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Considerations and preplanning in the initial establishment of telemarketing training

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Abstract

According to McGraw Hill Inc., the average cost of an industrial sales call has now reached $150. For direct mail, over the past five years, postage rates alone have increased 80% for first class postage and 70% for bulk mail. Add to this the substantial increase in type, print, paper and labor cost, and it is easy to see that direct mail is becoming less and less affordable.

CONSIDERATIONS AND PREPLANNING IN THE INITIAL ESTABLISHMENT OF TELEMARKETING TRAINING

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INTRODUCTION

Considerations and Planning in the Initial Establishment of Telemarketing Training

According to McGraw Hill Inc., the average cost of an industrial sales call has now reached $150. For direct mail, over the past five years, postage rates alone have increased 80% for first class postage and 70% for bulk mail. Add to this the substantial increase in type, print, paper and labor cost, and it is easy to see that direct mail is becoming less and less affordable.

In view of these facts, more and more marketers are turning to the telephone as either a primary, or value added supplementary marketing tool (Goroff, 1982; Reynolds, 1983; Bolgar, 1985). Telemarketing is the most cost-effective accountable, historically traceable marketing tool available (Goroff, 1982). For businessmen, the attraction of this new tool is great. But what are some of the factors that have lead marketers to "discover" the telephone during the years?

Certainly the most important factor is cost, (Hamilton, 1982). But Roman (1983) found five special characteristics that have made the telephone one of the most important alternatives in today's business climate. It is relevant to review each one in turn.

1. Person-Person Communication. Next to a live salesperson, the telephone is truly the most direct and personal direct-response medium available today. Telephones provide the most vital quality of the personal sales call, normally on a cost effective basis. In fact, for

many industries as the lines differentiating one company from another begin to blur, the customer-service orientation of the telephone contact may become the major difference stimulating a prospect to do business with one firm as opposed to another.

2. Immediacy and Flexibility. The response from telephone prospects is immediate, allowing quick management changes in strategy, price, and product. . . . Also, telephone provides marketers with flexibility to test different offers and creative strategies. Changes can also be immediate and inexpensive. There are no printing or production cost involved in testing different approaches on an ongoing basis.

3. Complementary and Incremental Effect. Telephones work best in combination with other media. Telephone follow-up to direct mailing will generate an incremental response 2½ to 10 times the response achieved by mail alone. For example: Direct-mail response, 2%; Telephone response, 12 to 15%; Combined response, 20 to 30%. This lift in response is incremental and creates a much different result than the responses normally achieved by mail.

4. Economic. Cost for telemarketing is very reasonable, when you consider the costs for the next most personal selling medium, the face-to-face salesperson. . . . Because of the speed of response, telephoning is also the most immediately cost-accountable direct-response medium.

5. Productivity. A well-managed and structured telephone operation can achieve a high level of productivity. One trained

communicator speaks with 3.5 to 7 business decision makers per hour, and speaks with 8 to 15 consumer decision makers per hour.

In view of the benefits of telemarketing, it is easy to see why many businesses and organizations are attempting to capitalize on this new marketing tool (Roman, 1983). Telemarketing is now one of this country's fastest growing industries, yet it continues to be plagued by some of the highest turnover in U. S. business (Miller, 1983). One security firm, which relies heavily on telephone marketing, estimates that it costs well over $100,000 during a period of three years to recruit, train, and bring a security's salesman up to a successful production level. Yet, it also loses some 74% of it's recruits within that time.

Obviously, high turn over is a key sign of employee dissatisfaction. While there can be many sources of employee unhappiness, two factors appear to be especially relevant to high turnover in many telemarketing organizations according to an article by Anastasi (1982). These factors are inadequate planning and inappropriate management.

The telephone is the most familiar of all direct response media. Therefore, some executives have assumed telemarketing is easy. Thus, many companies blithely design and operate telemarketing centers without sufficient attention to basic principles that have been painstakingly developed by telemarketing professionals (Bolgar, 1985).

