mindtickle

The Definitive Guide to Measuring Sales Readiness

The age of sales readiness is here

It’s an exciting time to be a sales leader. The past year has brought challenges across all industries — and sales is no exception.

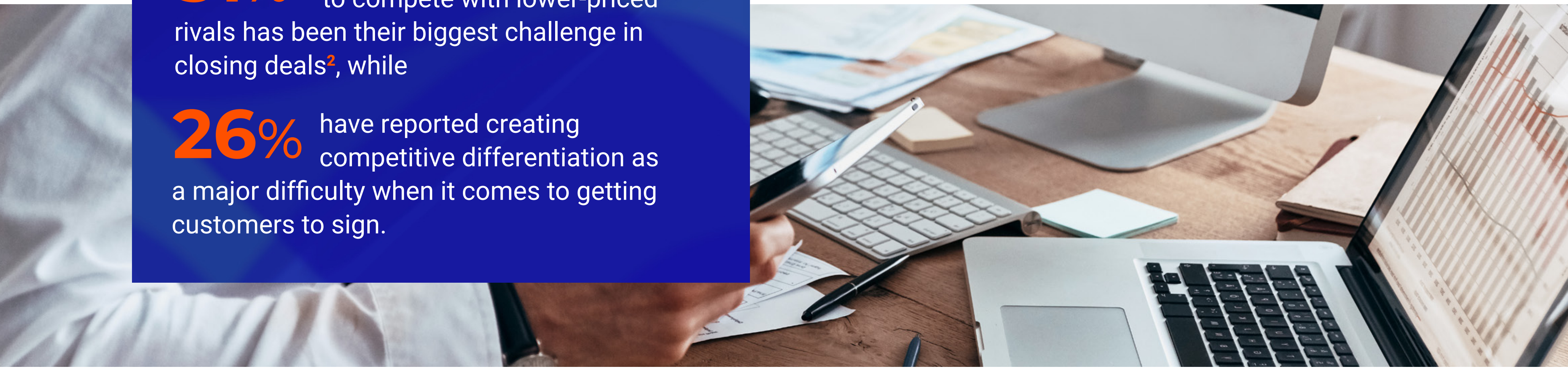
With most businesses now operating remote-first, customers have adopted more of a self-service model[1] when it comes to research during the sales cycle. This makes the interactions reps *do* have with customers all the more important. On top of this, the landscape is also more competitive than ever.

31% of sales professionals say having to compete with lower-priced rivals has been their biggest challenge in closing deals[2], while

26% have reported creating competitive differentiation as a major difficulty when it comes to getting customers to sign.

The key to mitigating these challenges is by equipping your salesforce with the skills they need to succeed in any customer-facing situation. From competitive intel to new product launches, it’s vital reps’ skills are nurtured continuously and routinely assessed to ensure they’re at the top of their selling game in an ever-changing market.

This guide outlines the metrics to track so you’re assured sellers continually retain knowledge, develop competencies, and practice skills. Measuring these activities not only empowers managers to course correct where necessary but ultimately prepares your customer-facing teams to “meet the selling moment.”



SOURCE 1. www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/marketing-and-sales/our-insights/these-eight-charts-show-how-covid-19-has-changed-b2b-sales-forever#
2. https://99firms.com/blog/sales-statistics/#gref

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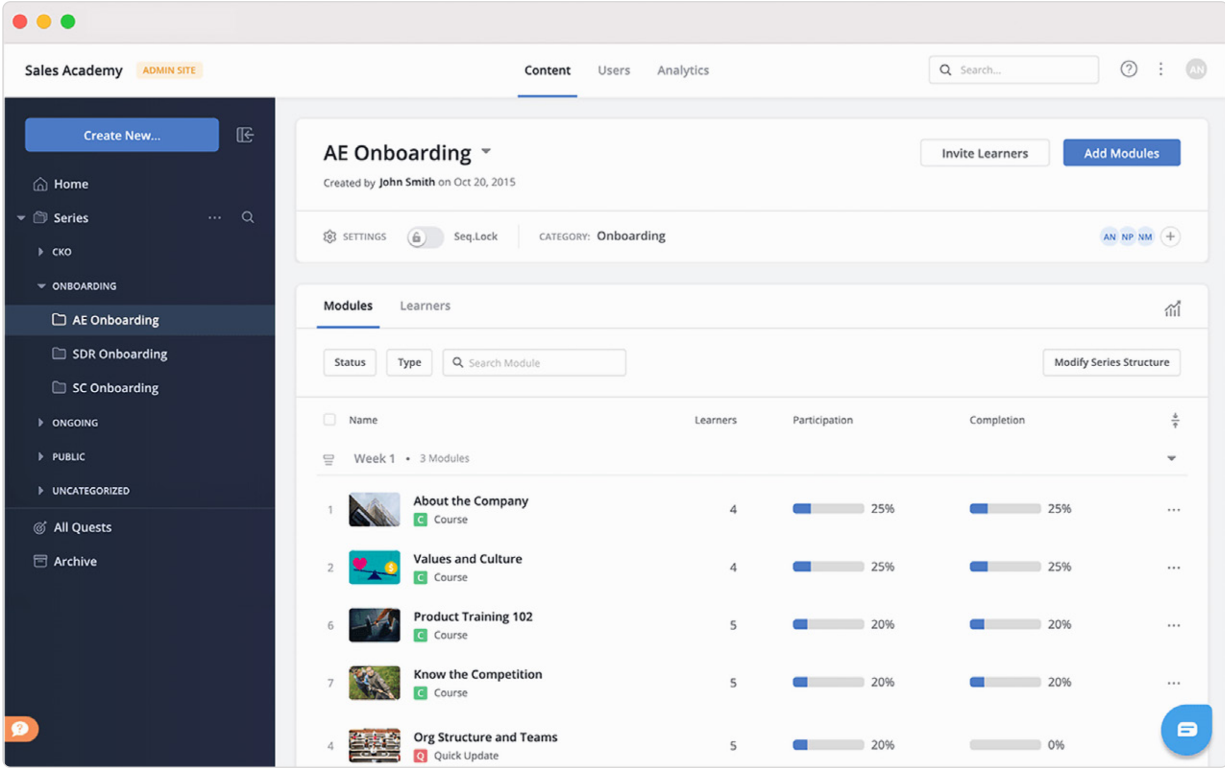
Sales onboarding & ramp up



