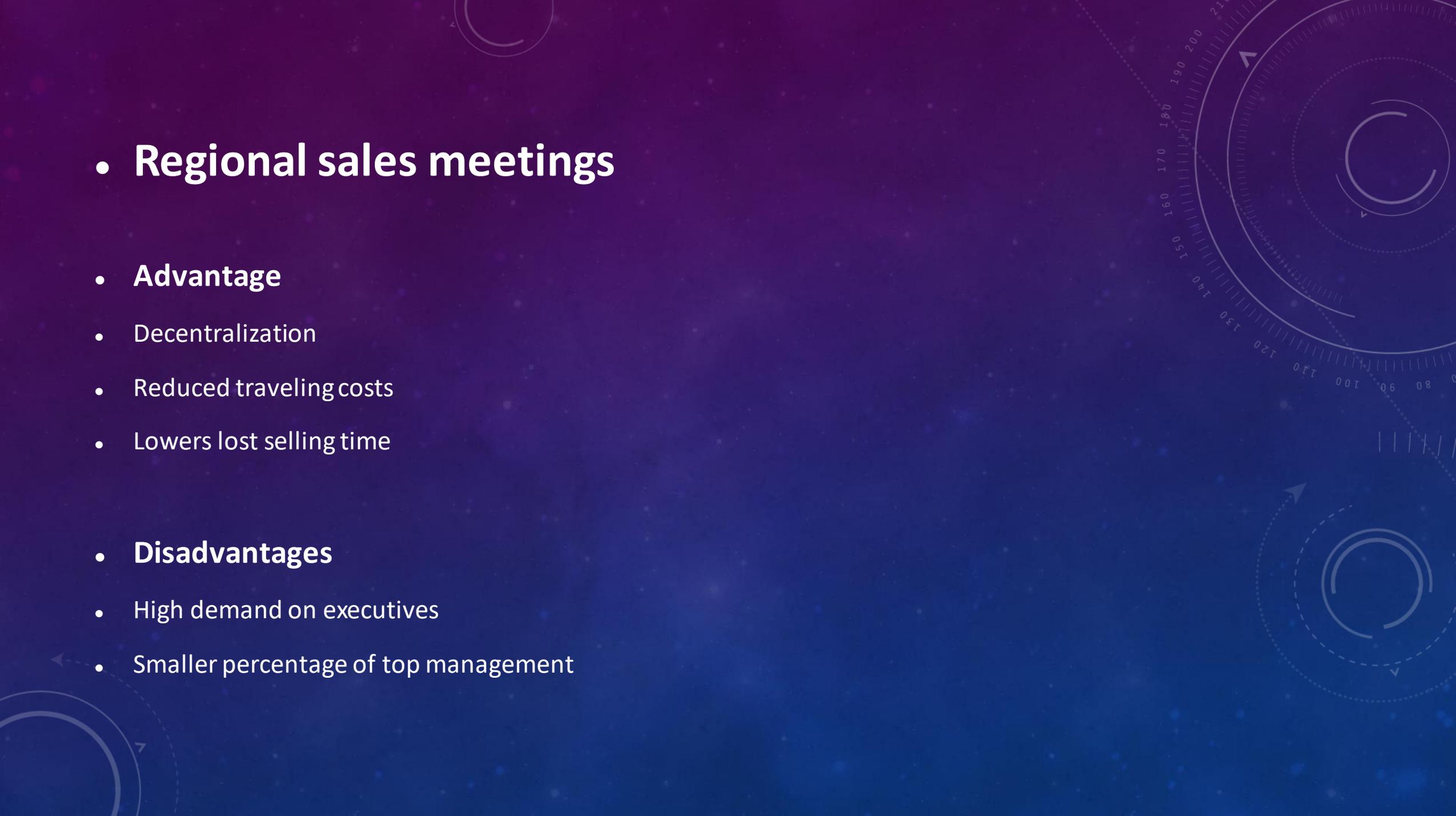
- To elaborate the burning issues in competitive market, the national sales meetings are to be held by the sales organisations. The costs of bringing the entire sales force to a central site are substantial, but national sales meetings are sometimes appropriate.