The question then becomes, how does an organization in a reasonably fast and cost effective way create a more effective supervisory climate so that sales managers can learn to turn on rather than turn off salespeople? They must also improve competence of salespeople so they will experience greater success, thereby increasing profitability of this new marketing medium. These are difficult challenges for any organization. But for a growing number of companies, in many industries, the challenge is being met by training.

Research indicates that the single most important element in the foundation of telemarketing success is training, yet many programs often fail to do more than orient the new telemarketing professionals toward company rules and regulations (Larson, 1986). Also, Anastasi (1982) discovered that earlier forms of management and sales training usually attempted to change attitudes about effective management styles and selling techniques, by presenting information on management and selling theory.

Trainees were then expected to implement these theories in on-the-job situations. Most people, however, could not transfer these theories into specific on-the-job behavior, so they typically reverted back to their old behavior. Therefore, a good deal of money spent on training was wasted (Anastasi, 1982).

Another consideration which perpetuates the problem of providing adequate telemarketing training is the limitations on training literature, based on the newness of the field of training. Goldstein (1980) conducted a review of training literature and found that most of the articles which have appeared on training can be classified into broad categories.

The category that covers the scope of telemarketing training literature consists of nontheoretical and nonempirical writings. This includes articles that review particular training techniques or that are general training statements about the need and importance of training for particular jobs or organizations. Telemarketing training literature supporting this premise includes: Miller, 1983; Quinn, 1983; Goroff, 1982; Roman, 1983 and many others.

Purpose

This paper proposes to consider some elements of providing initial telemarketing training. In this consideration it is hoped that the issue of inadequate preplanning and inappropriate management resulting in employee dissatisfaction is addressed. Rather than attempting to provide effective telemarketing training, the review will instead focus on the elements which should be considered in the preparation of initial effective training. Some of these elements include creating the proper environment, hiring the right people, expected requisite skills, orientation, evaluation, and retraining.

The first step involved in the consideration of initial telemarketing training will be provision of a training definition. After the definition has been clearly established, this paper will then focus on each element mentioned earlier in a sequential manner. The outcome of this procedure should result into a systematic, well-organized approach to the initiation of telemarketing training.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction to the Training Process

Training can be treated as a complete cycle with interrelated phases (Goad, 1982). These phases logically parallel the steps that a person would use in problem solving and involve five steps: (a) analysis, (b) design, (c) develop, (d) conduct, (e) evaluate. Each phase feeds back into the other, making it a closed loop system.

Although the particular phases of training identified by several different sources may contrast slightly, they are all very similar (Goad, 1982). For example, Certo (1983) views training as a four-step process of developing qualities in human resources that ultimately will enable them to be more productive and, thus, contribute more to organizational goal attainment. The four-steps of training individuals according to Certo (1983) are: (a) determining training needs, (b) designing the training program, (c) administering the training program, and (d) evaluating the training program.

The instructional systems approach to training introduced by Goldstein (1980) also indicates that there should be a logical flow from the initial determination of training needs to program development and to training evaluation. In other words, training is seen as an evolving process which utilizes evaluative information to adapt the program so that it better meets its stated objectives (Goldstein & Buxton, 1982).

For this review, a useful model describing the systematic preparation of telemarketing training is based on a general systems perspective (Laird, 1980). The general systems approach to training emphasizes experience, or structured discipline, which causes people to acquire new pre-determined behaviors as stated by the standard.

The key characteristics of this approach are structured experiences designed to adhere to standards and involves a six-step process (Laird, 1978).

Step 1. Define the standard way for performing all the tasks needed by the organization.

Step 2. Secure people to perform these tasks.

Step 3. Find out how much of the task they can already perform.

Step 4. Train them in the difference . . . in what they cannot already do.

Step 5. Test them to make certain they can perform.

Step 6. Give them the material, knowledge, and time with which to perform the task.

The model introduced implies that preparatory training should follow a logical sequence based on predetermined and measurable standards. One study on educational techniques discovered that the instructional phase of a lesson should give the class as much preparation as possible for the activities which are to follow (Weaver & Cenci, 1960).

