

Imaginative staffing inc. essay sample



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The days of selling to a buyer alone are slowly dying. Companies sell products that have a wide effect on the client and require approval from many levels. Success in complex sales is the result of clear planning and effective execution. This requires careful coordination of many resources on both the selling and client side throughout the sales process. What is team-selling? Team-selling is using the resources of a company to sell an account using all relevant decision makers. The goal of team-selling is establishing long, lasting profitable relationships between people, product, and companies. Team-selling provides an ideal process for account managers and specialists to work together to serve a client. “ The place and time to use team-selling is when customer solutions is more important than price” (Dalrymple et al 2001).

The Case Study

Imaginative Staffing Inc. is a temporary services firm, formed in 1990. With \$17 million in revenue; the CEO Angie Roberts is unhappy concerning the length of time to close a sale once a prospect has been identified. Roberts has found the average length of time to close a sale to a major customer is six months. Roberts finds a six month time frame unacceptable. After meeting a marketing professor at a party where the conversation involved team-selling, Roberts is sure team-selling is just what Imaginative Staffing needs; she put it on the agenda of a meeting with the executive committee (Spiro et al 2003).

Imaginative Staffing is new to the temporary services market and relatively unknown. Roberts believe the salespeople need to get the potential

customer comfortable with Imaginative Staffing sooner the customer would come to know and trust Imaginative Staffing. Susan Borland is the sales director and Roberts asked Susan to set up a plan for training and creating a sales team. Susan agrees with Roberts team selling is a good idea for Imaginative Staffing, has people in mind for the team, and understands training will be necessary for all team members. (Spiro et al 2003).

The Team-Selling is Right for Imaginative Staffing Inc.

Some reasons to use team-selling are providing a strategic advantage, meets demands of customers more effectively, establishes long-term quality relationships with clients, provides a competitive advantage using a different kind of customer interface strategy, increases flexibility in how customers are served, increases sales, and profitability, gives resource allocation decisions at the field level, generates better input to new products and services and improves an organization's market orientation. Team selling is cross-functional selling, involving different people from different areas to work together to sell to and service a customer. One important aspect of team selling is selecting and training people who are team-oriented and know how to get others from different areas of the company involved for the long term with the customer.

Team Members

The team should consist of Susan Boland, two account managers, two of the top performing salespeople, and if needed someone to offer technical assistance. There should not be too many people for the customer to deal with, but enough so if one person is not available that person would know

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the customer history and would have the ability to assist the customer. An inside sales representative is needed so customers can call in when they know what they need and want to order.

Training Needed

Team-selling is becoming popular in American business today. Many organizations are using team-selling to increase sales and profits. When a sales force is asked to change their way of thinking training will be a benefit and a necessity. Salespeople who are going into a team-selling atmosphere will need to develop team skills that are needed for any team to be successful. Since salespeople are solitary people, considered to be lone wolves, essential training will be the ability to collaborate, informing, having a consciousness and openness to others ideas, being aware to the needs of others, and placing the success of the team first. Focusing on these fundamentals will build sensitivity and trust among team members (Spiro et al 2003).

Planning Presentations

Sales presentations should be simple not overwhelming with information a customer may not be able to remember. The goal of a sales presentation is to sell a solution to a customer, that solution being the product or service of the salesperson. A presentation must be relevant, make a connection with the product and the prospect, be to point, use showmanship, be animated, use physical demonstration, and belief in the product.

In a team-selling environment, one person could give the presentation, one could answer questions, or however the team decides to set up the presentation. The one thing that should not happen is each person give there own presentation on the same product; do not confuse the customer. All team members should be clear on roles and responsibilities. A team should always be together so all members give the same answers and information to the customer.

Selecting and Recruiting

When hiring salespeople set of qualifications and a job description with the duties the salesperson will do should be established. Many companies use outside agencies to help screen and find the best candidates, with some candidates working on a temporary basis. Time, organizational and territory management skills will be extremely important in a candidate for a sales position. Recruitment should be a continuous activity, allowing for top applicants (Saterfiel & Associates 2003). Some traits to look for in a sales person are detailed orientated, follow through, willingness to fight for the customer, market awareness, knowledge of product or service, imagination, and negotiation (Dalrymple et al 2001).

Appropriate Training

Appropriate training is very important to make the move to team selling. With proper training productivity will be increased and turnover of sale people will not be as large. Customer relations will be enhanced, morale for the employee will be higher, time and territory management will be exceptional and more efficient (Dalrymple et al 2001).

Not all salespeople will need the same amount or kind of training. Training has to and should be viewed as an investment. According to Dalrymple et al (2001) planning for sales training involves three processes, “ assessing sales training needs, establishing specific objectives for the training program, and setting a budget for the program.” All salespeople, new salespeople and those that have been with the company for any length of time will need to attend training. With the new team-selling approach salespeople will have new skills to learn.

Once the subject matter has been decided who, where and how will the training take place is next. Depending on the budget will determine where the training will take place. The training can be centralized, decentralized or take place out in the field. Outside specialist, sales managers or staff trainers can conduct the training (Dalrymple et al 2001).

Once the needs are accessed, the goals set and the budget determined, the next decision to make will how will the training be handled, who will do the training? The topics to cover in training will vary and can include product knowledge, selling, improving teamwork and customer information. The training can also be done using alternative methods; these alternative methods can be very valuable and less expensive (Dalrymple et al 2001).

Motivation

While most companies speak about the importance of teams, many still recognize and reward individual rather than team results. This is especially true in the sales arena. Imaginative Staffing will have to be very committed to the team-selling approach and understand the tools for motivation if the

sales force. Motivational tools are self-management, quotas, incentives, and recognition. What drives one person may not be the motivation the next person needs. Sales managers have to know what each individual needs and how to fill those needs (Dalrymple et al 2001).

When setting quotas it is important to remember goal theory. Simply put, it is a difficult goal will lead to higher performance than an easy goal. Feedback is critical for improved performance though goals. Salespeople have to be committed to the goal, the person who does will be resolute in meeting the objective (Dalrymple et al 2001).

Incentives are designed to inspire salespeople to perform to higher than unusual levels and provide rewards. The average company spends \$97, 800 with \$6 billion spent annual on programs. Greater incentives lead to greater inspiration.

Recognition programs are based on two principles, generate enthusiasm and motivation plus get feedback from the salespeople to enhance performance possibilities (Dalrymple et al 2001).

Conclusion

Every sales person has been through meetings where one person dominates the sale in a team-selling format. Sometimes salespeople do not tell the client why they brought their team-mates and what those team members can do for them. The client will have expectations the team will have creditability to close the deal and service the client. Knowing the value of each team member and discussing as a team how the team can maximize

everyone allowing the whole team to contribute to close the deal. Imagine what could be achieved if no one cared who received the credit.

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