

# In House Training Case Study

Moving from a ‘task’ focused approach to a ‘people’  
focused one.

## Contents

<b>Client Details &amp; Brief</b> .....	2
Client .....	2
Client’s Brief .....	2
What we found.....	2
How we saw the problem.....	2
<b>What We Did</b> .....	3
Programme Content .....	3
<b>The Results</b> .....	4
Client Feedback:.....	4

## ■ Client Details & Brief

### Client

The client is a privately owned, international pharmaceutical organisation with a worldwide network. The number of employees is in excess of 30,000.

### Client's Brief

The client contacted PSM and requested a programme for a group of four Sales Managers. At the time, the company was implementing a new Competency Development Initiative which included a very innovative online system for coaching their sales force, which was due to take effect in early 2008. There were two aspects to the implementation of this new system, 'the process' and 'the people'. The success of the process was dependent on the understanding and effectiveness of the people implementing the system. The client needed a programme which would address the communication between the managers and the staff in relation to both their development and appraisal of that development.

Success hinged on the integrity with which the system was implemented. The system needed to be seen to serve the staff rather than the other way around. This would result in a high level of trust between the managers and their staff. It would also have a positive impact on staff motivation, loyalty and retention.

### What we found

After meeting with the client, we clarified the objectives. The need was for was a training programme that addressed the following:

- Getting communication between managers and staff to be open and honest
- Encouraging staff to see their own development needs
- Dealing with difficult people and those who resist being managed.
- Applying the cornerstones of coaching to the management of people and creating an atmosphere of trust and confidence.
- Using the system to serve the "people" and not the other way around.

### How we saw the problem

The management in this company were primarily task focused. Also, there was a certain reluctance, based on inexperience, to address performance issues which were arising on a daily basis. There was also a misunderstanding about the role of the manager and his or her responsibility for the development of their team. We knew we needed to get the team to do a bit of self examination in terms of their management style. They had to start seeing their part in the poor performance of the staff, albeit unintentional. You can't fake or systemise the management of people, you have to be sincerely and genuinely interested in their development. Each person is unique and requires something different. All of these factors contribute to the successful management of a team. We (managers) have to meet people where they are, not where we are!

## ■ What We Did

PSM ran a tailored programme presented over four non-consecutive sessions with an intervening period of one week between each session. The first session was one full day (9am-5pm) and was followed by three ½ day sessions. (9am-1pm). The intervening periods provided an opportunity for the managers to apply the course content in practise. We encouraged participants to practice during the breaks and then report back at each session.

The first day covered the fundamentals of the manager-staff relationship and the underlying principles that govern it.

## Programme Content

### Day 1 Content: (9:00am-5:00pm)

The programme content included the following:

- Introductions and overview of the programme
- Competencies and human development.
- The principles of the manager-staff relationship
- What is the true purpose of the relationship?
- What limits potential and inhibits development?
- Understanding the causes/factors of poor performance.
- The pivotal importance of awareness
- Recognising the development needs in staff.
- What gives the manager real authority?
- Introduction to coaching and the 'needs grid'<sup>TM</sup>
- Timely and fearless response to people's development.
- Encouraging self-reliance and self-responsibility.
- Practical exercises and role play.

### Subsequent sessions

Following on from the first session, we decided to conduct three half-day workshops The focus here was on the practical application of the principles and techniques involved and role-play exercises were central to these sessions.

#### Session 2 – (½ day)

- Report back on practical exercises given on opening session.
- Overview of the first session.
- Coaching and the needs grid.
- The essential corner stones of coaching.
- Introduction to the key tools.
- Adjusting the approach /style.
- The different levels of listening.
- The interference of vested interest and agendas.
- Practical role-play exercises.

#### Session 2 – (½ day)

- Report back on practical exercises.
- Overview of the second session.
- Coaching and questioning skills.
- Providing feedback perceived as negative.
- Recognising addressing development needs.
- Blind spots and the area of incompetence.
- Meeting people where they are, not where you are.
- Trust and truthful communication.
- Practical role-play exercises.

#### Session 3 – (½ day)

- Report back on practical exercises.
- Overview of the final session.
- Internal and external obstacles to coaching.
- Why people resist coaching?
- Additional coaching techniques / skills.

- Coaching what is good, not what pleases.
- Encouraging continuous effort.
- Holding the staff accountable.
- Practical role-play exercises.

## ■ The Results

1) The management realised even more importantly than they did setting out, the need for a particularly people focused approach to managing performance of their staff.

2) Management recognised that a people first approach is not about doing things to people, it is about how you are with people.

### Client Feedback:

- *“The training was excellent. It was tailored to our requirements and was spot on. It changed the mind set, turned the reflection inward.”*
- *“The training got us thinking along a different line.”*
- *“We are all trying to put it into practice. It was just what I wanted!”*
- *“The thing that has really stuck with me is the realization that it is the manager’s role to serve the staff.”*
- *“The main benefits for me have been in relation to focusing more, decluttering, giving attention, realising that I wasn’t giving attention when I should be, and seeing the unlimited potential in others.”*
- *“I have begun to stop the automatic reactions and I am more in control now of my own responses. I am more effective in dealing with others and more responsive to their needs.”*
- *“The ‘language’ has changed. I am trying to get more from my team, throwing it out to them and listening. At a meeting where one girl needed to say something, I just listened – she seemed to appreciate that.”*
- *“I am less stressed when interacting with others. I’m also trying to see others from their perspective.”*
- *“The style of presentation was very good, relaxed, easy going. It was paced exactly to the needs of the group.”*
- *“The trainer was excellent. The use of analogy to get the understanding across was brilliant. He made us do the work, to come up with the answers. His experience really showed.”*
- *“I enjoyed it. The recaps were very useful, the trainer made sure we were with him all the time. Very pleasant.”*
- *“All of the group were very positive afterwards.”*

- *“It was great to get an outside perspective, having an outsider giving the course. We should do it more often.”*
- *“A very challenging and worthwhile course.”*

Following this programme, the client realised the need for their teams to appreciate some of the communication and relationship training in the PSM programme, and immediately organised subsequent programmes for the different sales groups throughout the country. The aim was to introduce the sales teams to a method of communication that was more focused on building client relationships rather than just selling the product.

*Note:* We continue to work with the organisation to the present day.

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