> The goal should be to have the class understand what is going to take place, what the goal of the activities are, and to inspire the class members to accomplish the goals of the lesson.

Determining the General Goal

Learning should involve goal setting to generate new perspectives that carry with them suggestions of what may be done to handle a problem situation (Egan, 1975). According to an article by Larson (1986), the goal of telemarketing should be a telemarketing-oriented educational experience which will benefit both the employee and employer. The educational experience should not only train the newly hired, but provide remedial training to correct deficiencies and job enhancement for tenured staff.

Setting Training Objectives

Organizational objectives give managers and all other organization members important guidelines for action in such areas as decision making, organizational efficiency, organizational consistency and performance evaluation (Certo, 1980). Heinich, Molenda, and Russell (1982) suggest several reasons for the importance of stating objectives: (a) know objectives in order to make the correct selection of media and methods, (b) know objectives to create a learning environment in which the objectives can be reached, and (c) know objectives to help assure property evaluation.

Most developers include these three elements in a well-stated objective: (a) performance, (b) conditions, (c) criterion (Goad, 1982; Heinich, Molenda, & Russell, 1982; & Laird, 1978) and many others. In developing telemarketing objectives, it is important to create objectives for a specific purpose and set of desired activities (Larson, 1986). For instance, telemarketing objectives may encompass ways for the telephone sales representative (TSR) to handle new sales situations, improve their ability to communicate, discover a new product offering, perform a specific task, or overcome current performance deficiencies.

Create the Telemarketing Environment

One reason for stating objectives is to create the environment in which the objectives are to be performed (Heinich, Molenda, & Russell, 1982). Ichii Isomura, a Japanese sociologist and urban planner, identifies a direct environment that includes such factors as family, residence, play surroundings, schools, cultural relationships, and jobs or careers (Hawkins & Preston, 1981). All of these have what Isomura calls direct environmental characteristics or influences that affect not only the content of an individual's message, but also the proposed and actual receivers of individual messages.

It is, therefore, safe to assume that the direct environment expressed by Isomura can influence personal relations when considered from a group, rather than an individual perspective. Thus, the environment should be conducive to the establishment of well-organized personal group relationships between organization members, who strive for the achievement of goals, task, and production, according to the 1973 Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators. Combs (1985) introduced an effective method to improve personal relations through environmental considerations for telemarketing with his egronomic overhaul plan.

The ergonomic overhaul plan indicates that productivity levels are affected by psychological and physical ergonomics. In order for telemarketing managers to increase productivity and prevent probably training needs, they should concentrate efforts in creating proper environments through psychological and physical ergonomics (Combs, 1985). Following is a review of psychological and physical ergonomics.

Psychological Ergonomics

The work environment must be emotionally uplifting to the TSR. Certain aesthetic considerations should be taken to accomplish this psychological environment. These consideration are presented below.

Personalization. Allow each TSR to personalize his/her workstation within reason. This creates a more comfortable environment for the TSR and improves his/her attitude and morale.

Snacking. Food and beverage should be allowed at the workstation, if consumed between calls. Constant rejection increases nervousness and a basic human reaction to nervousness is a desire to eat. This is a small concession to make in order to have happy TSRs.

Group compatibility. You may need to reassign workstations to assuage personality conflicts. Some managers feel it is important to break up individuals who are too chatty because they maybe disruptive. Motivation is best accomplished at the peer level where support and reinforcement is always readily available.

Bulletin boards. Post individual and team sales results, information about new sales contest, past winners, and motivational quotations. Next examine the location of the bulletin boards. They should be placed in a highly visible area.

Physical Ergonomics

Computers and modern telephone systems frequently require environmentally controlled equipment rooms. Failure to maintain the proper environment can cause system failures and a production breakdown. Like computers, TSRs also require special environmental considerations to operate at maximum efficiency and productivity. Here are some of the factors that contribute to this productivity and efficiency.

