

Case Study: Leading Cable Company

Client/Organization:

Leading Cable Company/ Cable Industry

The Challenge:

A leading cable company was facing significant challenges from competition threatening the existing and potential customer base. There was also a need to restructure call center operations and activities:

- They were paying their sales reps a higher commission percentage of sales than was acceptable.
- There was a need to restructure the compensation plan to lower percentages to increase the company's margins while maintaining equal or higher individual compensation.
- Although closing rates varied significantly from sales representative to sales representative, the overall rate was around 20%.
- Sales representative behaviors were more in the "pitching" features mode to customers rather than effectively matching products and services to the needs of the customer.
- Over time the sales reps evolved into "order takers" instead of matching services to customer needs ultimately missing many sales opportunities.
- There was limited customer relationship development by sales representatives. They were less than effective as ambassadors for the company.
- Sales reps were not following the existing and prescribed sales process.
- There were conflicting measurements for sales representative activity, as well as measuring too many activities.
- Sales reps, although experienced, lacked the skill sets necessary to effectively build relationships and discover customer entertainment needs and wants.
- The sales reps were experiencing a "new positioning" of the product (product bundle) and lacked an effective sales process to fully maximize sales opportunities.
- In spite of the fact that the sales reps had a great deal of in-house sales training (as well as soft skills training and other vendor training), they were unable to make the behavioral changes necessary to increase closing ratios or effectively develop customer relationships.
- A large number of sales reps were operating in excuse mode—playing the victim card when they were less than effective—resulting in attitudes that focused on excuses as opposed to developing attitudes that were results oriented in nature.

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- Leadership was spending an excessive amount of time on “paper trails” instead of monitoring calls and performance, providing feedback, and coaching.
- Leadership was unable to create the relationship between individual and team performance in order to create a sense of team achievement.
- Leadership and supervision had adapted a leadership style that served to enable ineffective behavior as opposed to promoting personal responsibility and accountability.

Solution Milestones:

- Develop a call center strategy to maximize individual and team effectiveness that ultimately results in improved performance and increased revenues.
- Identify and develop leadership/supervisory competencies that enable them to effectively communicate strategy, objectives, and goals. Also, design and implement an effective feedback system to shape behavior for continuous performance improvement.
- Design, develop, and implement an approach that incorporates a proven sales process that maximizes sales rep sales, communication, and customer service skills and competencies in order to capitalize on sales opportunities.
- Develop sales rep abilities to transfer skills, knowledge, and competencies into the customer service and sales environments.
- Design and develop an effective measurement and feedback system that maximizes individual and group performance.

Results/Outcomes:

- 120% increase in closing rate.
- Dramatic increase in customer perception.
- Dramatic reduction in cancellations.
- Wages increase in every case—in spite of restructuring the pay scale.
- Increase effectiveness of the sales process in every case—140 sales representatives—most significantly.
- Unnecessary to separate any of the sales representatives.

Follow-Up/Sustainability:

- 260% increase in closing rate.
- Exceeded their pre-determined goal by 105%.
- Cultural change (from victim and blame to responsibility and results).
- Key promotions.
- “Experienced rapid subscriber growth due to our [product bundling strategy]. Introduced the Customer Experience Scorecard and exceeded our goals in almost every category.”

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- “[The region] is currently ranked as one of the Top 10 regions in the nation– taking 6th place!”
- “I will be eternally grateful to [our process facilitators] not only for exceeding our goal but also taking us to a level of performance that we didn’ t know existed.” - *Call Center Director*