- **Advantage:-**

- Comprehensive change in policies
- Standardized explanation and answer
- Common platform
- Better coordination

- **Disadvantages**

- High costs
- Disruption of routine
- Convenient time problem



- **Regional sales meetings**

- **Advantage**

- Decentralization
- Reduced traveling costs
- Lowers lost selling time

- **Disadvantages**

- High demand on executives
- Smaller percentage of top management

## Local sales Meeting

- **Advantages:**

- Strength is in formality
- Ample time for each person
- Better acquaintance
- Group identity

- **Disadvantage:**

- Very small to be motivated for a long time
- No opportunity to understand strategic
- Long term goals
- Casual approach but important to manage individual territory & sales

## Traveling and remote-control sales meetings

- To reduce cost and time expenditure certain forms of sales meetings are conducted by closed-circuit television, sales meetings by telephone, sales meetings at home, and as the traveling sales meeting.
- Closed-circuit television: Closed-circuit television enables a company to hold several sales meetings. The program is live at one meeting site and is telecast to others, thus retaining much of the inspirational value of the live show without incurring costs and inordinate losses of selling time.
- Sales meetings by telephone: Telephone conference calls are used for small group meetings and discussions. Users say the group should be no larger than twenty. The meeting is conducted like other small-group meetings.
- Sales meetings at home: Seeking to reduce the time and costs of sales meetings, some companies mail recordings or printed materials, to sales personnel at their homes.
- Traveling sales meetings: Certain meetings require numerous physical props. For instance, a manufacturer introducing a new product line may want to display and demonstrate each new product

## SALES CONTESTS

- **A special selling campaign offering incentives in the form of prizes or awards beyond the compensation plan called sales contest.**
- **The purpose of sales contests is to provide extra incentives to increase sales volume, to bring in more profitable sales volume, or to do both. Corresponding to Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory; sales contests aim to fulfil individual needs for achievement and recognition-both motivational factors. In terms of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, sales contests aim to fulfil individual needs for esteem and self-actualization both higher-order needs. In addition, sales contests develop team spirit, boost morale by making jobs more interesting, and make personal selling efforts more productive.**

## OBJECTIVES OF SALES CONTESTS

- Sales contests are aimed to accomplish the following objectives:
- I. To obtain new customers.
- II. To secure larger orders per sales call.
- III. To push slow moving items, high-margin goods, or new products.
- IV. To overcome a seasonal sales slump.
- V. To sell a more profitable mix of products.
- VI. To improve the performance of distributors' sales personnel.
- VII. To promote seasonal merchandise.
- VIII. To obtain more product displays by dealers.
- IX. To get reorders.
- X To promote special deals to distributors, dealers, or both

## FORMATS OF CONTEST

- **The contest formats are classified into two groups:**
- **Direct format:- A direct format has a contest theme describing the specific objective, such as obtaining new accounts, for example; Let' s go after new customers.**
- **Novelty format:- A novelty format uses a theme, which focuses upon a current event, sport, or the like, as in Let's hoot for hidden treasure (find new customers)**
- **A format should be timely, and its effectiveness is enhanced if it coincides with an activity in the news. The theme should bear an analogous relationship to the specific contest objective-for example, climbing successive steps on a ladder can be made analogous to different degrees of success, experienced at different times in persuading dealers to permit the erection of product displays. Finally, the theme should lend itself to contest promotion.**

# Contest prizes

- **There are four kinds of contest prizes:**
- Cash,
- merchandise,
- travel, and
- special honors or privileges.
- 1). **Cash:** The cash as an incentive weakens as an individual's unfulfilled needs; which are pushed farther up in the need of hierarchy.
- 2). **Merchandise:** Merchandise is superior to cash in respects. Winners have permanent evidence of their achievement. The merchandise prize is obtained at wholesale, so it represents a value larger than the equivalent cash.
- 3). **Travel:** Travel awards are popular. Travel awards generally provide trips for winners and their spouses, this being advisable both to obtain the spouse's motivational support and to avoid the spouse's opposition to solo vacation trips by the salesperson.
- 4). **Special honours or privileges:** This award has many forms: a letter from a top executive recognizing the winner's superior performance, a loving cup, a special trip to a home office meeting, or membership in a special group or club has certain privileges.