Comfort zone. Check thermostat, ventilation, and humidity levels. Year round temperature settings should be between 70 and 72 degrees. The air handlers should keep the air circulating constantly, especially if any TSRs smoke. Energy management is important, but not at the expense of the TSR's comfort.

Lighting. Check the lighting levels at desk height. Sixty to 70 foot candles is the minimum standard allowable. Inadequate lighting causes eye strain which slows down the TSR. Bright lighting will not only increase productivity, but will also improve attitudes.

Silence. Use a sound level meter to determine noise levels in the office. A noise level of 70 decibels or more can be disruptive to TSRs. This could result in TSR/customer misunderstandings, thus error rates increase as do call lengths. To reduce the noise level, evaluate the need to relocate printers, clerical support, and paging/music speakers. Consider placing acoustical dividers between TSRs. Carpeting, curtains (anti-static), suspended ceilings, and soft vinyl desktops can also be used.

Functionality. Analyze the TSRs' workstations. Is everything within arm's reach? Are in/out baskets located where clerks have access to them without distracting the TSR? Are the aisles wide enough so the traffic does not distract the TSR? Are there enough shelves, desk drawers, and dividers to allow the TSR to organize all materials. Providing a more efficient workstation is a low cost way to increase productivity.

Personnel

Hiring the Right People

One means of successfully providing appropriate human resources for organizations, according to Certo (1980), requires following a four-step procedure. This procedure includes: (a) recruitment, (b) selection, (c) training, and (d) performance appraisal. The process can be used to fill either managerial or nonmanagerial openings.

In securing personnel for telemarketing, Steckel (1976) suggests using the process of elimination because of the varied selection of applicants for the part-time position of telephone operator. The most successful telephone operators should possess three important qualities: (a) an excellent speaking voice, (b) a positive approach to each situation, and (c) genuine enthusiasm. About 85% of the applicants interviewed will not meet these standards and should not be considered. Of the remaining 15%, more than half will have a need for income. Those with a desire to earn are more conscientious and more apt to concentrate on the task at hand. These applicants will make the best telephone salespeople (Steckel, 1976).

Unlike Steckel's (1976) elimination process of selection, Hamilton (1982) found that the hiring procedure for telemarketing sales representatives should involve three important steps. The following section will consider these steps.

Placing the ad. Since the recruitment is based on part-time employment as a result of the high pressure environment of telephone calling, the ad should be block-type, with some kind of attention grabber. "Earn extra money for Christmas" or "Turn your free time into money." The ad should give a telephone number and a name to ask for, but not the address, since you want your first contact to be by phone.

The telephone interview. Few companies employ this technique effectively in interviewing telephone sales or service personnel. Yet, it is the single most important step in the selection process. The purpose of the telephone interview is to hear the person's voice on the phone and see if the applicant has the ability to think quickly on his/her feet. It may also be wise to test the applicant's reading ability if your organization intends to adhere to many different word-for-word scripts. This can easily be accomplished by asking the applicant to read the newspaper ad back to the interviewer.

Determine Prior Knowledge

Recruitment activities begin with a thorough understanding of the position to be filled. Only after this understanding exists can the broad range of potential employees be narrowed intelligently. Job analysis is a procedure aimed at determining: (a) What activities a job entails, and (b) What type of individual should be hired to perform the job. Job description is the term used to refer to the activities a job entails, while the term job specification refers to the characteristics of the individual who should be hired for the job according to Certo (1980). Apparently Certo's research indicates that people seeking employment should already possess the requisite skills and knowledge indicated by the job specifications.

A study conducted by Junge, Daniels, and Karmos (1984) discovered that business and industry expect the educational system to provide them with entry-level personnel who possess skills that will contribute to corporate goals, yet the study found the skills to be lacking. Their study was designed to assess requisite skills that would help enhance individual adaptability to industrial growth in terms of importance, competence, and discrepancy. The findings of the study are listed in the table below.

Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations for Skill Importance, Competency, and Discrepancies

Skill	Importance Mean	Competence Mean	Discrepancy Mean
Speaking and Listening	4.08	2.91	1.15
Writing	4.06	2.69	1.38
Reasoning	3.78	2.57	1.20
Reading	3.62	2.73	0.88
Mathematics	3.05	2.41	0.63
Scientific	2.59	2.07	0.53

Note. From an article written by the authors of the study (Junge, Daniels, & Karmos, 1984.

As indicated by the table, Business and Industry need entry level employees who are already competent in certain requisite skills, but there is a discrepancy in this provision.

Orientation

Steckel (1976) views telemarketing orientation as a process of giving each new person an orientation booklet, or something similar, to review at home. This orientation booklet alleged establishes the importance of seeing the telephone calling position in the right perspective by explaining company expectations, goals, and objectives. Providing this information in printed form is supposed to give the sales representative a better opportunity to review the information at leisure, and increase retention of important points relayed. Steckel's approach to orientation seems to be the problem with this process, according to the research on providing an orientation system that builds productivity by McGarrell (1984).

McGarrell's (1984) research indicates that company employees were often placed into new positions before they learned anything about the company. Therefore, their first day was generally disorganized and confused. After careful analysis of the problem with orientation, and proven methods to correct it, some guidelines were developed for building effective orientation designed to increase productivity (McGarrell, 1984). Some of these guidelines are presented in this review.

1. Impressions about an organization are formed early. These impressions, if poor, lead people to seek other jobs. Make them lasting.

2. The time between acceptance of the job offer and the first day of employment should be used to maintain contact with the new

person; help with housing, provide information about the community, and so forth.

3. Day one is crucial because new people remember their first day of employment, so it must be well managed.

4. Provide a sense of the total company with objectives, policies, values, and plans.

5. Teach the basics first so that new people will know the hows, whens, wheres, whys of getting things done before starting their assignments.

6. Give new people the major responsibility for their own orientation. Adults learn best if they have a responsibility for themselves.

7. After the new people have gotten an understanding of the organization, then they should be trained in order to perform organizational objectives provided at the start of orientation.

Any organization can benefit from these guidelines. They should seriously be considered when providing telemarketing orientation of the newly hired.

Considerations for Training the New Telemarketer

In training the telephone sales representative, the initial consideration should be an introduction to company policies, objectives, and expectations (Roman, 1983). But, it should also include product knowledge and telephone selling skills (Hamilton, 1982), as well as a chance to practice and evaluate what was learned during telemarketing training sessions (Larson, 1986). These are general considerations for telemarketing training. More specific elements are included in research from other sources (Anastasi, 1982; Ortland, 1982; Smyth, 1984).

Smyth (1984) created a telemarketing trainer's topic outline which emphasized the considerations of initial training. This outline indicates that training should include a basic introduction to the field of telemarketing and also discuss particular aspects of the telemarketing project. The following questions provide the core outline of areas that should be covered in basic telemarketing training (Smyth, 1984).

1. What is telemarketing?
2. What is direct marketing?
3. What is the telemarketing sales process?
4. What qualities must a salesperson have?
5. What are objections?
6. How do you handle the call screener?
7. How do you handle decision maker's objections?
8. What is role play?
9. What are the parts of sales script?
10. What are standards for delivery of a scripted call?

Providing answers to those questions will generate the components of initial training and was the foundation of the research by Smyth (1984).

The behavior model approach to telemarketing training operates on the theory that the most sure way to motivate people is to give them the skills they need to be successful on their job (Anastasi, 1982).

This approach to initial telemarketing training works in seven phases. Each Phase is considered below.

Phase one. Participants are trained in a series of telephone or supervisory skills. In telephone sales training programs, such skills include approach, benefits, probing, handling objections, and closing. Ortland (1982) explains each of these selling skills.

Approach--All telephone sales presentations should be introduced with an enthusiasm that the prospect can hear. The inflection of the voice should instill in listeners a positive feeling toward you as the salesperson. The major objective is to let your voice convey a smile.

