



Major Pharma Division Takes HCP Engagement to New Heights

Introduction

Imagine the daunting challenge faced by a multi-billion-dollar pharmaceutical company to completely revamp its sales process to accommodate its growing sales force of over 300 field reps and 35 leaders. This was the case for a long-standing client of Performance Development Group (PDG), who turned to PDG to develop a new selling framework that would help supercharge their performance.

Introduction

To kick off the project, PDG started with a comprehensive discovery process to analyze the pharma company's existing sales model, including what was working well and the challenges, gaps, and areas needing improvement. We also evaluated previous sales models to ensure we understood the significant issues of each.



PDG discovered four mission-critical components the new selling framework would require to be successful:

- 1. A Common Language for Selling:** Despite the company adopting various sales models in the past, none really stuck due to their complexity and other contributing factors. In analyzing the current sales model, we noticed it lacked a standardized language for sales and coaching, which was hindering the company's progress. We further discovered that the sales team were from different departments or external organizations, and each pursued distinct strategies, which caused a lack of cohesion and an inability of sales leaders to pinpoint reasons behind successes and easily replicate them.

A cohesive selling framework was imperative to achieve unity and alignment, encompassing a shared selling language, improved communication strategy, and an effective coaching model.

- 2. A Method for Selling a Portfolio of Brands:** Since the company was shifting from a single-product focus to a diverse brand portfolio, the new selling framework needed to facilitate a method for communicating the expanded portfolio, effectively convey critical product information, seamlessly transition between products, and help reps engage with a broader and more diverse customer base.
- 3. A Consultative Approach for Better HCP Engagement:** The new selling framework needed to shift from self-focused discussions to a consultative approach. This new approach would empower reps to efficiently prioritize brands based on client needs, optimize their time and impact during their limited HCP interactions, help create a competitive edge, and add stakeholder value.
- 4. Improved Pre-Call Planning:** Most field reps lacked a strategic approach to planning HCP visits – essentially running from visit to visit with little preparation time in between. The new framework would require a more thoughtful and effective approach to pre-call preparation, enabling sales reps to maximize their impact during each meeting. By dedicating more attention to pre-call planning, field reps would be better equipped to have more valuable interactions and achieve greater success.

Solution

After our comprehensive analysis of the division's current sales practices, the next step was to incorporate the learnings from our discovery process to provide a clear path for internal alignment with our pharma client. We looked at sales leadership, sales enablement systems, and the broader company ecosystem to understand the dependencies at play.

To ensure widespread buy-in and alignment, PDG engaged key stakeholders from all the company's brands to foster a sense of unity and consensus, understand which components of the old model were still valuable, and identify any gaps.



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PDG realized that to be successful, the new framework needed to be **simple, repeatable, easy to follow, and capable of consistently driving the desired future state of the business.**

The new selling framework included the following:

- A strategic and consultative selling approach
- Customer-focused messaging, including preparation, asking insightful questions, listening, transitioning, and a call-to-action
- Engagement and pull-through for full operationalization
- Reinforcement of the new knowledge incorporated into the sales reps' daily workflow through microlearning
- Full ownership, accountability, and agility at all levels

The new framework centered on creating a streamlined and highly effective approach to selling, which we distilled into three easy steps:

- 1. Plan**—Before the call, review the account and identify key discussion points
- 2. Prepare**—Ensure interactions are customer-centered and include insightful questions to engage the HCP
- 3. Assess**—Reflect upon and document how the call went for continuous improvement

The rollout of the new framework began with sales leaders learning how to coach it to their teams.

This included role-play exercises and a discussion of the importance of “mindsets” as a critical success factor.

Next, the field force was introduced to a tool that helps with account diagnostics, portfolio analysis, strategic planning, pre-call preparations, engaging with HCPs, brand transitions, and defining desired actions at the end of each interaction.

To ensure ongoing support and reinforcement, PDG rolled out a post-implementation plan that included a continuous improvement model and sharing of best practices among the field force and sales leaders.



The division surpassed expectations, reporting a nearly 130% increase in performance compared to the prior reporting period. This impressive performance improvement encompassed two sectors, with almost 115% of the budget plan achieved.

Results

Overall, the results achieved through the new selling framework demonstrate its effectiveness in driving business impact, increasing HCP engagement, and fostering knowledge growth. Here are numbers in just under four months of launching the new framework.

CONFIDENCE LEVEL:

7%
INCREASE

The initial results exceeded the original target of 7% by a substantial margin, leading to a high confidence level in the effectiveness of the new framework.

ENGAGEMENT:

31%
GROWTH

Targeted HCP engagement also experienced a notable 31% growth.

ENGAGEMENT:

56%
GROWTH

The number of engaged healthcare providers (HCPs) saw a remarkable 56% growth.

Other Leading Indicators

- **Adoption of the selling approach:** A Coach of the Year contest has been established and a percentage of feedback from the new selling framework is required to qualify for the award. Managers are being reinforced on how to coach the new selling framework.
- **Alignment of brand materials and selling framework:** Brand workshops with the Marketing Division have been that pull through the concepts of the selling framework.
- **Leadership adoption:** Senior leaders have publicly called out the new selling framework on stage as a key driver and focus for the entire division.

Future Use

Due to its unprecedented success, the implementation of the new selling framework is set to roll out within other divisions within the company. This universal methodology of preparing, engaging, and assessing applies to every sales representative, making it an easily adaptable framework for various therapeutic areas.





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