Getting sellers up to speed can be a combination of self-paced learning activities, bootcamps or instructor-led training, on-the-job learning, and one-on-one coaching. Every organization approaches onboarding differently but no matter what, there are key metrics to track progress and success.

KEY METRICS TO TRACK

- Time to completion
- Time to first deal
- Successful onboarding completion
- Average ramp time for new hires
- Annual rep attrition rate
- Annual number of new hires

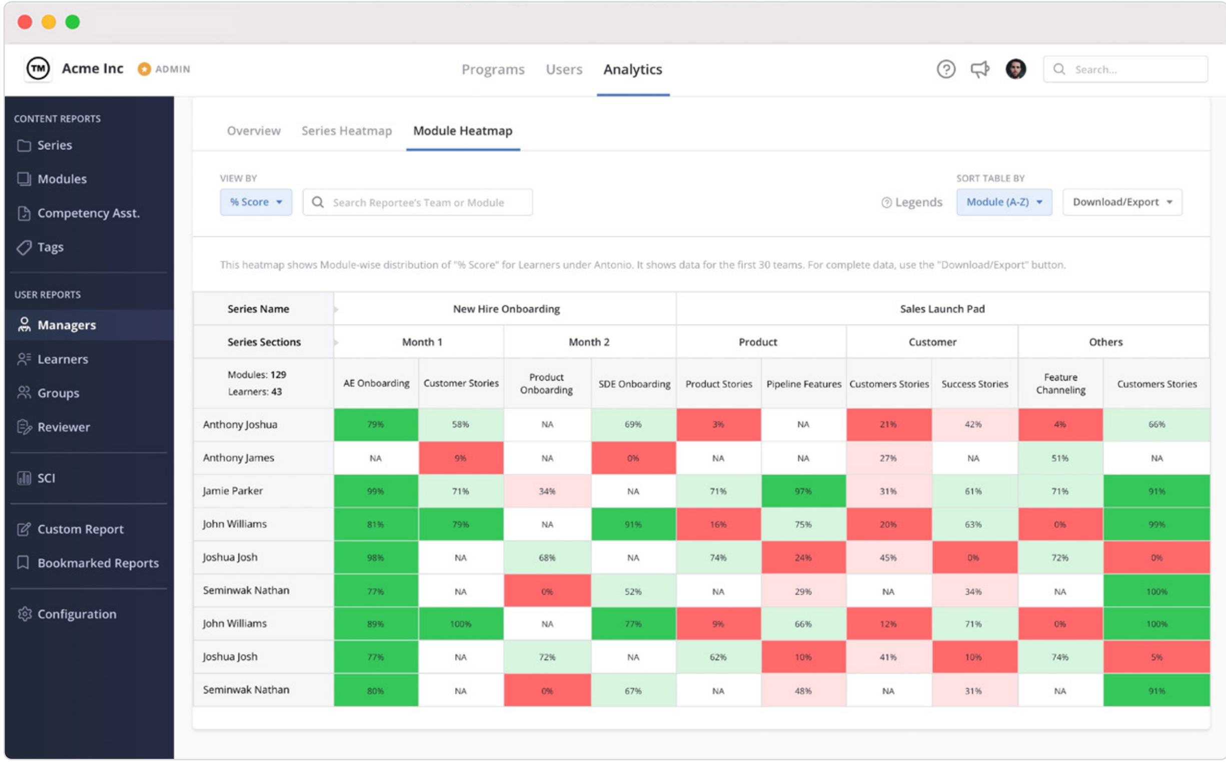
Tip! Drill down to each rep's performance scores to see where they may need help with additional or customized training at their own pace.

Most onboarding programs have milestones that are associated with specific competencies. Evaluating your reps this way identifies any gaps in their skills and knowledge during the onboarding process.

WHAT ELSE TO CONSIDER

- Use data to uncover where reps/teams excelled
- Evaluate where reps/teams lagged
- Compare results with other reps, teams, and regions
- See how the current cohort compares with the other cohorts or the best performing cohorts

Sales everboarding
(ongoing readiness)



By providing your salesforce with regular, spaced-out courses in the form of bite-sized updates, you'll be able to identify the soft and hard skills of the best sellers. You can then replicate those reps' "profiles of success" across teams.

