

ESN: Should we keep the best salespeople when they don't follow the rules?

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Top performers who bypass the rules may seem indispensable, but they undermine trust, transparency, and cooperation. In the medium term, their collective impact costs more than their individual performance.

They are often the most effective. Those who sign where others struggle. Those who bring in revenue and keep the business running when times are tough. They are looked at with admiration... and sometimes with discomfort. Because behind the performance, there are methods that are unsettling.

Let's take an example. A Business Manager opens a prospect account that was clearly assigned to a colleague, without notifying anyone. They don't communicate the end of their consultants' projects, and discreetly start them on new projects, without the team or even the manager being aware of their availability. They meet with candidates but do not record them in the ATS, progressing alone on their own, and only announcing them once the start is confirmed. On the surface, they are autonomous, quick, results-oriented. In reality, they break the collaboration mechanisms on which the organization relies.

And if we let it happen? The negative effects are quick to appear. Rules lose credibility: why follow them if some escape without consequences? The atmosphere becomes wary among salespeople. Everyone distrusts each other, avoids sharing information, keeps their projects secret. Distrust also settles in towards management, accused of turning a blind eye to unethical behavior simply because it brings results. The company's values become a subject of mockery.

Of course, in the short term, all this may seem secondary. We think that revenue compensates, that the important thing is that "it works". Some even claim that their energy should be a source of inspiration for others. But in the medium term, it destroys what keeps a team standing: **trust, transparency**, the desire to play **as a team**.

A good salesperson is not just someone who sells. It's someone who sells **without harming others around them**. Otherwise, it's no longer an asset, it's a weakness disguised as strength.