Stress Benefits--An easy way to control conversations with the prospect is to remind them constantly of the major benefits the products or services can offer. Immediately after introducing yourself, start promoting the sales points that offer the most to the person on the other end of the line.

Probing--Probing is a questioning technique used to get a feel for the prospect's position on the product you are selling. It is a means of bringing out prospective objections.

Handling Objections--Objections are built in defenses that prospects use to get you off their backs. Handling objections simply means turning buyer's negatives into positives by providing the benefits of your product.

Closing--Closing is culminating the presentation, overcoming objections, summarizing and typing up. There are five types of closings: (a) alternatives, (b) space/quantity limitations,

(c) silent technique, (d) emotional appeal, and (e) added incentive. After training of sales skills, participants are trained in supervisory skills where they learn motivational principles such as: maintaining self-esteem, focusing on specific behavior, reinforcement, maintaining communication, and follow-up.

Phase two. Participants then learn how to apply the skills of phase one in a series of sales or supervisory situations. Each situation has a series of sales or supervisory situations. Each situation has a series of guidelines or action steps designed to help the individual successfully handle the sales situation.

Phase three. Participants watch a model showing a telephone salesperson using the action steps and skills to handle the situation.

Phase four. Participants practice the action steps and skills they saw modeled.

Phase five. Feedback is given from three sources: peers, the trainer, and the model of the practice session.

Phase six. At the end of every skill training session, participants commit to using the skills on the job.

Phase seven. The management provides reinforcement of the skill. The training program is evaluated for effectiveness.

Evaluation of the Training Program

Evaluation is a set of theoretical and practical activities without paradigm (Glass, 1980), but it is a vital aspect of training because it completes the training cycle (Goad, 1982). Ford and Wroten (1984) indicates that a critical need to evaluate the existing training program evolves in order to prioritize training needs for program redesign.

Types of Training Evaluation

Evaluation for training can be divided into three types, although they do overlap and are required to provide effective testing, according to Goad (1982): (a) self-evaluation, the process of determining the effectiveness of the trainer; (b) learner evaluation, the process in which the learner expresses their opinions about the effectiveness of the training; and (c) testing, the process of determining whether or not the learners learned what was intended. These types of evaluation will be discussed in the following sections.

Self-evaluation. It is usually difficult for people to critique themselves, but one way to obtain the maximum information is to do the evaluation shortly after the entire training course (Goad, 1982). A helpful aid for conducting self-evaluation is a self-evaluation checklist, illustrated by Sample 1.

Self-Evaluation Check-List
Sample 1

Material

1. Was my material appropriate for the group?
2. Was it well organized?
3. Did I make my objectives known?

Presentation

1. Did I secure the attention of the group?
2. Did I give a coherent presentation?
3. Did I motivate the group?
   And so on . . .

Facilities

1. Were the physical arrangements satisfactory?
2. Did I keep adequate records?

Post-Course

1. Were the training objectives achieved, to what degree, if not, then why?
2. Were the learner's expectations met? How do I know?
3. What were some of the indications of changes in knowledge, skills, or attitudes?
   And so on . . .

Following the guidelines of the check-list is a sure method of covering all the aspects of self-evaluation.

Learner evaluation. The second type of evaluation, according to Goad (1982) is to get the learners' responses to the effectiveness of training after the training program has been completed, although Laird (1978) believes that this method of learner evaluation is inappropriate:

> What happens too often is that learners are asked to evaluate the training program at the end of the training sessions. This is unfortunate because at closing, most participants just want to go home. The timing is bad. (p. 25)

The best method of evaluation at such a moment is to get the learner's estimate on how much they have acquired, or how much they think they will apply the new learning on the job. The most effective instrument for this form of evaluation is illustrated by the Sample 2.

How Will You Put the Training to Work
(Sample 2)

Now that you have finished training, it's time to put your training to use. Will you give your best estimate to the statements below by checking the columns?

	I Plan to do this Always	Often	Sometimes
1. Prepare learning objectives for each lesson.			
2. Insist the objectives involve observable action.			
3. Use some form of pretest.			