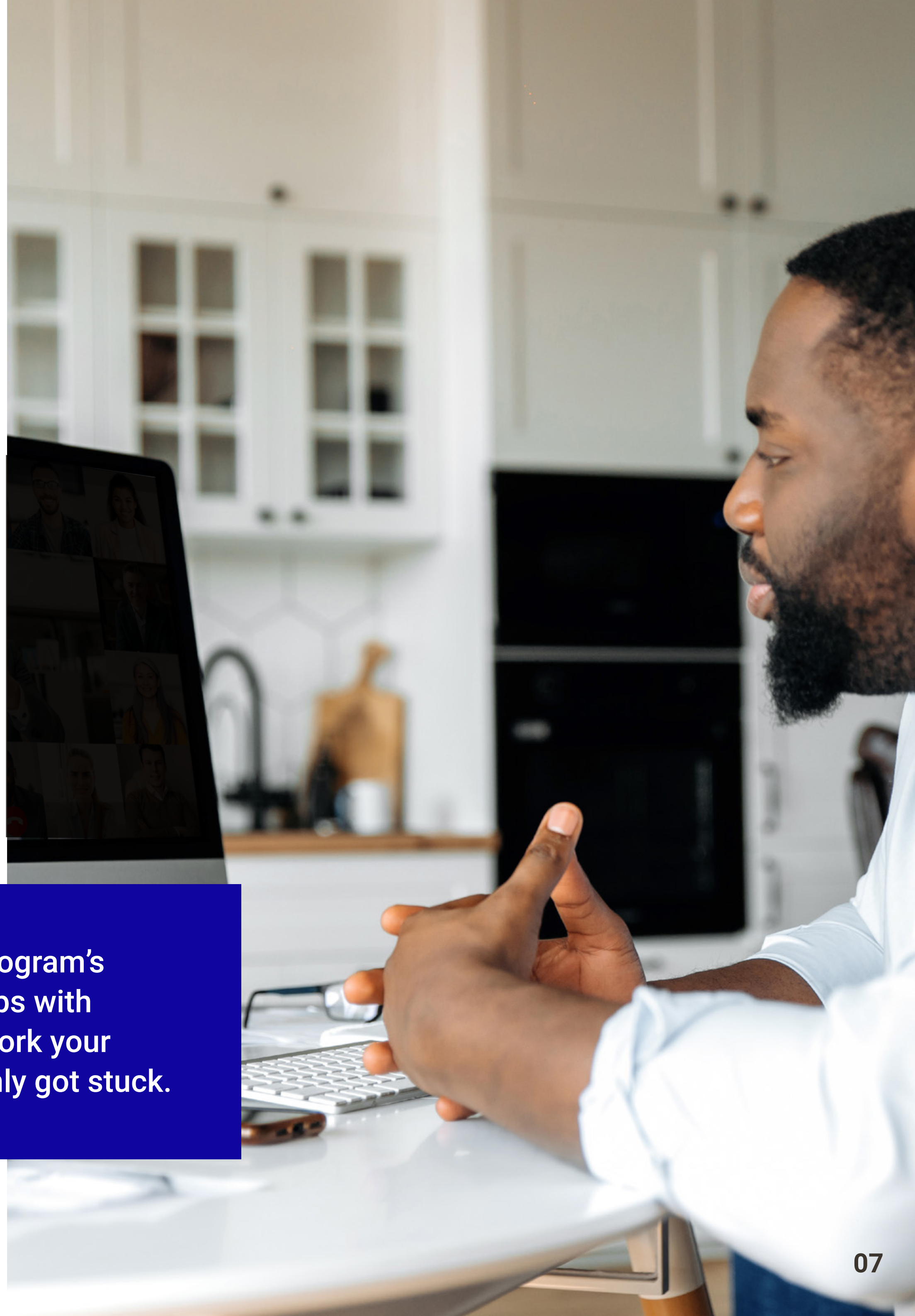
KEY METRICS TO TRACK

- Seconds of training videos watched
- Pages of documents read
- Correct answers on assessment quizzes
- Responses to assessment questions
- Overall team performance
- Certification completions
- Rep feedback for on program efficacy
- Overall engagement
- % of reps hitting quota
- Win rates by deal stage
- Average deal size
- Amount and frequency of upsells
- Average deal cycle time

With these metrics in mind, you'll be able to track and analyze ongoing performance on an individual level and develop customized enablement programs for skill and knowledge building based on your findings.

