

CASE STUDY FOR TELESales TRAINING - MAJOR Insurance Sales Team



How 'SPRINT'ing with **apt** helped a major insurance company

This case study shows how Advantage Performance Training Ltd helped a major insurance company improve their performance by improving the closure rate of telesales staff from 38% to around 71% and how the time taken for new starters to get to speed reduced to around 6 weeks from an average of 6 months.

Situation

The company is a mutual organisation and the market leader in the provision of relatively low-cost healthcare insurance through which members can claim back up to 50% of their healthcare costs on a range of up to 21 benefits, depending upon the chosen plan.

The organisation is nearly 80 years old and is undergoing cultural change. Growth is organic and also by acquisition / merger. The people are generally supportive of the organisation and fiercely loyal to their product.

Problem

As with any organisation the people can sometimes think 'the grass is greener' and therefore that their product loses out in some way to competitive offerings. There had only been a training culture in respect of technical and computer training and some product training which was very much 'classroom' style.

Although there have been patches of personnel turnover, in general the existing telesales staff have been at the company for 2-7 years. Their performance was at the best spasmodic and 30/40% call to closure ratio was more or less the norm.

New staff would take approximately 6 months to get up to the speed of the incumbent people.

Average call time was 7-10 minutes, but in some cases in excess of 20 minutes and whilst the conversion rate was average, the poor call volume meant the bottom line figure was also poor. Some felt threatened by change.

Research

2 members of the **apt** team spent time with various members of the management team to establish what precisely they were looking to achieve and to ensure that they were aligned with the 'corporate goal' and cultural changes. We also spent a day in the operations room, in conversation and listening to live calls.

INitiative

From discussions with various constituents of the company, **apt** decided that there had to be changes to both the perceptions of the operatives and the manner in which they operated. Also we had a belief that if one operative could obtain a 70% closure then others should be able to also. Therefore considerable time was spent observing the star performer and finding techniques which could be modelled.

Training

A series of challenging 2 & 3 day courses were specifically designed to effect the changes required by the Divisional Head and also to encompass a commercial awareness amongst those who took advantage of the 'system'. The courses were well structured and objectives clearly set out and shared with everyone involved. The approach was taken that we were there not to train them how to use the telephone, rather how to use it more effectively so that they could earn substantially more income.

The first sessions dealt with their personal motivations and using some very interesting metaphors, how to break through barriers. Then, why they should set goals, how to set a goal and how to achieve it.

Once these aspects had been dealt with, we looked at structure - of their days and of their calls. Then the delegates each had an opportunity to 'try out' their new ideas in a safe environment with peer reviews – always with a positive coaching approach.

Finally, delegates had to commit to 4 Actions they were going to take as a direct result of the course which THEY BELIEVED would enhance their performance.

So what did this major insurance company get from their SPRINT with apt+?

The results were far greater than expected and had wider reaches.

Average call closure went to 65% - 71%

The star performer (who we thought we could help at the margin of 1% maybe 2%) achieved up to 85%. Others amongst the group and also some of the new starters began to challenge her dominance.

The time taken for new starters to get to speed reduced to around 6 weeks, so they became contributors above margin much earlier.

The people who thought that the 'best way' to sell the product was the hand holding 20 minute conversation discovered that you could still build the empathy and be committed, professional and friendly in much shorter times (around 12 minutes when last checked). So call volume increased and with the improvement in closing rates made the whole team more profitable. It also increased effectiveness per call agent.