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improve and evaluate

Case Study:

Merlin on IN-CALL EFFECTIVENESS

The Client

The client is a major pharmaceutical company, among the top five globally, operating in several therapeutic areas, including cardiovascular and respiratory medicine.

This client operates significant primary care and secondary care sales forces, together with a range of other customer-facing personnel.

The Merlin Metrics[©] Solution

We were commissioned to evaluate the success of this in-call excellence initiative.

Using our unique Merlin Metrics[©] software and evaluation tool, we were instructed to survey three sample regions with a sub-analysis of the pilot region.

In partnership with the client, we developed a tailor-made bank of questions; thereafter Merlin Metrics[©] was configured to provide a comprehensive on-line review of the experience and perceptions of salespeople and managers.

The Results

The client's training management received business-critical information within six weeks of the evaluation commencing. This was presented to them as an 18-point Executive Summary, which they have since presented to commercial stakeholders within the organization.

The client was sufficiently impressed with the project to commission a second Merlin Metrics[©] evaluation, this time with the microscope on the Initial Training course for new representatives.

The Client's Need

In 2009, our client implemented the roll-out of a new selling skills program, which aimed to facilitate In-Call Excellence (effectiveness).

The core aim of the program was to change behaviors of their salespeople in several key areas, including questioning skills, listening and assertiveness. Unusually, the program was rolled out to the sales teams by their Area Managers. Beforehand, the Area Managers received a comprehensive train-the-trainer briefing and were familiarized with the key language, skills and materials within the program.

Prior to all of this, the program was initially delivered to a pilot region. The Managers from this pilot region played a significant role in the training of their Area Manager colleagues – and throughout 2009 have been consistent advocates of the training, working intensely with their teams on follow-up and coaching.

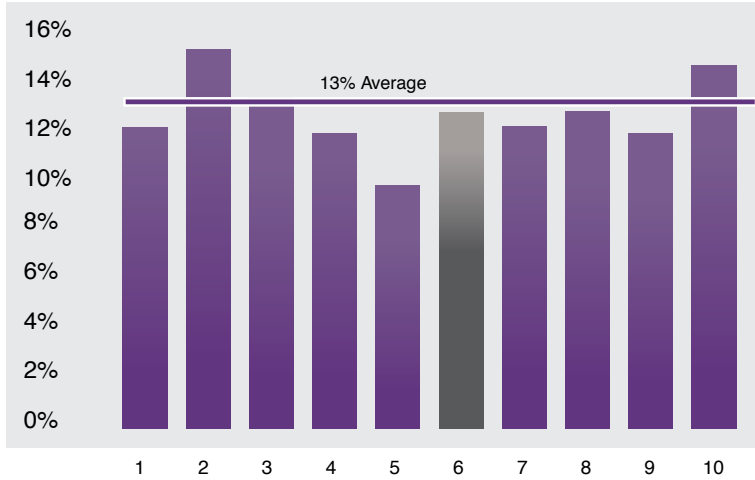
The roll-out represented a significant investment for the client – in terms of money, time and opportunity cost. The training management team were therefore keen to assess the lasting impact of the program on the behaviors of their salespeople, several months after the roll-out.

Among other things, they wanted to know:

1. What level of behavioral change, if any, has resulted from the training?
2. Can they demonstrate any commercial benefits in terms of return on investment?
3. How has the impact of the training varied across the different regions?
4. How do the results from the pilot region compare to those from elsewhere?

Before vs. After: % improvement

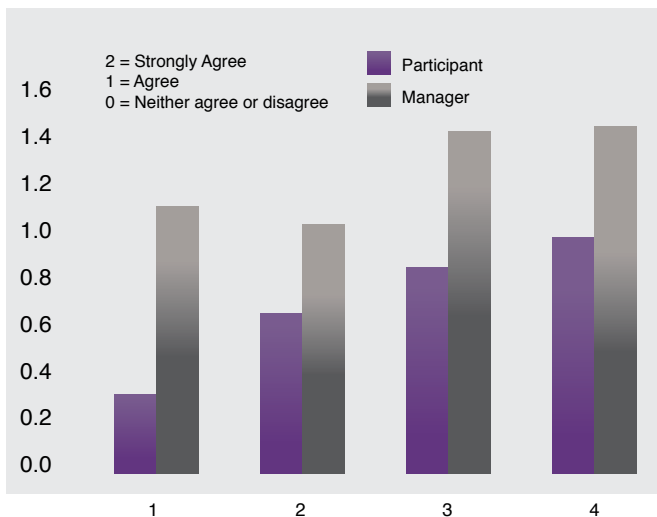
On average, there was a 13% perceived improvement in skills/behaviors, with an average perceived 'commercial return on time in the call' also of 13%



1. The quality of my pre-call planning
2. My use of productive questions
3. The quality of my active listening
4. My level of assertiveness in the call
5. My tailoring of messages in the call
6. The commercial return on my time from calls
7. My level of personal accountability
8. My level of self-awareness in the call
9. My modification of behavior to suit the customer
10. The quality of my self-development

