

Fujitsu Services

Embedding best practice in sales



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Roger Gilbert

Group Director and Head of Sales & Account Management Community

Interview with Roger Gilbert, Group Director and Head of Sales & Account Management Community

Recognising a need for change

Fujitsu combines highly reliable advanced microelectronics, computing and communications products with significant systems and service expertise to deliver worldwide IT-based added value business solutions to nearly half of the Global Fortune 500 companies.

However, Fujitsu recognised that IT excellence alone wasn't enough to build on this success and that "adding value" required high order sales skills as well. In analysing its approach to sales training, two key issues emerged:

- Fujitsu wanted to improve

the selling skills of all its sales people, and whilst its existing sales training was good at tackling individual parts of the sales challenges faced, it was not tackling the problem as a whole.

- This was compounded by a period of significant growth, necessitating the recruitment of large numbers of sales people from diverse sectors and backgrounds.

Fujitsu recognised that a common and robust process and consistent methodologies for managing sales opportunities were lacking. "A 'cosmopolitan' approach to the sales process was causing confusion," explained Roger Gilbert. "We wanted to create a well-oiled, widely used and consistent way of interacting with customers and prospects, and managing sales campaigns across the business. There was a real need to develop 'the Fujitsu way'."

Identifying sales best practice

Fujitsu recognised that, although there were challenges to overcome, a great deal of good practice already existed within the company with many star salespeople performing extremely well. "We had strong ideas about what best practice looked like and initially considered building upon our existing reading material, knowledge and approaches to create our own programme," said Roger. "However we soon realised that identifying sufficient trainers of an adequate standard and deploying

resources to effectively develop the programme simply wasn't achievable." Fujitsu, therefore, decided to compare what could realistically be accomplished internally with what was available in the marketplace.

Fujitsu needed not only an expert in affecting behavioural and cultural change, but a partner who could mirror its locations across the globe, which is a tall order in itself. Whilst the management and monitoring of the bid process is vital to success, the trap is that salespeople often become led by the process rather than taking a proactive approach to influencing it, so Fujitsu needed a partner with a less process-heavy approach than its own. "On top of a wealth of very demanding criteria, we wanted to complete the project extremely quickly and needed a company that could meet our challenging time frames. After much critique, we chose Huthwaite International as the company who ticked all the boxes."

A solution to fit Fujitsu

The sheer size of Fujitsu meant that scoping the project properly was critical to success. "Integrating our own material was important to us to ensure that we created a tailored programme with a strong Fujitsu flavour," explained Roger.

Paul Loxley, Huthwaite's account manager added, "There is a world of difference between rolling out a big training implementation and delivering a behaviour change across a sales-force. Commitment

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from the highest level was vital to embed the Huthwaite methodology into Fujitsu’s sales practices and successfully effect behaviour change.”

As part of the roll out, Huthwaite:

- Delivered to over 170 members of the senior management team across Europe. This training introduced the Huthwaite Major Sales Process (MSP) methodology – to maximise the success rate in major, complex sales – and the Huthwaite SPIN® selling skills programme, which has at its heart the nine key behaviours that transform a good salesperson into a great salesperson.
- Arranged one-to-one sessions with many of the senior management team to help them reinforce the uptake of the Huthwaite methodologies and to help them address any specific issues they might face in embedding them.

“The programme kicked off with the senior team themselves; in fact the Chief Executive, David Courtley, was one of the first to be trained,” said Roger. *“This helped everyone across the organisation to understand the importance of the initiative and just how seriously it was being taken.”*

During the roll out, circa 480 salespeople and account managers underwent in depth SPIN® selling skills and Major Sales Process training. To ensure that the Huthwaite methodologies continue to permeate the organisation into the future:

- Over 25 nominated people throughout the sales organisation have been trained as SPIN® coaches.
- Persuasive Case Analysis workshops were delivered to over 65 people with the aims of creating an understanding of how SPIN® can be used to create added value, providing an introduction to the concepts of micro differentiation and decision guidelines, and to help them start to develop PCA’s around their own solutions.
- ‘Real Deal’ workshops were also set up specifically to coach live bid teams and help them apply Huthwaite methodologies in their campaign.
- ‘Walk in coaching surgeries’ were also offered, allowing salespeople to book a short slot where they received expert coaching from a Huthwaite consultant on the application of the skills and concepts to their specific sales opportunities.

“Sales people and account managers were the primary target for the programme, but importantly, Huthwaite courses were also initiated for those involved in the sales process; for example the financial community and HR,” said Roger. *“We fully recognise that sales must become part of our business philosophy so that it’s not just marginalised as a department.”*

Company-wide coverage

The objective of implementing the programme to tight time frames was achieved and after

running pilots over the late spring and summer, the major roll out began in the autumn and company-wide coverage was completed by the end of Fujitsu’s financial year in March. Continued demand for the Campaign Workshops and 1:1 Clinics has been strong, indicating an ongoing commitment to the understanding and application of the Huthwaite methodologies.

“Huthwaite International has undoubtedly driven sales performance improvement through behavioural change. Huthwaite’s courses now form a fundamental part of Fujitsu’s ‘Sales and Account Management Academy’, and we are fully committed to embedding a sales-centric culture and making the right behaviour instinctive,” commented Roger. *“The Huthwaite team has acted as a mentor to us, providing invaluable direction, counsel, expertise and support. Our relationship will continue into the future, but importantly, we now feel empowered to take these lessons forward, build upon them and channel them into creating a Fujitsu sales ethos that permeates our entire organisation.”*

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