

# Track the skill change produced by coaching

## Is coaching important?

When asked this question, most managers agree that coaching their staff is important. Managers usually agree that coaching helps their people to:

- perform their jobs effectively
- apply skills learnt on training programmes back on-the-job.

However, in our experience it is rare for managers to do much, if any, coaching. There are always reasons why not, beginning first with the manager's own workload which frequently leaves little time for coaching. The question of how good managers are at coaching when they get round to it is of course another big issue!

But before jumping on the band wagon of 'Managers should coach' it is worth considering how much investment in training is lost when they don't.

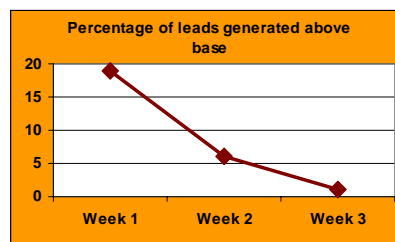
## Does lack of coaching lead to loss of ROI?

A major UK bank shared some course evaluation data with us. They had run training aimed at enabling cashiers to generate more leads.

The cashiers returned to their branches and received the usual amount of coaching – none! Initially results were encouraging and in the first two weeks they were generating 19% more leads than they had been before training.

*"The goal of coaching is the goal of good management — to make the most of an organization's valuable resources."*

However, as the graph shows, within six weeks the effect of the training was negligible. The bank attributed this drop to the total lack of

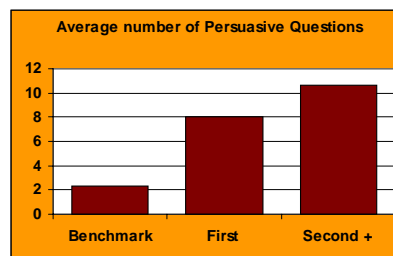


coaching the cashiers received from their managers.

## Does coaching lead to skill maintenance?

The next question is "Post-training, does coaching help people maintain and develop the skills they learnt?"

The data below comes from a training programme we ran with a major continental bank.



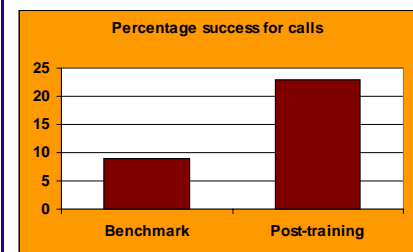
As the graph shows, pre-training, the bank's relationship managers were asking very few persuasive questions. Instead they focussed on gathering facts to assess the importance of the potential customer to themselves, rather than the value

that they could provide the customer. After training the level of persuasive questions increased, and with coaching, was maintained. The first coaching data relates to calls made three to four weeks after training and the second six weeks or more after the programme.

## Does this impact on bottom-line results?

Skill development in itself is only a first step towards the main interest of most sales managers – increases in bottom-line results.

During the training and subsequent coaching the sellers were encouraged to be more sales focussed and explore how the bank could add value to the potential customer.



As the graph above shows there was a large jump in success rates from less than 10% to over 20%.

**If you would like to know more please contact Huthwaite International**

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**J. Waldroop & T. Butler, "The Executive as Coach," Harvard Business Review, November-December 1996**