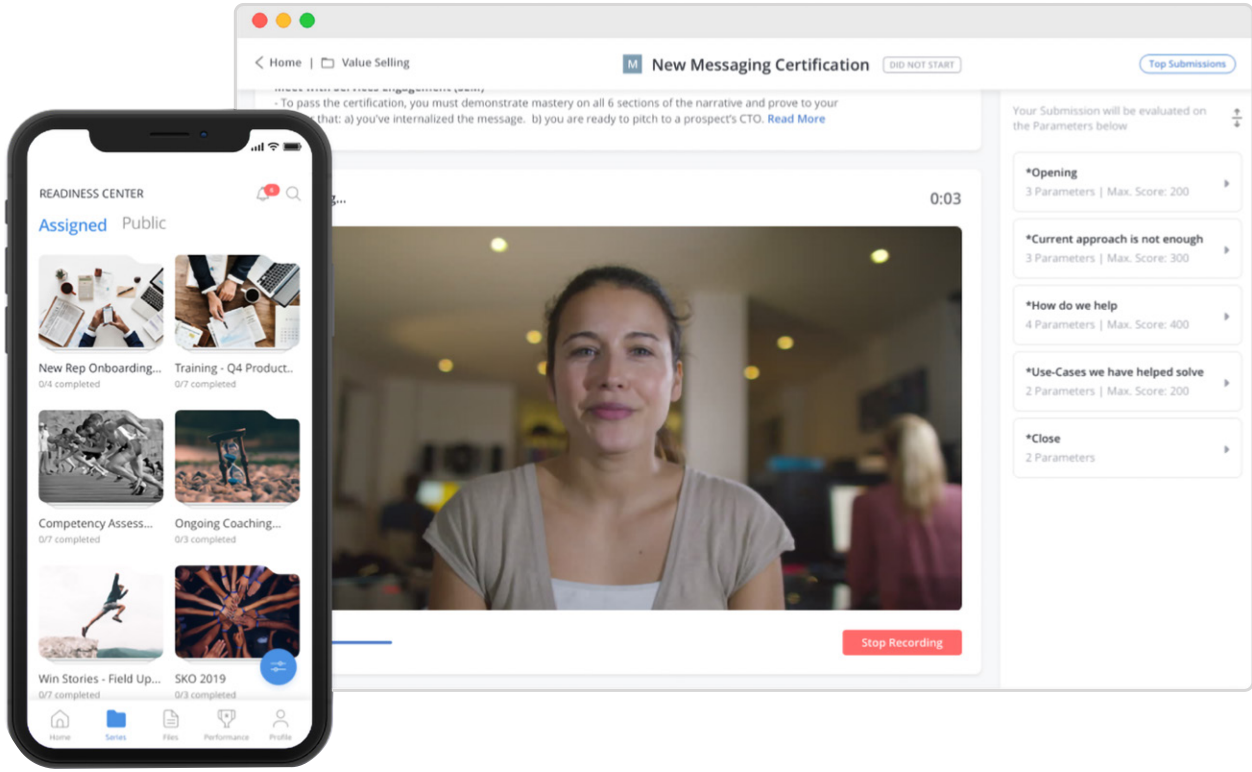
WHAT ELSE TO CONSIDER

- Measure the level of rep's completion and engagement with new content
- Evaluate and score reps on new knowledge and skills
- Compare results across reps, teams, or regions
- Assess the effectiveness of training by looking at seller feedback



Tip! Use analytics to improve your learning program's efficacy. By combining feedback from reps with an evaluation of average scores, you'll be able to rework your questions and content based on where reps commonly got stuck.

Practice & role-play



Enabling sellers to practice and apply knowledge through recording demos, presentations, and pitches not only hones their skills but provides managers with data that can drive coaching conversations.

KEY METRICS TO TRACK

- Messaging consistency
- Topics discussed
- Meeting/presentation length
- Speech pace
- Filler word usage
- Level of enthusiasm
- Scores on evaluation competencies
- Time to start and complete tasks

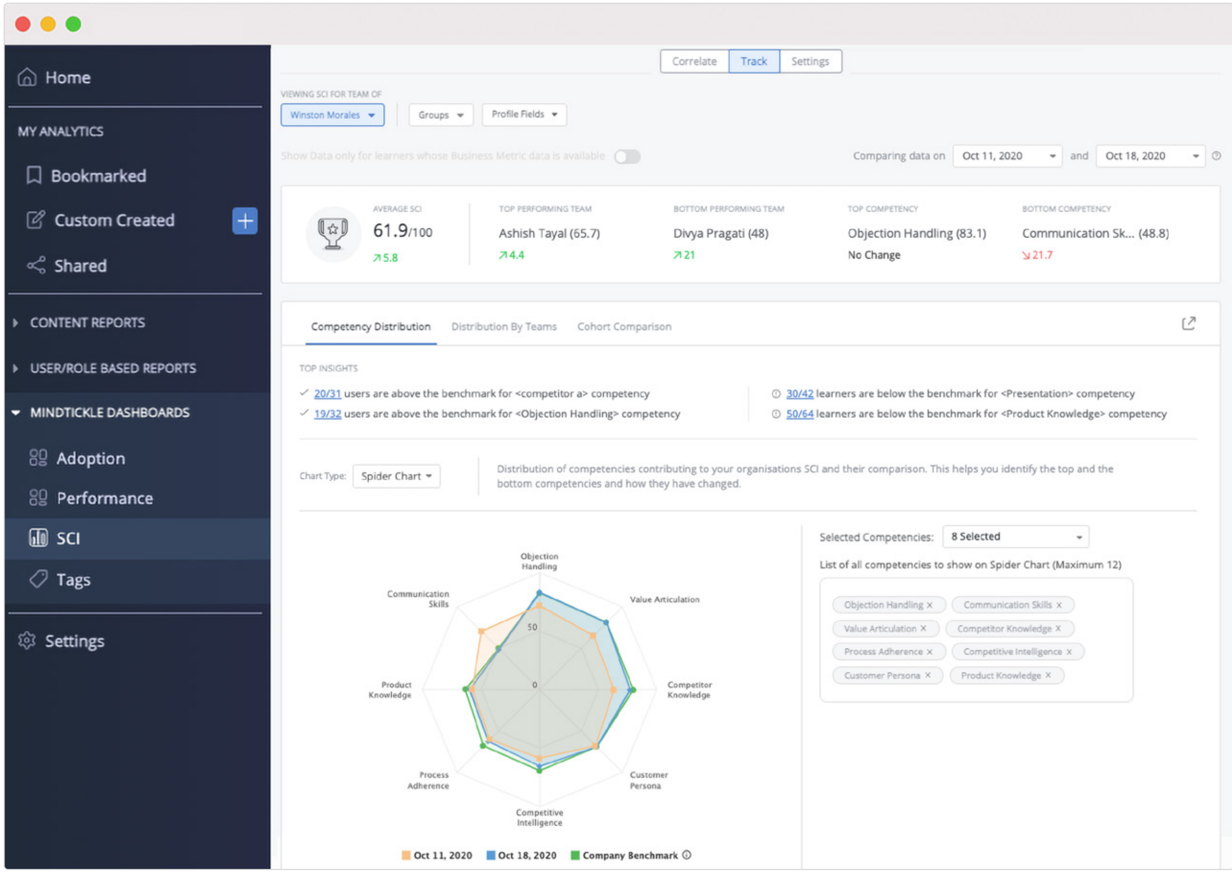
Manually evaluating your sellers with this level of granularity would be a near-impossible task. If you're using a sales readiness platform — especially one with AI-powered language processing — you can collect data on reps' role-play activities, leverage AI to quickly and more efficiently use that data to identify each rep's unique challenges and coach them accordingly.

