

Effectiveness Consultancy event kick-starts change at APV

APV is a major international engineering company, chiefly manufacturing and selling process plant for the food and drink industries.

Its work with Huthwaite, beginning just over a year ago, was a major commitment for both parties.

1994 was a challenging time of great turbulence in APV. A major review of strategy at all levels in the group led to new definitions of business priorities and a fundamental restructuring of the organisation. One aspect of this change was a recognition of the need for global co-ordination as a means of securing and executing the largest multi-million pound contracts. APV management knew that three things were essential for success.

- Everyone's commitment to the new strategy, and clear understanding of what was expected of them and how far their roles fitted together.
- Common language, systems and procedures so that people from different companies throughout the world could work together on a sales campaign.

- A raised level of skills development.

For Huthwaite consultants Nick Anderson and Tony Sharpe it was an ideal opportunity to put together a fully-formed, Effectiveness Consulting package.

The focus for Huthwaite's and APV's efforts was a project painted on a big canvas by any standards. Key senior APV people were brought together from as far afield as the Americas, Far East and Australasia, as well as several European countries, for a two week residential programme in Silkeborg, Denmark — an event combining organisation development work with sales training.

Custom-built sales simulations ran throughout the two weeks and all role-plays were specially prepared too, so the work was highly practical.

More than that, the event covered a range of important issues which Huthwaite methods and tools are designed to support: qualifying opportunities and sales forecasting; developing a common understanding of sales processes, skills and strategies; presenting solutions persuasively in writing and orally; and re-focusing sales strategies for current major opportunities.

Many clients have asked Huthwaite to run programmes dealing with some of these areas before, but rarely has such a complete portfolio been used in such an intensive context before. Here, after all, was a team of people who absolutely had to get value out of the event, living in each others' pockets night and day for two weeks, and needing to work productively together once the event was over.

For APV it provided a major kick-start to the change process which will continue throughout 1995 and beyond.

