

A leading telecom effectively designs sales training to address skill gaps



As the economy tried to recover from the recession, a leading telecom company saw its competitor eroding the market in the internet broadband. This telecom's Regional Sales Managers suggested that the entire sales team should be retrained to handle the new market conditions.

The telecom's main concern was determining the key areas or gaps that should be addressed in the training program. Identifying key areas would have helped the telecom company to design relevant training content within the allocated training budget.

HireLabs, once brought on board, suggested the telecom's management to conduct training needs analysis (TNA) before they designed content for the training. HireLabs worked with the telecom's line managers to identify potential gaps in knowledge, skills and aptitude in the sales team. After a session with the line managers, the following potential gaps were identified:

- Product knowledge
- Understanding the customer
- Constructing a sales pitch
- Competitors' weaknesses
- Sales support

The next step for HireLabs was to create competency tests to measure the extent of the gaps. Around 450 people in the sales were tested online. The results via online analytics were instantly made available to the line managers so they could identify the areas of weaknesses.

The test result indicated that the sales team had sound knowledge of their company's products. But, they were weak in constructing a sales pitch, understanding the customers and identifying competitors' weaknesses.

With help of the TNA, the telecom company now knew that they needed to design a training program around '**product positioning**' and '**delivering the right pitch**'. Instead of training the entire sales team, only those sales people were taken off the field and trained who scored low, reducing the cost of training by almost 45 per cent.

Challenge

- Identify the key areas of focus for training the sales team, and design relevant content around it.
- Control training costs

Solution

- Conduct Training Needs Analysis (TNA)
- Create competency tests to measure potential gaps found in the sales team
- Provide online testing tool, Profile Sense
- Provide real-time analytics and assessment reports

Approach

- Work with line managers to identify potential gaps existing in the team
- Design competency tests based on scenarios affecting sales
- Assess 450 people in the sales team
- Identify areas of weakness using online analytics and test reports
- Design training program to develop areas of weaknesses identified through TNA
- Train only those sales people who scored low

Outcome

- Through the TNA, the telecom company was able to design a focused training program on product positioning and delivering the right pitch
- Reduced the training cost by 45 per cent
- An estimated increase of 7-10 per cent was seen in sales team's productivity, post training

"Training Need Analysis (TNA) plays a crucial role in improving staff performance by identifying training needs and bridging skill gaps."

— Head of Organizational Development at the telecom company