WHAT ELSE TO CONSIDER

- See if sellers receiving quality, timely feedback from managers
- Gauge how many times a seller practiced by viewing the number of drafts alongside their final scores
- Look for proficiency gaps by analyzing average scores across competencies

Tip! Create a model pitch to measure sellers against. With AI, you can automatically transcribe and extract keywords from the model pitch and compare to your reps' submissions.

Sales coaching



Build a culture of continuous learning by using data to drive one-on-one, structured coaching conversations. Coaching helps reps gain confidence in their selling abilities and provides managers instant visibility into skill gaps so they can course correct.

KEY METRICS TO TRACK

- Monthly average users
- Completion rates
- Average assessment scores
- Pipeline management before and after training
- Coaching data organized by region, department, teams and individuals
- Individual core skills and competencies
- Your sales team's overall productivity and efficiency
- Sales performance tied to company targets
- Strengths and weaknesses of your teams
- Coaching adherence or habits of different teams and managers

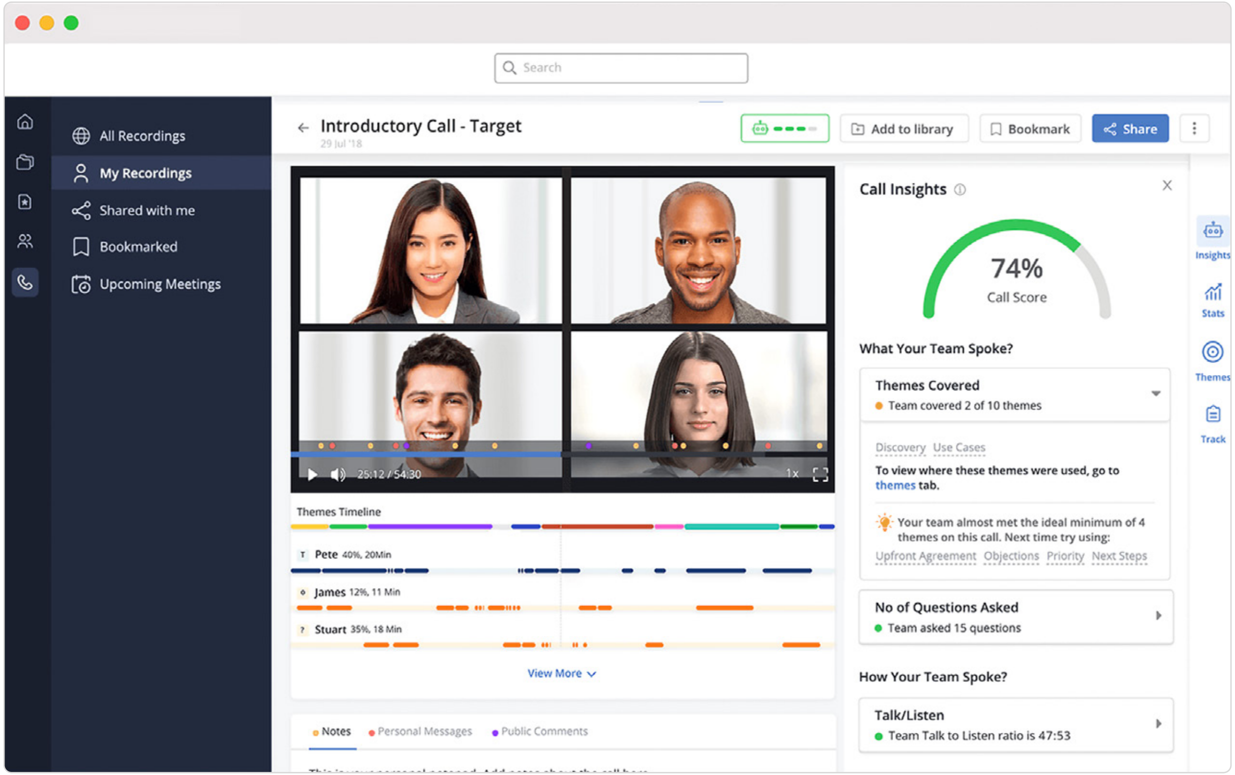
Tip! Identify behavioral as well as soft and hard skills of the best reps and use that data to replicate a "profile of success” across teams.

One-on-one coaching not only builds their skills, but it also helps you achieve more predictable revenue. With these key metrics and considerations, you’ll be able to assess seller readiness while also identifying any possible setbacks.

