

JANEK PERFORMANCE GROUP

CASE STUDY

Case Profile

Company Name

McCrone Associates
(a division of The McCrone Group)

Industry

Scientific Research & Consultation

Key Challenges:

- Technical staff with little or no sales background
- Missed opportunities with existing relationships due to skill and culture gaps

Who was Interviewed:

- David Wiley, President of McCrone Associates
- Jeff McGinn, President of McCrone Microscopes & Accessories



Challenge

The McCrone Group is regarded as the world leader in the fields of microscopy, microanalysis, materials characterization, instrument sales, and related education. The organization consists of three member companies: McCrone Associates, Inc.; McCrone Microscopes & Accessories; and Hooke College of Applied Sciences.

McCrone Associates is their scientific services provider division and the organization we want to introduce in this case study. McCrone Associates focuses on solving materials and particle identification problems for a variety of clients from academia, industry, clinical laboratories, government agencies, and scientific researchers. Their team consists of scientists who consult and work directly with clients and use advanced microscopy techniques and instruments to help solve their clients' problems.

The McCrone Group wanted to grow overall sales by establishing deeper relationships with existing clients at all levels (procurement, engineers, lab managers, etc.), provide their technical staff with the skills to become trusted advisors who can identify and seize new business opportunities, and shift their corporate culture from a reactive to a proactive sales model.

In particular, The McCrone Group was looking for a sales training provider to help their division in the following areas:

- Instill a sales and selling mindset across a primarily technical, account-management focused organization
- Provide tailored sales training to equip a sizeable team of account managers and technical experts with the skills to identify and capitalize on business cross- and up-selling opportunities
- Deepen business relationships with existing and new customers by improving customer interactions and communication

Bottom Line:

McCrone Associates employs a sizable staff of scientists whose jobs included a project management component and who worked directly with clients on a daily basis. Few had any formal sales training and did not possess the ability to identify and capitalize on new opportunities for the organization.

Solution

The Company needed to implement a culture shift within their organization. McCrone Associates wanted their staff to become trusted advisors to their clients, not only by discussing and managing the scientific portion of a project, but also by exploring new business opportunities as they worked through projects with their clients.

Step 1: Prepare and Plan

Consultants from Janek Performance Group worked closely with leaders and staff throughout McCrone Associates to understand their division as part of a larger organization and how they do business. Customizing a sales training solution specifically tailored to McCrone Associate's unique business model was instrumental. Janek's team met with key stakeholders during on-site visits, talking with leaders and managers, as well as staff members, to fully understand the current state of the organization and how the company's employees were interacting with customers.

This phase of the process was critical because the scientists at McCrone Associates did not see themselves as salespeople. Janek's team members were careful to recognize the audience for their highly technical expertise and background. This went far in making them feel comfortable and be more open-minded to the training process.

Step 2: Training the Team

Knowing that most McCrone Associate team members never had formal sales training, Janek Performance Group fully customized their Critical Selling Skill methodology to make it relevant to the audience through true-to-life scenarios. Modular sales training included:

- Hands-on exercises
- Role-playing scenarios
- Interactive examples
- Use of subject-matter experts

Step 3: Sustaining the Skills

After the training wrapped, Janek worked closely with McCrone Associates to identify what the organization needed to do to lead change, reinforce skills, mentor managers, and supplement training. Follow-up was provided in the form of webinars, refresher courses, and ongoing discussions in order to ensure that the lessons learned were implemented and the associated skills become second nature to the scientists.

In addition, Janek worked with managers and leaders to deliver sales coaching techniques they could use to provide ongoing inspiration and guidance to the staff long after the training sessions had ended.

Bottom Line:

Close collaboration between Company stakeholders and the Janek team resulted in a tailored, real-world training program that would equip the scientists and technical staff of McCrone Associates to identify and capitalize on business opportunities.

"We felt that it was important to expose the scientists to some sales techniques because it's a facet of project management and a facet of initial engagement. Certainly our scientists could benefit from some of the tools and knowledge that traditional salespeople use in their approach to clients, understanding needs, and building value."

*-David Wiley, President,
McCrone Associates.*



Results

Bringing in Janek Performance Group as an outside organization provided The McCrone Group with a more objective view of their situation. It allowed them to look at things differently. The training also provided the sales force with new strategies and tools to approach their customers, left the staff with a positive vibe, and had a direct effect on growing sales, which continue to increase year after year.

As a result of the sales training, McCrone Associates has seen consistent year-over-year improvements in sales since Janek Performance Group first began to train its scientists and technical staff in 2013. In addition, the organization has seen more repeat customers, improved customer interactions, and deeper reach into new markets.

The average deal size has increased because a more customer-focused approach has turned McCrone Associates' staff into trusted advisors who are able to better identify needs and sell a broader array of products and services. As a result, they enjoy richer customer relationships across the organization.

Since taking a customer-focused sales approach, McCrone Associates has been better able to develop customer relationships. The training has resulted not only in increased sales but also in improved customer relationships – without sacrificing the technical and scientific expertise that the staff at McCrone Associates needed in order to sell their services with confidence and authority.

Bottom Line:

McCrone Associates has seen an increase in the average deal size; growth in sales year over year; and developed closer and deeper business relationships with their customers. Perhaps most importantly, McCrone Associates witnessed a culture shift within their organization in which each team member became a trusted advisor to their clients, being able to better understand their customers' needs, expand relationships, and identify new business opportunities.

"We want people to rely on us and come back to us. It's not just about the big sale. It's about forming the relationship and being able to carry it forward. Janek's sales training has changed our culture and our approach."

*Jeff McGinn, President,
McCrone Microscopes &
Accessories.*



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