

Sales Performance Case Study

Telecommunications

Telecommunications Leader
North America

Sales Growth in Preparation for IPO

Challenge: The client is a \$10 million telecommunications company located in North America. The Vice President of Sales was brought into the company to build revenue rapidly in preparation for the company's upcoming IPO. In order to accomplish this, the VP knew he had to expand his existing sales team from its current staff of 6 to at least 30 without making costly hiring errors. He also wanted to ramp up the team and build the foundation for long-term sustainable results.

Assess: The VP brought in the behavioral assessment tool, Predictive Index® (PI®) from PI Worldwide, to help with the hiring process. His first order of business was to have everyone on his team complete the PI so he could understand the behavioral strengths of his team. The results showed that 85% of his sales force were highly analytical and technical but had little natural sales aptitude – very common in technology sales. Using this information, a new job description was developed for a sales representative, focusing more on selling behaviors than technical skills, and posted on the web. This effort resulted in 180 responses. All 180 candidates complete the PI, with 18 of them being a strong fit to the desired sales skills. Eleven job offers were extended and all 11 candidates accepted.

"PI Worldwide's Customer-Focused Selling program not only gave our sales team a methodology for the sales process but a hands-on roadmap that allowed them to effectively execute on sales opportunities. The result has been increased productivity and a new-found confidence in dealing with prospects."

Vice President of Sales
Telecommunications Leader

With the right behavioral fit for the team; the VP needed a process to assess the selling skills of his newly established team. Sales teams from multiple locations and the Executive Team at headquarters completed PI Worldwide's Selling Skills Assessment Tool™ (SSAT) which identifies the individual's selling skills on the 5 phases of the consultative sales process: Open, Investigate, Present, Confirm and Position, and then reports them on three levels: by organization, by group and individually.

The results of the SSAT showed that the group from one location was performing at a far lower level than the other groups – posting an overall score of 62 (out of 100) versus the other 2 groups which ranged from 74 to 78. Upon closer inspection of the SSAT results, there were three specific sales skill areas that needed targeted training:

1. Open – Build trust and credibility through managing client expectations.
2. Investigate – Accurately assess the situation and uncover client needs.
3. Confirm – Win the business.

Train: With this invaluable information, the VP was able to focus his team's sales training to strengthen their sales performance. The 16 sales representatives from the lower performing office then attended the 1-day Customer-Focused Selling™ (CFS) training offered as part of the PI Worldwide sales training program. The results were almost immediate. According to the VP, "The training absolutely changed the entire sales force's approach to their business, and in less than a week, I started to see measurable results."

He continues, "The training provided us with a language we could all speak. The sales team can uniformly discuss where they are in the sales cycle and break down what they need to do at each of the 5 core steps in order to ultimately close the

sale. The investigative phase was where we received our largest return. By understanding the needs of the prospect early on in discussions, it enabled us to quickly determine which opportunities were a fit for our services.”

Lead: To reinforce the sales success the organization was experiencing, one month after completing their CFS training they conducted an internal ½ day follow up session, having the sales people who had particular expertise in one of the 5 core sales skills mentor the sales people who continued to need coaching in specific areas. The VP balanced the skill development efforts with individual coaching based on each rep’s motivation and drive, as measured by PI. This unique combination of skills and execution helped him create substantial results.

Results: Getting the right people into the right jobs using PI, assessing the skills knowledge base with SSAT, providing CFS training, and leading the team leveraging PI insights, have this leading telecommunications company in great shape for long-term success. In addition to positioning them favorably for their IPO audience, the sales team increased revenue by 20% while coming in 40% under budget.

PI Worldwide® is a global management consulting organization that helps companies be more successful by focusing on their most important asset-their people. Praendex Incorporated, the parent company of PI Worldwide, is publisher of the Predictive Index®, the Selling Skills Assessment Tool™ and Customer-Focused Selling™.