WHAT ELSE TO CONSIDER

- Use historical data from coaching sessions to track skill development over time
- Dig into the data gathered from coaching sessions to verify managers are coaching effectively
- Think about training needs for future cohorts based on the common coaching areas reps are receiving coaching

Call analysis



Analyzing sales calls can give you a ton of insight into how your reps are taking what they've learned through your training and coaching initiatives and actually applying it to their conversations with prospects.

KEY METRICS TO TRACK

- Number of filler words used
- Keywords used
- Messaging used
- Identify key problems in deals that didn't close
- Trends of key metrics across different deal stages
- Areas of improvement against the recommended behavior to define actions during 1:1s

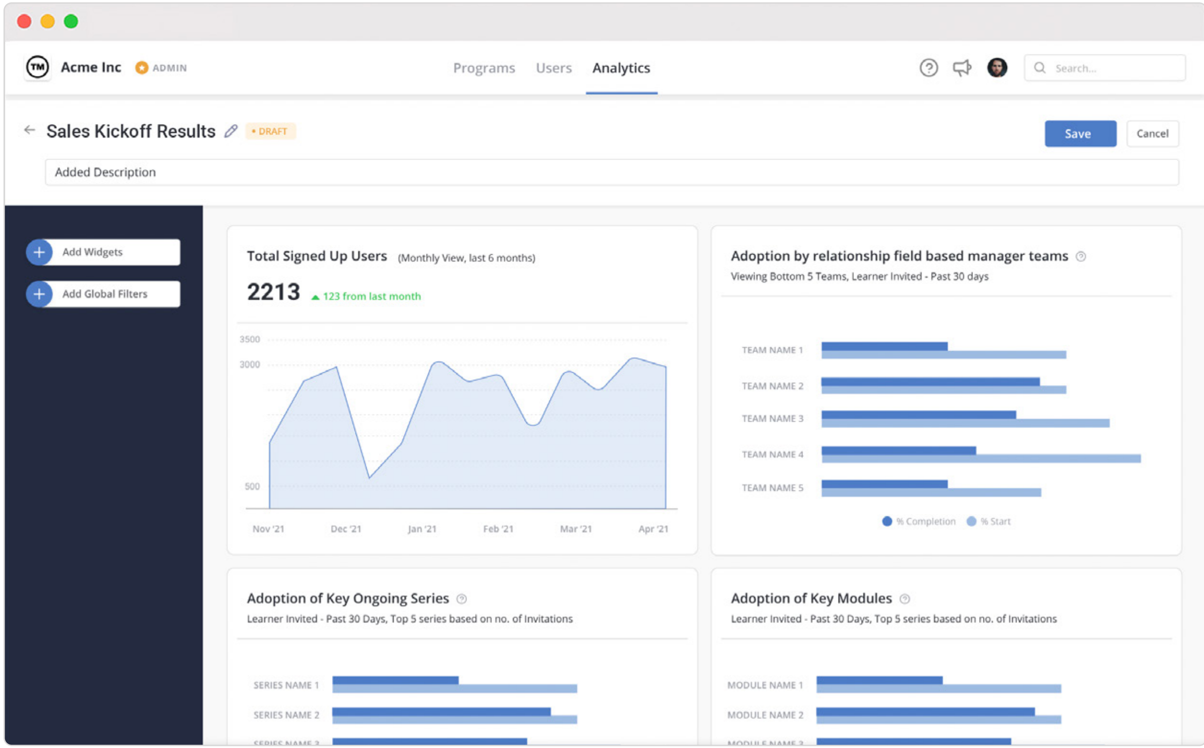
Using AI is the most efficient, scalable, and effective way to track and analyze your reps' calls. It saves time by automating the process and only highlighting what you really need to know — and helps to ensure all calls are evaluated in the same way.

WHAT ELSE TO CONSIDER

- Use call analysis to identify key problems in deals that didn't close
- Understand the most common objections or questions reps are being asked and how you can enable your team with the best answers from top-performing reps
- Deep dive into calls with low scores to identify problems
- Think about how to coach reps individually based on knowledge gaps in their conversations

Tip! If you're using AI-powered call analysis software, you can use call data to correlate skills and closed business in your CRM.

Sales events



Whether you're hosting a sales kickoff or quarterly business review, it's important to have your sales reps' full participation. These events are typically the time to establish organizational goals and expectations, so it's important to ensure sellers are fully engaged.