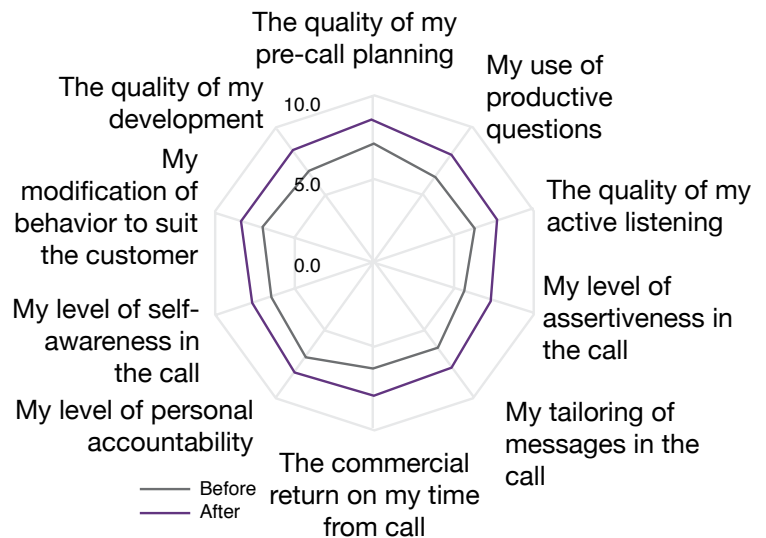
ROI

The markers for 'commercial return on investment' all showed an increase, in the eyes of salespeople and managers. These include "I have gained more business from certain customers"



1. Overall my sales are better than they would have been if I had not attended this training
2. I have gained more business from certain customers
3. This training has been a worthwhile investment in me
4. The training has been a worthwhile investment ifor the company

Before vs. After (Sales)





Before vs. After (Sales)

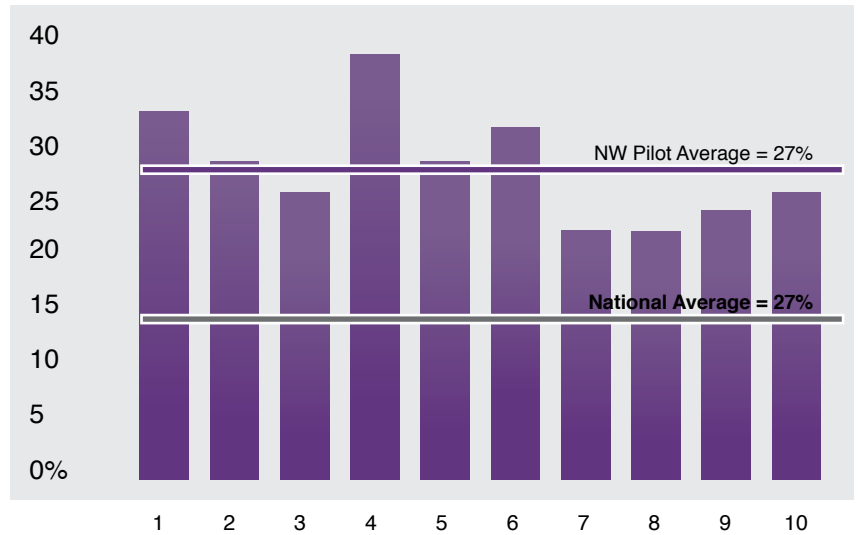
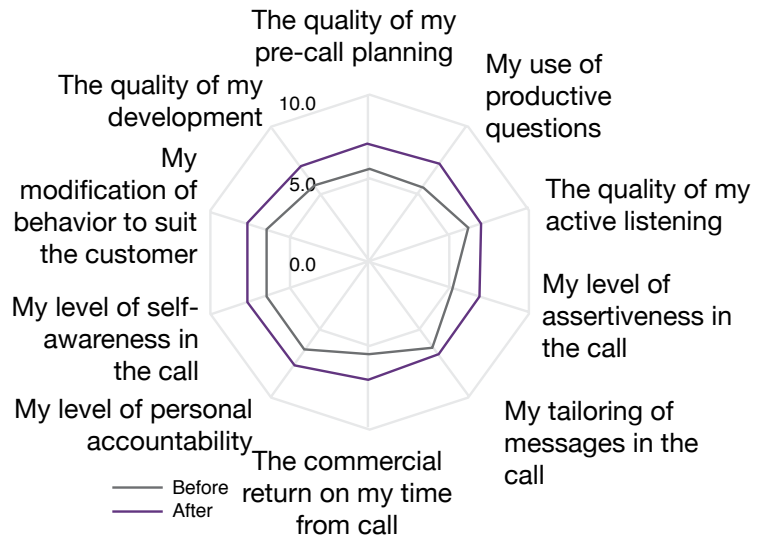
There was perceived improvement in the implementation of the key skills, according to salespeople and their managers

Each Region showed demonstrable improvements in the key skill areas, ranging from +9% to +16%.

Before vs. After: North West Pilot

The pilot group showed a marked increase in perceived return, compared to the other three Regions (27% improvement versus an average of 13%)

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8. My level of self-awareness in the call
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	South W	North W	North W Pilot	Wales
Overall, my sales are better than they would have been if I had not attended this training	0.6	0.4	0.8	-0.1
I have gained more business from certain customers	0.8	0.6	1.0	0.4
This training has been a worthwhile investment in me	1.1	0.9	1.3	0.5
This training has been a worthwhile investment for the company	1.1	0.9	1.2	0.7

In Summary

The richness of the information from Merlin Metrics© has enabled the training team to:

1. Confirm a return on their investment – in terms of behavioral change and enhanced sales
2. Identify where additional effort and resource should be directed to further enhance in-call excellence implementation
3. Ask informed questions about the roll-out process, so shaping vital decisions regarding similar projects in 2010 and beyond