

Aslan Trains Sales Reps to Bypass Physician “Waiting Room”

THE CLIENT

One of the world’s top ten pharma companies, which develops, manufactures and distributes pharmaceuticals

THE CHALLENGE

Gaining access to physicians creates headaches for sales representatives that no aspirin can cure. Competition is fierce. For example, between 1995 and 2003, rep growth escalated by 94 percent, while physician growth increased only 15 percent and 40 percent of all physicians are characterized as “no-see/low-see.”

Working for one of the top ten companies in your industry is no guarantee the doctor will take your call, as discovered by the sales force of a globally respected pharmaceutical company. The young representatives were new to sales, lacked confidence and experienced difficulty breaking through barriers. After they made a connection, many did not have the ability to navigate from the gatekeeper to the prescriber or to engage in consultative dialogue. Experienced managers faced challenges as well. Most were entrenched in an established corporate culture and uncertain how to motivate free-spirited members of the “Y” generation.

THE ASLAN SOLUTION

The pharma company engaged Aslan Sales Training to design a program for a division dedicated to growing market share in a specialty area in which loyalty was low. The process involved three deliverables:

- Customized content
- Account Development Skills training program
- High-Performance Coaching, manager certification program

Customized Content: Specific Tools to Address Each Client’s Challenges

How do you transform an interaction from being perceived as a nuisance to “you had me at hello?” With customized tools and content that arms reps to overcome hurdles and engage in meaningful dialogue. With the pharmaceutical giant, one of Aslan’s founding partners, along with one of the firm’s seasoned consultants possessing deep medical industry experience, first examined industry macro and micro issues, and collaborated with the client to pinpoint specific problems. They then designed the program—infused with ideas, tools, information and verbatim suggestions—for reps to eliminate barriers and engage in meaningful conversations with physicians.

Training Program: Powerful Sessions for Lasting Behavior Change

To ensure the program was more than an entertaining event, Aslan provided the foundation for lasting behavior change with creative learning techniques and reference tools, including conversation guides with sales-ready messaging. Participants learned how to address the following major challenges:

- Quickly build relationships and alliances within the office to gain sponsorship
- Navigate barriers to gain access to the prescriber

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- Engage emotionally unreceptive physicians who deliver canned responses to avoid a meeting
- Respond to the prescriber's misconceptions and beliefs about products, ensuring they are receptive to changing prescribing habits
- Develop a creative account management process to build loyalty and gain a competitive advantage with stalled accounts

High-Performance Coaching: The Key to Making it Stick

Most programs fail. Why? They don't provide the management team or the reps with the tools and support to continue the skill development process. Aslan ensured the success of the program by:

- Certifying the managers coach and reinforce training
- Providing tools for manager assessment, skill builders and personal development plans
- Developing self-assessment tools for reps
- Ongoing one-on-one coaching sessions with managers
- Offering free monthly subscription to Aslan Applications

Pharmaceutical managers attended sessions with the sales reps. After completion, the Aslan consultant returned to conduct a separate two-day class with managers to reinforce the reps' training. Through this the managers learn skill-building exercises and coaching techniques. In addition, Aslan developed assessment tools to help managers evaluate reps' progress. The client said this process differentiates Aslan from other training programs.

THE RESULTS

"I've been with this company for 25 years and this is the best sales training I've ever attended," remarked a sales manager. Participants agreed. Every single one said the program exceeded or met their expectations. And, the training resulted significant inroads by the reps. Shortly after the Aslan program, the number of calls getting through to prescribers doubled! The company now reports that reps easily engage in conversations with gatekeepers, and they build relationships with office staff thanks to enhanced communication skills. "I've already recommended Aslan's training program to others because of the success we've seen," says the sales director. "It's better than other courses because it gives participants specific language to use rather than focusing on theories."

ABOUT ASLAN SALES TRAINING

Aslan Sales Training is a global training and consulting firm that offers customized inside sales training, field sales training and sales leadership development. Since 1993, Aslan has helped internationally recognized brands, such as FedEx, Boehringer Ingelheim, Aventis Pasteur, GE, Apple and others improve the performance of their sales reps and managers. Aslan equips reps with the skills and processes to succeed in today's increasingly difficult selling environment and has developed a total solution that includes hiring strategies, transitioning managers into coaches and leaders, and improving overall performance.