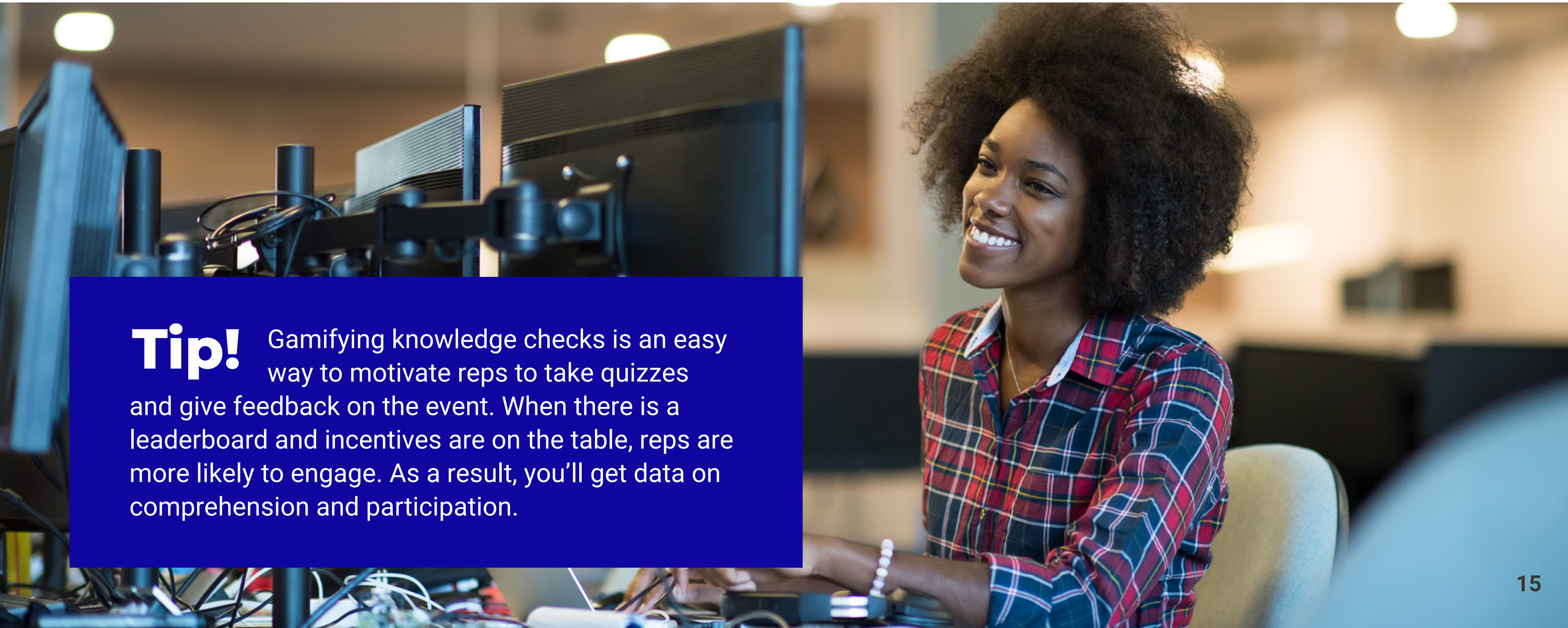
KEY METRICS TO TRACK

- Post-kickoff quiz results
- Participation rate
- Engagement rates by team, rep, and region
- Post-event rep feedback and reaction
- Sales event training completion rate

By looking at these key metrics, as well as analyzing overall feedback from reps, you'll be able to use data to improve events' efficacy even further.

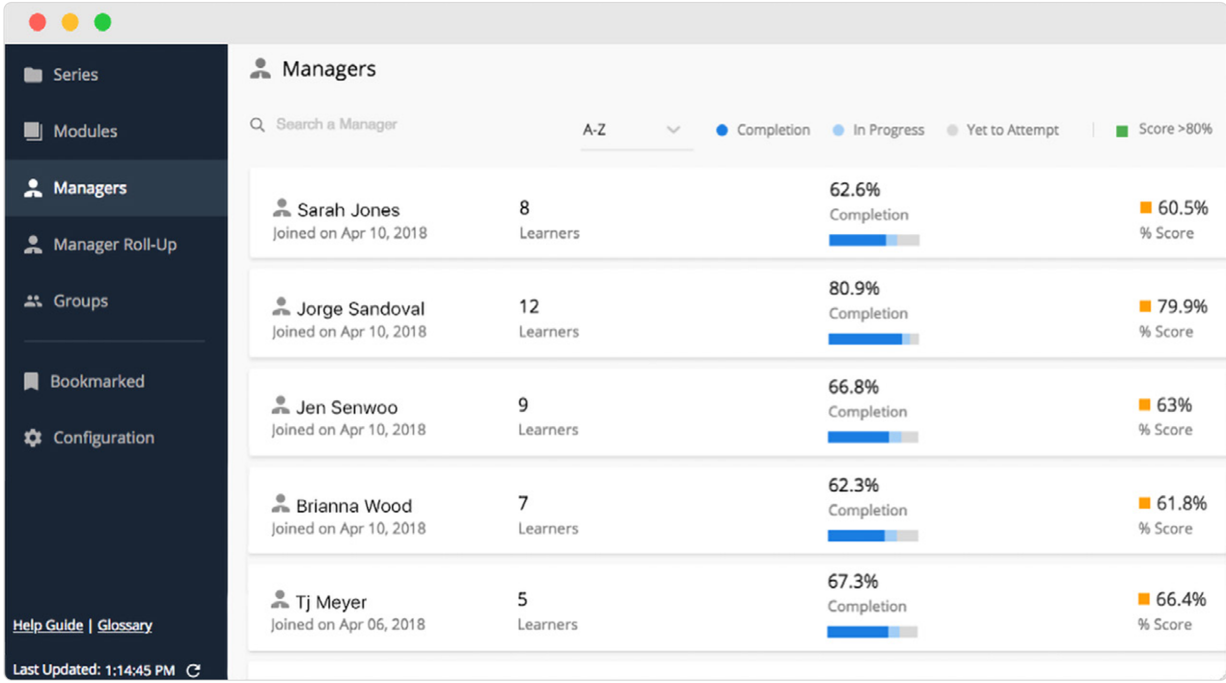
WHAT ELSE TO CONSIDER

- Seller participation rate before, during, and after the event
- Understanding of content covered during and after the event
- Feedback from reps on content, delivery, and agenda



Tip! Gamifying knowledge checks is an easy way to motivate reps to take quizzes and give feedback on the event. When there is a leaderboard and incentives are on the table, reps are more likely to engage. As a result, you'll get data on comprehension and participation.

