

Xel Training & Development Case Study:

Cherwell

With a successful partnership now extending over many years, Cherwell, a leading supplier of cleaning and hygiene products and a member of the Nationwide Hygiene Supplies group, has once again appointed Xel Training & Development to design and deliver a further 12 month Sales Development programme for the Cherwell sales team.



With a reputation for outstanding service and value for money products, Cherwell are one of the UK's leading suppliers of cleaning and hygiene products. Prior to engaging the services of Xel however, in a highly competitive market they had struggled to grow their turnover and maintain margins. According to Jeremy Hodge, Cherwell's Managing Director "the business had begun to stagnate and the sales team was in need of redirection."

Various recommendations were put forward by Xel which included a clear approach to follow in order to promote positive change in the Cherwell sales organisation and covered:

After much analysis, we identified the key problem as one of a sales team who were failing to respond appropriately to a rapidly changing market. It was clear that we needed external help to tackle this problem, and, following a recommendation, we turned to Xel Training & Development. We asked them to undertake a review of our sales team and our overall approach to sales, in order to provide an independent check on our own assessment and help us to put in place a bespoke and targeted change programme within our sales organisation.

The review included individual profiling (selling styles analysis) of the sales team, an extensive interview programme, and a review of the sales function more generally. Jeremy stated... "your review at times made very uncomfortable reading for our management team, suggesting that the problem existed both with the team and our management of sales in the company. I was particularly impressed with the way in which you delivered feedback both to management and the sales team, successfully treading the difficult line of 'taking people with you' without compromising the content of key messages."

- Re-training of the sales team to focus on 'value-added' selling, selling the 'benefits' of the company rather than letting the sales negotiation be dominated by price issues alone;
- defining clear, evidenced propositions by which the company can differentiate itself in the market;
- implementing a sales team appraisal system, in order to provide a mechanism to monitor customer targeting and sales progress and importantly make the sales team once again feel valued in the company;
- developing a coherent and consistent range of marketing support materials, which reflect key points of differentiation in the marketplace and thereby support the selling efforts of the team;
- implementing a 'putting the customer first' programme among non-sales people (warehouse staff, drivers, etc) in order to ensure the overall focus of the organisation on the customer.



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The sales re-training programme represented the central element of the overall restructuring, and consisted of a series of classroom based theory and practical role-play sessions, followed by individual field coaching sessions.

Jeremy commented...

It was very pleasing and rewarding to see that an initially sceptical sales team, very quickly embraced the key content and messages of the training, and immediately looked for ways to change their method of working to implement a more consultative style of selling.

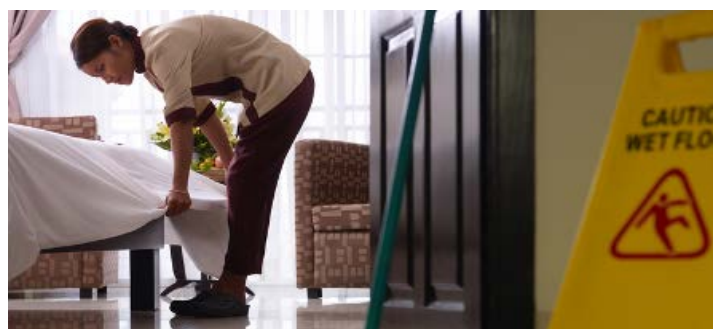
This transformation owes much to the individual energy and motivation of the trainer, but also to the soundly based and common sense concepts which underpin the Xel training model.

Key of course to the successful implementation of such ideas is constant reinforcement, and in this regard the field coaching sessions which followed the classroom training worked particularly well, providing instant feedback and guidance on the deployment of principles learnt.

As a result of the continuing development programme, Jeremy stated that they have seen many positive results from implementing the change programme under the guidance of Xel including a re-motivated, 'hungry' sales team; a sales team who feel confident in selling the benefits of the company (rather than 'chasing prices'); development of supporting sales materials; a number of good customer wins, with a profitable and growing revenue stream.

Commenting about the results, Jeremy said...

I am very confident about future sales growth and welcome your continuing involvement in our sales organisation. I would happily recommend your firm to prospect customers and would be happy to discuss our experience with them.



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