

# Strategies for assessing skills and competencies



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Outline for firm's HR strategy vis-à-vis B2B launch As a Manager of sales department of software firm and in charge of staffing decision for new launch of B2B program, I think that with 20 members of strong sales team, the need for new sales executive is not immediately required. The current HR strategy, therefore, would focus on training and development of skills and competencies for B2B project from amongst the best five sales executives who have shown consistently good field results in the last 12 months.

B2B market and sales strategy targets other business houses and companies for bulk sales of its product and services. The main difference between the retail sales and B2B sales is in terms of the volume. B2B deals in large volumes of sales order and therefore, becomes important ingredient of sales strategy. Hence, while the basic competency and skills of the present sales staff is adequate, the new group from within the sales team would need to undergo 4 months training and development program. They would also be required to explore B2B market for 1 month to evaluate their requirements and how the company can meet them.

The in-house training by the external consultants and senior management staff would on the following modules would greatly enhance existing skills and provide them with wide scope of expanding their knowledge area:

Gaining more knowledge about B2B market and major strategies to make in-road into new area.

B2B market is focused on bulk orders therefore sales executives must be skilled in knowing what the investment parameters are going to be so that the objections arising due to money, time and resources are already made clear before making their sales presentations. The training module would prepare the sales team to evaluate these parameters for its different

business partners.

Developing competencies in leadership initiatives, relationship building, setting up priorities and learning to deal with ambiguous and adverse situations.

Learning effective communication skills and techniques for closing sales through understanding and analysis of human psychology.

Confidence building through commitment to work and focused approach.

Creating need for products and services amongst the business partners and convincing them on why one's products are best suited to their needs and requirement.

Reflection/ my thoughts

The encouraging and incentive driven work environment promotes retention of employees and gives the organization better leverage to compete with their rivals. The experienced and motivated workforce is conducive to higher degree of creative inputs and innovative approach. Commitment to work and loyalty towards employers is considerably increased when the employees are given opportunity to improve and improvise their professional skills and competencies through in-house training and development. Zapata-Cantu et al. have also asserted that professional growth and self improvement, through human resource development practices, greatly enhance organization's advantage (Zapata-Cantu et al., 2007).

In the highly competitive environment of recessive economy, upgrading the skills of the existing sales executives would be the best option. Indeed, HR's initiatives become critical to creating congenial work atmosphere that motivates and inspires others to improve their performance and achieve organization's goals with vision and innovation. The sales executives are

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already well versed in the strength and weaknesses of the firm's goods and services and therefore, would be able to better handle the queries from the B2B business partners. Hence, I think that my strategy of using existing sales staff for B2B marketing is right.

#### Reference

Zapata-Cantu, Laura, Olivas-Lujan, R Miguel, Ramirez Jacobo. (2007). e-HRM in Mexico: adapting innovations for global competitiveness. *International Journal of Manpower*, Vol. 28, No. 5. (2007), pp. 418-434.