

A Trainer in Value Selling for Freudenberg – Steve Nixon

Issue for Freudenberg in Europe

Freudenberg had recognized that despite their large market share in many of its markets it was not capitalizing on its true value to the customers and was being caught up in a price down war with its competitors, who often did not offer comparable products in terms of quality and performance. To readdress the balance the board of Freudenberg embarked on an exercise called “Customer Value First”, wherein the value of its products and services needed to be better represented and “sold” to the customers. A small number of people were chosen, like disciples, to spread the training and techniques. Steve Nixon was chosen to do this for the UK company.

Overall contribution / achievement of objectives

Steve was the only non-sales person chosen to perform this in recognition for his strong negotiations in the piston seal business. He provided training for all the UK based staff, approximately 100 in total.

Impact on the business / bottom line

The direct impact on the bottom line is harder to measure as this is a holistic approach to improving customer satisfaction whilst still maintaining good market share and prices. In his own division this customer value first program formed one of the main elements in a total strategy, which resulted in profitability increasing from 10% to 20% on sales, market share growth from 67% to 90%, with a corresponding increase in turnover from €52m to €70m

Leadership / people management skills

“Steve was the only non-sales person chosen to perform this in recognition for his strong negotiations in the piston seal business. He proved to be an excellent trainer for the sales and general staffs, helping everyone see the true value of Freudenberg’s services and how to prove this to the customers. Steve gave his “pupils” many different strategies to use in discussions or negotiations with customers.”

Sales team – customer development – s14n