This form could be presented at the end of the training session, and participants could complete it at their available time.

Testing. The ultimate question in the instruction process is whether or not the students learned what they were supposed to learn (Goad, 1982). According to Heinich, Molenda, and Russell (1982), capabilities of the process product, or attitude type could be assessed to some extent by means of written or oral tests, but more direct and stronger evidence would be provided by observing the behavior in action. This implies setting up a situation in which the learner can demonstrate the new skill. Table 2 by Laird (1978) provides an appropriate method of testing based on the learning domains.

Table 2

Matching Measurement Instruments to Learning Domains

For these domains:	Cognitive Domain	Affective Domain	Psycomotor Domain
Consider these Instruments:	Short Answer Fill in the Blank True/False Essays	TAT Team Effectness Scales	Performance Try-Out Manipulative Games and Exercises

Note. From Training and Staff Development (Laird, 1978).

Telemarketing Training Evaluation

Telemarketing, like any direct response medium should be measured to ensure that the effort is being managed efficiently (Roman, 1983).

There are two broad areas that must be measured and evaluated to ensure the success of the telemarketing effort. Those are quantitative and qualitative, according to Stone (1984). Let's review these measurements.

Quantitative measurement. Quantitative factors are directly measurable variables that result from the promotion and sales processes of a telemarketing campaign. Examples of these would be:

1. Number of calls generated from a campaign.
2. Number of calls handled by the telemarketing center.
3. Number of calls handled by each specialist.
4. Number of sales and dollar volume of sales.
5. Average revenue per sale.
6. Distribution of sales product-line analysis.
7. Sales conversion rate for lead generation programs.
8. Revenue to expense ratios.

The quantitative data captured from your telemarketing effort will be the basis of reports to management on how the program is performing.

Qualitative measurement. Qualitative factors cover the scope of the review and are indirectly measurable through both analysis of quantitative variables as well as observations of the center's day-to-day performance. These factors measure the productivity of the center's effectiveness. Examples of these variables would be:

1. Ability of individual telemarketing specialists to consult or cross-sell.
2. Efficiency of management of telemarketing center's capacity.
3. Productivity of center and staff.

4. Appropriateness of critical elements of promotional message.

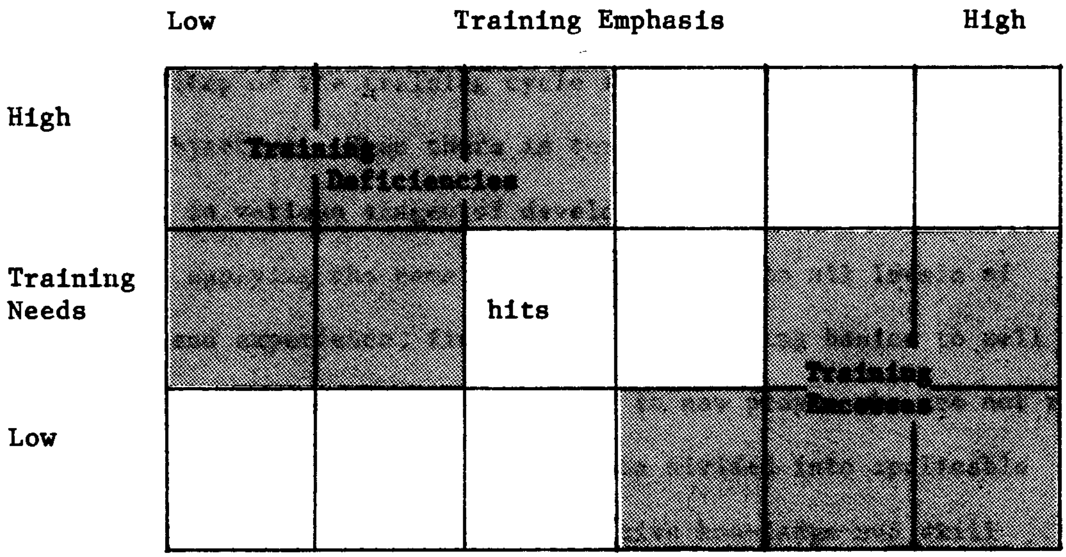
5. Efficiency of inbound and outbound calling plan.

