



EGYII

PERFORMANCE ACCELERATION

An Egyii Case Study
Coaching for Sales Performance

By Andrew Sidwell

Introduction

With sales down and constant pressure to perform due to the recent global economic downturn, the client, a large Singapore based insurance company, required their financial planners to deliver effective and impactful sales meetings and conversations that were unparalleled by their competitors.

As part of their *client focus* programme, the insurance company needed their financial planners to perform at their highest level in order to build credibility in their client meetings and relationships, to win new clients and maintain their current client base.

The Opportunity

In order to achieve this, the insurance company required their front line leadership team to inspire their financial planners to be more engaged and motivated so that they could deliver the right message to win the business.

The Challenge

The majority of the front line management was either inexperienced or ineffective at meeting this requirement. Their "management" activities were "quick fix" actions based on their lack of experience and intuition. The team was not being inspired.

The Solution

Using workplace observations, analysis of performance data and 360 Feedback surveys of coaching capability, a performance analysis identified and confirmed that few of the leaders were applying a consistent approach to coaching their sales teams. In addition, the following performance gaps were observed:

- Leaders couldn't identify and coach specific sales behaviours that lead to improved performance. Instead, they provided feedback on sales actions *only*, for example, whether a staff asked questions or not (action) and not coaching how to effectively ask the question (behaviour).
- Leaders were having performance discussions that were problem focused rather than solution focused. As a consequence, feedback wasn't actionable, clear action plans and goals for enhanced performance were not being set.
- The majority of coaching discussions were in a 'I tell - you do' style rather than having a two way discussion that builds and/or maintains staff self esteem and encourages staff commitment and understanding towards improving their performance.

To address the performance gap, a hands-on learning programme was designed around specific

challenging workplace coaching scenarios. The programme helped each leader practice and enhance his ability to apply coaching strategies to improve the performance of staff in their teams who:

1. *Can't Do* (do not have the capability) and *Won't Do* (and do not have the willingness, motivation or confidence to perform)
2. *Can't Do but Will Do*
3. *Can Do but Won't Do*
4. *Can Do and Will Do*

For each of the four groups of performers, leaders practiced:

- How to assess sales results and identify critical behavioural performance gaps
- How to handle staff resistance, provide feedback, tailor their coaching approaches and set development plans
- How to reinforce and provide active support to achieve sustainable behavioural change back in the workplace

A series four '*Share and Compare*' sessions and '*Coach the Coach Skill*

Embedding' sessions were designed and delivered to:

- Help reinforce desirable leadership coaching behaviours
- Address coaching issues and roadblocks
- Affect sustainable change at the individual and team level in the workplace

Results

Key stakeholders reported improvement in the number and quality of coaching sessions the leaders were conducting with their frontline sales teams. The leaders were also consciously applying what they learnt during the workshop as well as making a greater effort to build rapport with their team members.

As an example of changes as a result of the programme, one of the leader's teams exhibited a high level of team spirit and effort during the company quarterly "Team Harmony" event. This was unexpected as the leader of the team was considered a low performer and a non-team motivator. The stakeholder then reported that the team members in started connecting with one another and that the teamwork had improved.

Soft skills for hard results:

- Key leader coaching behaviours improved by 7% across the leadership team from 76% pre course to 83%, 4

months post course, as assessed by the leaders' line managers and direct reports.

- Comparing four months of sales and revenue data before and four months of data after the programme, the overall team sales productivity improved by 41%. This resulted in an ROI for the insurance company of over 800%.

The prescribed Coaching for Sales Performance programme also helped the insurance company:

- Enhance their own internal credibility by successfully engaging and developing their people during a global downturn
- Demonstrate their commitment to valued employees in the challenging frontline sales environment
- Maximise their learning investment by demonstrating to senior stakeholders within the business a significant ROI on their investment within four months of the rollout of the programme

This case study and the results demonstrate how the Coaching for Performance

learning and development programme and consulting solutions are a powerful force in increasing the performance and initiative of employees in sales environments.

This programme and similar ones provide significant improvements to revenue and sales even in an economic downturn.

About Egyii

Egyii is a learning and development consultancy that helps your business achieve better results by strengthening your people's relationship skills.

Egyii specializes in:

- Building and fostering *client relationships*
- Enhancing the *customer experience*
- Building and rebuilding *trust*
- Maximising *sales performance and skills*

It's time for a change.

Email:
stuff@egyii.com

For more information:
www.egyii.com

For updates:
www.twitter.com/egyii
www.egyii.com/blog