

MANAGEMENT APPLICATIONS: Apx Alarm

An Internship Project

presented to

the Faculty of the Communication Department

at Southern Utah University

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirement for the Degree

Master of Arts in Professional Communication

by

BRIAN JATEN TAYLOR

Dr. Brian Heuett, Internship Supervisor

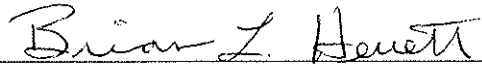
December 2007

APPROVAL PAGE

The undersigned, appointed by the dean of Humanities and Social Science, have examined the internship entitled

MANAGEMENT APPLICATIONS: APX ALARM

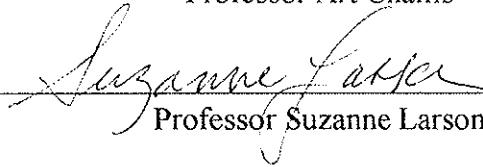
presented by Brian Jaten Taylor, a candidate for the degree of Master of Art in Professional Communication, and hereby certify that, in their opinion, it is worthy of acceptance.



Professor Brian L. Heuett (Chair)



Professor Art Challis



Professor Suzanne Larson

Table of Contents

1. Acknowledgements	V
2. Executive Abstract	VI
3. Introduction	1
4. Roles and Responsibilities	2
a. Recruit	
b. Training	
5. Defining Management Methods	4
6. Preparation in the Pre-season	9
a. Recruiting the Team	
1. The “It” factor	
2. Finding people with motivation and ambition for success	
b. Do Not Procrastinate and Continually Search	
c. Goal setting	
d. Product knowledge	
e. Enthusiasm	
f. Filling out paperwork	
g. Sales cycle	
7. Individual Training	18
a. Modeling	
b. How to act when knocking door to door	
c. No negativity, always remain positive	
8. Controlled Activities	21
a. Mock presentations	
9. Management	22
a. Starting with yourself	
b. Outlining expectations	
c. Goals	

10. Motivation	24
a. Goals and aspirations	
b. Incentives and incentivizing representative	
c. No mediocrity, remain consistent	

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the teaching staff in the communication department at Southern Utah University and my family for their instruction and guidance.

Specifically, I would like to thank Brian Heuett as my chair, counselor, and friend throughout this wonderful experience. Also, I would like to acknowledge my wife and best friend, Andrea Taylor, for her support and guidance throughout my academic career.

Executive Abstract

This handbook is a digest of management application and skills developed through management experiences while working with Apx Alarm. The material targets Apx managers and provides a detailed description of the skills required to be successful recruiting, training and managing a summer sales team. Authorization is permitted for the use of this handbook to those Apx managers whose intention is to increase their leadership skills and have a greater understanding of the requirements involved with recruiting, training, and managing a summer sales team.

This handbook was developed by:

Brian J. Taylor MA.
Sales Team Manager, Apx Alarm
Southern Utah University
Cedar City, Utah

Forward

This handbook was designed to provide managers with the required criteria for successful management skills, as well as demonstrate how to use these abilities in preparation for their management experience with Apx Alarm.

There are a variety of different types of management qualities, such as honesty, character, faith, loyalty, integrity, and love (Ziglar, 1978). Managers search for effective leadership skills to apply in various facets within their organization. Therefore, it will be effective to provide a greater understanding of how successful managers lead, recruit and train while working with Apx Alarm.

There are numerous leadership books, one of which is entitled, *See You at the Top* (Ziglar, 1978), that focuses on teaching ways to increase sales, advertising, and enhance productivity. Ziglar also notes that effective leaders are flexible and willing to improve their skills. Therefore, managers can strengthen employees skills by seeking out new methods of training and developing new philosophies of leadership, such as the methods discussed in this handbook.

Introduction

Since management is the foundation of an organization, it is vital for organizations to be conscious of the leadership traits in their managers. There are multiple leadership objectives and styles incorporated in all organizations such as motivation, enthusiasm, goal setting, and consistency. Identifying and understanding the various objectives and styles of leadership can be difficult. This handbook has been created to bring clarity and understanding of the specific managerial requirements in the summer alarm sales industry.

This handbook is based on managerial experiences working in summer sales with Apx Alarm. It compiles valuable information based on firsthand experience regarding preseason preparation, recruiting objectives, and effective training techniques that will help managers within the summer sales industry.

