Does Your Sales Comp Plan Pay for What Your Strategy Needs?

A 12-question alignment check for founders and sales leaders

Mark Yes (2 pts), Not sure (1 pt), No (0 pts), or N/A if a question doesn't apply to your business.

Part 1: Plan Design (Questions 1-9)	Yes (2)	Not sure (1)	No (0)	N/A
1. Can you name the one or two outcomes your strategy depends on this year (new customers, expansion, margin, retention, a new product)?	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Does the plan have a metric that directly measures and rewards each of those outcomes?	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Is most of the variable pay tied to those outcomes, rather than to a general bookings number?	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Does the plan protect margin, for example through margin thresholds or commission rates tied to price realization?	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Is the plan designed so a rep can't easily reach quota by pulling deals forward or splitting one deal into several?	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. Does the plan have safeguards (caps, thresholds, or review) against an unexpectedly large payout you wouldn't want to repeat?	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Does the plan pay on the right unit for your growth goal (for example, new customer count versus new customer revenue), and was that a deliberate choice?	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Is the way the plan treats new business versus renewals and expansions a deliberate choice that matches your strategy?	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. Has the plan run for the full year without mid-year patches or custom fixes?	☐	☐	☐	☐

Part 2: Operations & Administration (Questions 10-12)	Yes (2)	Not sure (1)	No (0)	N/A
10. Can a rep explain how their commission is calculated on a typical deal in under 30 seconds, and trust the result?	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. Are commissions paid on a consistent, predictable schedule that reps understand?	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. Can your finance or operations team calculate monthly payouts without manual workarounds?	☐	☐	☐	☐

How to Score

Score **Design** (questions 1-9) and **Operations** (questions 10-12) separately. Divide your points earned by 2 times the number of questions you actually answered (skipping N/A), and multiply by 100.

- **80% or more:** Well aligned. Revisit at least once a year or when there is a significant change in strategy.
- **55% to 79%:** Mixed results; some areas deserve a closer look.
- **Under 55%:**
  - **Design:** Your plan may be paying for behavior that isn't what your strategy depends on, so a design review is a smart next step.
  - **Operations:** Payouts carry manual effort and risk, so outsourcing the calculations may help.

An illustrative framework from ZandiaX, not a diagnosis of any specific plan. Happy to talk through your answers, no obligation.

Book a free audit at zandiax.com