

JANEK PERFORMANCE GROUP

CASE STUDY

Case Profile

Company Name:

Global Consumer
Packaged Goods Company

Industry:

Manufacturing

Size of Company:

5,000 employees

Key Challenges:

- Extremely competitive, commoditized marketplace
- Combining a large team of Director-level sales professionals with newly hired “green” sales professionals that had no baseline selling skillset
- A longtime industry culture of “contractual selling”

Who was Interviewed:

- Director, Talent Development



Challenge

As is the case with many corporations, the Company realized that what once worked successfully for them would no longer keep them thriving in their current circumstances. Unable to keep up with competitors that could afford to buy market share, the Company needed a different approach – one that leveraged their strengths in the marketplace. Execution of this approach would require the development of a new type of sales rep – one who can foster rich customer relationships to truly become a “trusted advisor” and business partner.

Executives at the Company began by asking themselves, “What are our assets and strengths?” The answer was simple. It was the brand, their forward-thinking products and their people. However, there was a disconnect between the three, seemingly discouraging the development of relationships and loyalty with customers. The Company saw the need to leverage its longstanding brands and innovative product lines with a new and different type of sales professional.

One issue was the longtime culture of “contractual selling,” where the reps would see themselves as enforcers of the contract rather than using questioning and listening skills to work with the client when issues arose. Instead of a sales approach where one size fits all, the Company needed to shift to a more personalized, needs-assessment approach. Changing the culture, critical thinking and analytical skills of the reps was a major obstacle to overcome.

Stemming from the contractual sales mentality, the sales organization lacked the skills necessary to truly engage in a need-focused dialogue with their customers and use the information gathered to create a mutually beneficial outcome. Instead, the sales reps were too quickly relying on enforcing the contract terms and not considering how to position the terms in alignment with their customers’ needs. In effect, they needed to show their customers how the recommendations they were making would support their short- and long-term business objectives. This type of approach would go beyond the culture of the organization; it would be the first of its kind in the industry.

Finally, the Company was battling the challenge of keeping a large and ever-changing sales team on the same page. Hundreds of the sales reps’ roots were grounded in the world of “contractual selling” while hundreds were newly-hired and green, with little to no sales experience of any kind.

Bottom Line:

The Company needed to gain market share by establishing a culture of relationships with its customers. To do so, the Company needed to provide its sales organization with relationship-building skills and more dynamic sales training. In order to implement long-term change across the board they would need to combat the broad range of styles and consider the short- and long-term training implementation plan.

Solution

The Company needed to implement a real change in their sales operations. A change that was all-encompassing in scope and required resources and commitment at all levels of the organization – from the CEO to the sales professionals and everybody in-between.

Understanding the importance of this undertaking, the Company's executives approved the time and resources to make it happen. In identifying the ideal sales performance company to partner with, a group of sales professionals from various segments of the organization was asked to first attend public workshops of various sales training companies and report back. What they found was that most companies offered sales training and this was just *one* component the Company would need. Their ideal solution would include tailored strategies, relationship building within their unique culture, and really a new way of doing business altogether.

Upon selection, Janek took a sincere interest in the Company, spending the time needed to meet with the team and fully understand their roles and functions. Janek's pre-training consultation process included the identification of subject matter experts, field visits with sales reps, interviews with the executive team and review of organizational structure and history. By partnering with Company stakeholders in this way, Janek's instructional design team was able to customize the program with the experiences they gained.

The Company gave unfettered access to the Janek team, allowing program designers to talk with and observe numerous salespeople while conducting business, learning the internal vocabulary and industry jargon. Janek's team worked to have a clear understanding of the client relationships, brands, products, and the current "go to market" strategies to achieve a seamless and highly credible learning experience.

The rollout of the **Critical Selling® Skills** program included an internal marketing plan. A presentation was given to senior management and significant time was devoted to introducing the program by the Executive VP of Trade Marketing to the 3,000+ sales reps at the Company's bi-annual national sales meeting – thus signifying how important this program would be to the future of the organization. The excitement generated by this grassroots internal marketing effort created a demand for the program.

Five Janek trainers held dozens of two-day workshops in five cities over a three-month period. The research and preparation paid off, as attendees commented that the vocabulary was not only accurate, but that they felt the Janek facilitators truly knew their business and could have been mistaken for longtime employees of the Company. This gave the training that much more integrity and credibility. Post-training job aids and reinforcement tools were designed and distributed to every level of the organization to support their ongoing internal coaching efforts.

Bottom Line:

A true partnership with Company stakeholders allowed Janek's instructional design team the access and flexibility required to create a dynamic, impactful and truly one-of-a-kind program. When all was said and done, every person participated in the training – from the EVP to the newly-hired sales reps, demonstrating the buy-in and investment of the entire organization. The entire Company sales team learned to speak the same language.

"Janek intrigued us with an approach that was based less on the contract itself and more on the relationship with the customer. Janek could provide more opportunities to create consistency and possessed an appreciation for the benefits of effective selling skills and relationship building within our industry and culture."

-Director of Talent Development.

Results

The results were tangible. Through Janek's detailed, highly-customized and practical training program, sales reps began to understand the concept of the "trusted advisor" – the objective thought process that is required, and the skills necessary to be viewed and valued as such. From the top down, employees in the sales organization at the Company understood that they had to earn that title. It took practice and effort to become a trusted advisor and develop a meaningful relationship with the customer.

Sales reps were asked to complete electronic assessments to survey the effectiveness of the training and the results were extremely positive:

- 96% of the audience rated the overall workshop as either "Excellent or Very Good"
- 96% of the audience also felt the Trainer was knowledgeable about the topic and created an environment in which they could learn and wanted to participate
- A Return on Investment of 792% was realized as a result of the sales training initiative.

The sales team enjoyed and continues to enjoy much more substantial relationships with their customers, highlighted by deeper and more thorough communication. Janek's **Critical Selling® Skills** program is at the core of this change.

In fact, the Company is so pleased with their sales teams' new and consistent approach, they have already begun to integrate the teachings in other areas. Janek's sales curriculum has been customized and embedded into the onboarding of all new Company hires – and not only in the U.S. but also in the Company's international locations. Additionally, a sales leadership program has been created and rolled out by Janek for the Company's tenured sales professionals.

Bottom Line:

As a result, the sales team is experiencing more wins, and the Company is moving forward in a climate of excitement, purpose and growth.

"Our folks are acting different, and it shows the success of the Janek program at our company."

-Director of Talent Development

Individual participant comments include:

"Really enjoyed the course as well as the instructor. She was very enthusiastic and motivating."

"I am very pleased to have been a part of this training. The information I've learned is the most relevant information to really take to the streets."

"Such an effective course! Loved it! Thank you!"

Please visit www.janek.com or call **800.979.0079** to see how we can help your organization achieve its sales performance goals.