

New product sales **exceed all expectations** for Hollister



Change Behaviour. Change Results.

...the SPIN® approach provided a good fit with the need for a relationship based sales model.

Selling in a mature market, where sales have to be won from well-established competition can be difficult in itself. But when the market, by its very nature, is also conservative and cautious in its buying behaviour the salesforce can be in for a tough time.

A marketplace very familiar to Hollister, a world leader in Continence, Ostomy and Wound Care.

Having customers who tend to stick with products they know, and are often resistant to change is commonplace, but also frustrating for Hollister employees, who feel they have something better to offer within the product portfolio.

Building and maintaining strong, long-term relationships with the nurses who form the customer base, against incumbent suppliers who already have the trust of nurses and demonstrative proof of their products, is essential for success.

Clearly, in this marketplace, having an excellent product range wasn't enough – it wasn't going to sell itself - in order to achieve the growth they desired Hollister decided it was time for change.

The make up of the UK sales force also presented a challenge since it had a huge spread of age and experience and included people from their sister company "Dansac" a company with its own sales culture.

Jonathan Scott, Sales Manager for the Ostomy Care Division at Hollister, commented "We were very concerned about finding a training provider who could pitch the training at the right level, so it would challenge our experienced people, but not leave the newer ones behind. With a range of experience from 25 years to only 3 months we felt this would be very difficult to achieve. We also wanted a European based training provider who could deliver the programme to other countries, in local languages, if the UK project was a success."

Huthwaite was selected because they had the best fit with requirements

Four European training providers were invited to bid for the project. Huthwaite was selected because the SPIN® approach provided a good fit with the need for a relationship based sales model. Huthwaite's ability to deliver the programmes across all European countries, in local languages, through their European network, fulfilled the other key selection criteria.

Huthwaite delivered SPIN® selling skills training to the salesforce,

with a coaching programme for the sales managers, to help them support the training initiative through on-going, practical coaching. Additionally, both teams were introduced to a number of tools to help them identify their products' competitive advantages, to plan sales calls to explore the need for these products and to record call information quickly and effectively.

The training brought visible results

Jonathan Scott reports that the training quickly brought results: *"It was very noticeable that the SPIN® training gave people a structure for the sales calls. Our sales people used to be very focused on the customer relationship, which was good, but it could result in them following the customer's agenda to the detriment of exploring sales needs and so failing to progress the sale. Now they are leading the calls and directing them towards customer problems and needs where we have products that can help. The reaction to the coaching has also been good and sales people actively seek feedback from their managers. SPIN® is fast becoming embedded in our sales culture."*





New sales approach has been a great success

One of the most tangible benefits of the new approach has been its impact on Hollister focus products.

Jonathan Scott comments “Our annual results show a tremendous increase over last year in sales of focus products. The tools Huthwaite provided helped us to identify our products’ competitive advantages, so we could plan sales calls to ensure we explored

problems and needs our new product could solve better than the competition. This, allied to our sales team’s questioning skills, meant that we used time in sales calls more effectively, focussing on areas where we had the best chance of success.

The results have been outstanding and we have increased our market share from a standing start in only six months. Given these results we will be looking to adapt the same approach with other brands in future.

This training project has been an important step in pushing Hollister back onto the growth track here in the UK. The importance of the project is marked by the fact that our Managing Director attended the training himself. This did a great deal to deliver a message that we were very serious about the initiative and it’s clear how well our people responded to that.”





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