Field updates



It's important to make sure your field team is always up-to-date with the latest on market changes, competitive updates, industry trends, regulatory issues, and any other timely information. A great way to educate sellers is through micro-learning content, pushed directly to reps' mobile devices, then following up with a quiz or other type of knowledge check.

KEY METRICS TO TRACK

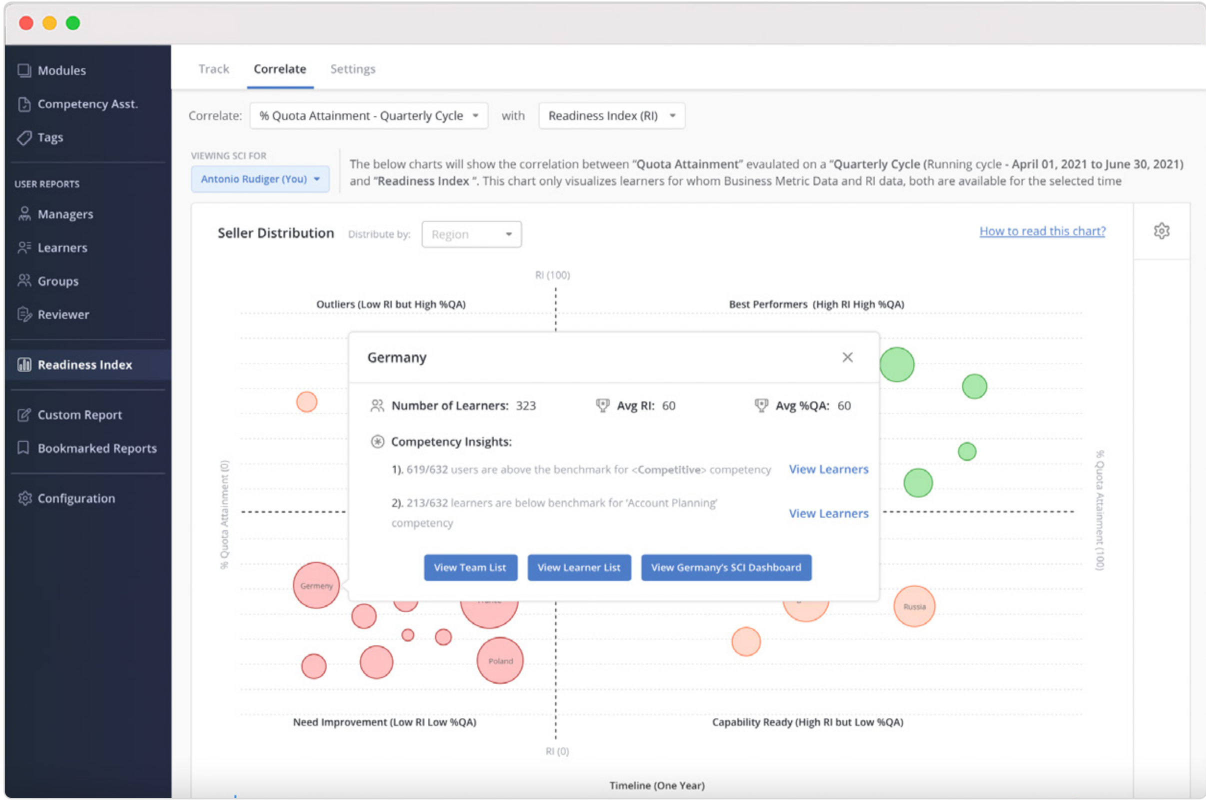
- Engagement/open rate
- Time to complete content
- Knowledge assessment scores
- Solicit rep feedback on information shared to evaluate the update's impact

WHAT ELSE TO CONSIDER

- Look at metrics to determine if reps are ready to have conversations with prospects based on their scores
- See if sellers have met compliance requirements
- Identify if there were common roadblocks when completing the assessment

Tip! Assign role-play challenges based on new material to see if reps can articulate what they've learned. The activity may vary from highlighting or demo-ing a new product offering or explaining how to differentiate from a competitor, but no matter what you're testing, it's a proven way to gauge understanding.

Competitive training



Using battlecards and educating on key advantages of your product or solution, you can empower reps to win when you come up against particular competitors in sales conversations.

KEY METRICS TO TRACK

- Content views
- Training session completions
- Knowledge retention through quiz scores

Equipping your reps with the stats they need to differentiate your product can be what stands between you winning and losing a deal. On top of the key metrics mentioned above, these additional considerations will prove the value of your competitive training.

WHAT ELSE TO CONSIDER

- Look at the impact of the training on the actual sales outcome metric
- Measure the uplift in the outcome metric for reps who did well (or didn't do well) in the training
- If you have conversation intelligence, review the call recordings and insights to see how effective selleres were in speaking to your solution in comparison to competitors
- Give sellers role-play exercises to practice or determine where they need a better understanding of your competitive advantage

Tip! Look at benchmarks for a particular group of users to identify how well they're scoring on your assessments. Any trends you notice could be an indicator that your training material isn't resonating with reps and could use updating.

Ongoing analysis is what drives true success

With these key sales metrics in mind, you'll be able to evaluate the success and impact of your sales force in a much more comprehensive way. It's not just about how quickly a new rep closes their first deal or their average deal size over time.

So much can be tracked, analyzed, and improved upon in between those milestones to help your sellers be ready to increase knowledge, enhance performance, and adapt to change.