

Oracle developing a common language for strategic selling

Team building can be one of the most difficult and also one of the most rewarding aspects of any Director's role. The ability to build a successful and, above all, cohesive unit can often prove particularly troublesome - after all, even the slightest breakdown in communications can result in a level of underperformance that can undermine the organisation's entire strategic focus. But what, then, is the secret of building a successful team?

Oracle, the world's largest provider for e-business, made the decision to expand its CRM sales team from 9 people to 34 and as Alistair Hopkins, Oracle's UK Regional Director for CRM, explains: "I spent the best part of 18 months recruiting a team with a variety of valuable skills and experience. I realised that we needed to find a way for the team to bring their individual skills together to operate effectively as a strategic sales unit. That's when we decided to bring in Huthwaite International".

Oracle's CRM team is dedicated solely to delivering and selling solutions across a variety of sectors, including financial services, insurance, transport and distribution, and local government. As a precursor to taking part in Huthwaite's Account Strategies for Major Sales

(ASMS) programme, the Oracle team took the SPIN® -Online course - using CD-ROM technology and web-enabled tools in order to provide some of the background theory.

Alistair Hopkins comments: "Of course, our primary goal was always to increase the overall capability of the team - but what we found to be a real bonus was that the training was such tremendous fun. I felt that the method of delivery was superb, and in my opinion, the enjoyment factor was one of the principle reasons for the success of the training. Huthwaite's training really helped to meld our strategic selling team, providing us with a common sales language and a way of behaving when dealing with each other and towards our clients."

Huthwaite consultant Ian Newall, who oversaw the Oracle team's training said: "The ASMS training consists of trainer inputs on the Huthwaite methodology and use of Huthwaite tools, practice in using them in a simulation and their application to real cases that the delegates are currently involved in. What made the training especially effective was the involvement of Alistair and other senior managers who attended the training and acted as coaches for the real case work. Management involvement like this ensures that the training is integrated with the delegates' real world both during the training and when they return to work."

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