The qualitative factors are every bit as important as the quantitative ones. Measuring them indicates quality of performance and a direction to possible training needs.

Retraining

The purpose of evaluation is to determine further training needs that should result in program redesign. A methodology called the "Matching Technique" is one technique used to link the training needs reassessment information to program revision (Ford & Wroten, 1984). The new "Matching Technique" introduced in their research is conceptualized in Sample 3 as a matrix in which training emphasis is directly compared to training needs.

Sample 3



The comparison of emphasis with needs identifies training hits and misses. Training hits refer to those content areas (defined in this study as knowledge, skills, and abilities) where the emphasis received in training appropriately reflects training needs. Training misses are separated into two types: deficiencies and excesses. An assumption behind the Matching Technique is that the greater the number of misses (both deficiencies and excesses) uncovered, the less effective the training program and the greater the need for refinement (Ford & Wroten, 1984).

Although the Matching Technique is an effective tool for measuring training needs, Steckel (1976) implies that it would be inappropriate for retraining in telemarketing. Retraining is never a major effort in telemarketing. If the results are bad enough to indicate considerable retraining of experienced personnel, the best solution is usually replacement, in view of the part-time nature of the position (Steckel, 1976). Steckel provides a few guidelines for retraining telemarketing sales representatives.

Dividing Training Into Applicable Compartments

Each step of the training cycle must be planned to accomplish its specific objective. When there is turnover, the sales force is constantly in various stages of development. Managers who make the mistake of applying the same level of training to all levels of expertise and experience, find themselves teaching basics to well developed phoners and advanced methods to new people who are not ready for them. Therefore, training should be divided into applicable compartments for faster and more effective knowledge and skill retention.

Establish workable rules. Once a training program is established, there is no need to break it by making exceptions. The manager must set down rules that are workable, but more importantly, he/she must be sure he/she is not the first person to break his/her own rules. The program can only succeed when it follows the system and it will be weakened every time a change is made in the system.

Discover and correct problems quickly. If there is a breakdown in results from any representative, at any stage of the process, the problem must be discovered and solved quickly. Discovering the problem can be as simple as monitoring calls and as complicated as taping 30 minutes of selling efforts. If the problem cannot be corrected with little effort, the problem representative must go.

Retraining the telemarketing sales representatives can be an easy process because of the part-time nature of the job. From a cost-effective point of view, it is better to replace a problem representative, rather than spend excessive efforts in retraining. But, retraining is necessary if the problem can be handled quickly (Steckel, 1976).

CHAPTER III

CONCLUSION

Each new decade introduces complexities and opportunities that necessitate changing the way businesses are maintained and expanded. The telephone is now the medium of today's businesses. In just a few short years, its role has changed from merely a means of exchanging information into a successful tool for marketing products and services.

Many businesses and organizations are therefore attempting to capitalize on the potential benefits of this new medium without adequate planning and training. Thus, many telemarketing centers are established under the false premise that all it takes is the latest development in telephone technology and a few people to make the calls.

Despite this belief, the literature review provided in this paper points out that those telemarketing firms which intend to preserve or increase their market share must consider preplanning and preparation of the telemarketing sales representative (TSR), because it is the TSRs who call the shots in telemarketing. Related to this point is the need to understand that telemarketing must be inserted into a system of people--people who will have to work with telephone technology in order to meet management objectives.

The author feels that in the years to come, there will be a substantial shake out of companies that ignore this important fact. The least prepared companies are the ones that will vanish in the near future. The companies that ignore the preparation of the TSRs will find themselves non-competitive, regardless of technological excellence. The market place is composed primarily of the TSRs. The equipment and services must therefore effectively address their need. Training becomes essential and necessary.

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