# Awarding the prizes for sales contests

- It is a good idea to make it possible for everyone to win to stimulate widespread interest in the contest. This means that the basis for awards should be chosen with care. Contest planners recommend that present performance levels be taken into account-to motivate the average or inexperienced salesperson along with the star performer-and the basis of award be for improvement rather than total performance.
- 1). Contest Duration: Contest duration is important in maintaining the interest of sales personnel. Contests run for periods as short as a week and as long as a year.
- 2). Contest Promotion: Effective contest promotion is important. To most sales personnel a contest is nothing new. A clever theme and attractive prizes may arouse interest, but a planned barrage of promotional material develops enthusiasm. A teaser campaign sometimes precedes the formal contest announcement; at other times, the announcement comes as a dramatic surprise. As the contest progresses, other techniques hold and intensify interest. Results and standings are reported at sales meetings or by daily or weekly bulletins.

# Evaluation of contests

- There are two times when management should evaluate a sales contest-before and after. Reevaluation aims to detect and correct weaknesses, Post-evaluation seeks insights helpful in improving future contests. Both pre and post evaluations cover alternatives, short- and long-term effects, design, fairness, and impact upon sales force morale.
- **1. The contest versus alternatives:** If serious defects exist in key aspects of sales force management, a sales contest is not likely to provide more than a temporary improvement. The underlying purpose of all sales contests is to provide extra incentives to increase sales volume, to bring in more profitable volume, or to do both-this purpose is 'not accomplished if sales force management has basic weaknesses.
- **2. Short and long term effects:** A sales contest accomplishes its pose if it increases sales volume, brings in more profitable volume, or does both in the short and the long term. successful contests so boost the spirits of sales personnel that there is a beneficial carryover effect.
- **3. Design:** A well-designed contest provides motivation to achieve the underlying purpose, while increasing the gross margin earned on sales volume by at least enough to pay contest costs. The contest format, whether direct or novel, should tie in directly with the specific objectives, include easy-to-understand and fail' contest rules, and lend itself readily to promotion.
- **4. Fairness:** All sales persolli'1el should feel that the contest format and roles give everyone a fair chance of winning the more attractive awards.
- **5. Impact upon sales force morale:** Successful sales contests result in permanently higher levels of sales force morale. If the contest format causes personal rivalries, it may have the counterproductive effect of creating jealousy and antagonism among the sales force. Even if sales personnel compete for individual awards, it is often advisable to organize teams and place the emphasis on competition among teams for recognition rather than among individuals for personal gain.

# Objections of sales contests

- **Only one- fourth departments use sales contests. The remaining give the standard objections:**
- 1. Salespeople are paid for their services under provisions of the basic compensation plan, and there is no reason to reward them further for performing regular duties.
- 2. High-caliber and more experienced sales personnel consider sales contests infantile and silly.
- 3. Contests lead to unanticipated and undesirable results, such as increased returns and adjustments, higher credit loss, and overstocking of dealers.
- 4. Contests cause salespeople to bunch sales during the competition, sales slumps occur both before and after the contest.
- 5. The disappointment suffered by contest losers cause a general decline in and sales force morale.
- 6. Contests are temporary motivating devices and, if used too frequently, have a narcotic effect. No greater results in the aggregate are obtained with contests than without them.
- 7. The competitive atmosphere generated by a sales contest weakens team spirit.

## SUMMARY

- **To stimulate sales personnel sales meetings and sales contests are two main means in the sales organisations. Sales meetings provide opportunities for motivating and communicating with individual sales personnel and for strengthening group identification. Sales contests provide incentives to increase profitable sales volume and achieve more specific objectives. Sales meetings and sales contests require thorough planning and effective implementation. The judicious use of meetings and contests builds individual and sales force morale and helps to accomplish company goals.**

## • SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

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- 1. What do you mean by Sales-meeting? What steps may be followed to conduct a meeting.
- 2. Why the sales meetings have become so important in success of firm?
- 3. What are the objectives of a sales meeting and sales contests?
- 4. Explain the types of sales meeting and sales contests.
- 5. Explain the role of sales meeting and sales contests to improve Sales-Force's Productivity and performance?

## REFERENCES/SUGGESTED READINGS

- Stanton and Spiro, 'Management of a Sales Force', McGraw Hill.
- Anderson, Joseph, and Bush, 'Professional Sales Management', McGraw Hill.
- Robert J. Calvin, 'Sales Management', Tata McGraw Hill.
- Dr. Surinder Singh Kundu 'sales management'