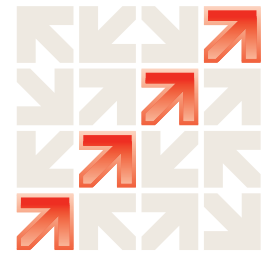


# Get the Results You Want From Your Training



**CRITICAL MOMENTS**

Two new ideas to secure that vital return on investment

So you have invested some or all your training budget to improve sales performance. Programmes are booked and the sales team have been asked to keep their diaries clear. You are obviously hoping the training will make a positive difference.

What are your expectations? Are you looking for:-

- An increase in new business?
- Brand new customers?
- Higher volumes of business from your most important accounts?
- A visible sales process?
- Changed behaviour?
- All of the above or something else?

This may sound remarkable, but I remain surprised that so many organisations give insufficient thought to the return on their investment. Some organisations are excellent when it comes to measuring sales performance improvement but unfortunately most of the time I find that we, the chosen business partner for training and development seem to ask most of the questions.

I can think of one company where we provided training to over 100 people and even though we asked questions from the beginning about we were going to work together to make sure the training was effective, we never heard anymore. We asked for feedback, we recommended ways to measure how effective the training should be but no follow up took place. We even asked to stop the programmes to allow time for reassessment but still the bookings came in and we requested to continue the programmes.

Unfortunately this behaviour is not exceptional. I will not waste your time describing follow up programmes such as coaching, web based reinforcement and integrating sales process with CRM systems. You can find that information on our web site or Miller Heiman's.

However I would like to share with you two remarkable ways to discover early if training is working and how to refocus if you are not getting the results you want.

## 1. Self Assessment

Working for one of our global clients, we have partnered with another firm which specialises in self assessment techniques. Using the key learning objectives from Miller Heiman's three flagship programmes Strategic Selling™ Conceptual Selling™ and Large Account Management Process™ we identified between 15 and 20 key learning objectives delivered during the programmes. Participants were asked to visit a web site a few days before the programme to answer a series of on-line multiple choice questions to test what they knew before the training. Two weeks and also three months after the training the participants logged on again and took the same self-assessment. The questions and statements were very carefully written to ensure the participants had to read the possible answers carefully. With one correct answer, three similar but incorrect answers and a "Don't know" to choose from, it was virtually impossible to "finesse" an answer. The only way to get a good score was to know the right answers.

Each participant received a report as did each line manager with explanations and recommendations for areas in need of coaching or further training.

## 2. Observable Behaviour

A valuable alternative to self-assessment is another approach based on what behavioural changes are observed during the sales process. Working with another partner company we devise a scorecard based on the behavioural changes expected as a result of the training. Sales people very often arrange visits with colleagues or their boss. Our programme sits on the boss's laptop and for each training programme attended the boss is asked to simply record if they observe (or not) any action or behaviour expected in the sales process after the training.

The results are mapped against best practice and once again the participant and his/her boss receives a written report. The simplicity of this objective assessment is stunning. Very often the output shows groupings of demonstrated new or unchanged old behaviour which require attention. Action can be taken quickly and the line manager can offer guidance and coaching to help embed the desired changes. We also take care of any coaching support if required.

Our partners in this method have never failed to get less than an 8.5% improvement in sales performance and in case they achieved almost 400%. The approach has been recognised and endorsed by two business schools.

When you intend to invest in sales performance improvement, let's make sure we discuss your expectations after the training as well. Please contact Stephen Newman on:

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