The experiences upon which this manual is based, comes from three years of personal sales and managerial experience with Apx Alarm. Apx Alarm was established in 1990. According to the PR Web Newswire, Apx Alarm, “is currently the largest privately-owned residential security alarm installation company in the United States.” (Dean 2008). According to Jeremy Marshall, regional sales manager, Apx Alarm employed over 1,900 sales representatives and had 82 offices across the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico in 2007. Apx Alarm sales representatives market the newest Honeywell digital and cellular two-way voice alarm systems to customers. It is accomplished door-to-door, during the summer sales season, beginning in April and ending in September.

Currently, the only form of training managers with Apx Alarm receive comes through lectures. There currently are no training manuals, reference books, or guides. Verbal instruction through semi-annual conferences evidently assists the company to some degree, being very effective in sales efforts. However, incorporating well-researched methods with scholarly theories into a concise handbook will further assist Apx Alarm in becoming a stronger, more diversified, better trained, and a more resilient organization.

Roles and Responsibilities

Managers are looked to as examples by their subordinates as well as peers. When a question or concern develops, individuals often seek the experience of a manager for leadership, guidance, and help.

The management qualities that will be discussed in this handbook may help individuals become more practiced and evolved based on the previous experiences of an Apx Alarm manager. The majority of the leadership qualities addressed in this handbook can be used in a variety of fields because leadership traits are incorporated with most organizations. However, the specific information shared in this handbook is intended to be in depth instruction on becoming a better leader in the industry of summer sales programs, specifically within the Apx Alarm organization.

Managers working with Apx Alarm are responsible for the success of their team. They are responsible solely for hiring and training their summer sales team. Therefore, being the best possible manager should be the ultimate goal. If a manager desires to lead

his/her team to success, understanding the unique roles and responsibilities for the specific organization must be a requirement.

Recruit

As mentioned earlier, a manager's first responsibility comes to hiring a team. This is called recruiting and it's done during the preseason, before the sales season actually begins. Preseason begins in October and ends in April. A manager's responsibility consists of hiring as many qualified team members as possible. Certain aspiring qualities that team members should possess will be addressed later.

A manager should be particular in the number of representatives they hire. In some situations, there could be too few or too many team members. Ideally, a manager should attempt to hire a team of 20 to 30 quality team members. If a manager hires too many representatives, issues such as inadequate training due to too many individuals and not enough time come into play. Having too many people may also create an unsuccessful team if not handled properly. A team with a small number of team members who are successful, while the majority are below mediocre becomes very negative. Furthermore, hiring too few team members can create issues such as low drive and ambition, or boredom with little diversity within the team. Every manager may be able to handle different quantities. Remember, quality is always more important than quantity. Finding individuals who will be successful are assets to the team and far more important than having a greater number of team members.

Training

Once a quality group becomes hired, a manager must extensively train each individual in all facets of the organization. Training is ongoing throughout the preseason, as well as during the summer sales season. A manager must understand this vital role; He is for the most part completely responsible for the success of the team members. Investing the time into adequately training all members of their team during the preseason will ensure the success of their team during the sales season.

Beyond recruiting and training a team, there are many challenges and responsibilities a manager may have to assume. Managers should be prepared to face challenges with enthusiasm, a positive attitude, and a determination to be successful. Such unforeseen challenges may come in the form of personal issues of individual sales representatives, or interpersonal issues between team members. During the sales season team members are in close proximity to one another in both living arrangements and the work environment. The variety of issues which could arise throughout the season are too numerous to mention. Still, no matter what the issue may be, managers should be understanding and as helpful as possible. Issues should be resolved quickly to ensure the team member's personal issues will not interfere with their work, or the work of other team members.

Defining Management Methods

There are a vast number of important leadership methods used by managers. This handbook will identify and discuss five necessary traits, which are: vision, passion,

effective decision making, being a team builder and character. All of these traits are required and must be understood to become a successful manager.

The first leadership trait is vision. As a leader, it is pertinent to learn to communicate a clear vision to team members. How is this possible? Patty Vogan, (2006, April) chairman and owner of Victory Coaching, an executive coaching company for business and personal success, and the largest CEO training organization in the world, TEC International teaches three ways:

1. Learn to paint a picture with words. Speak it, write it, draw it, and touch it. Whatever methods you can use to create a picture, do it.
2. Ask each of the other managers in your company to tell you, in their own words, about the vision of the company. How close is it to what you thought they understood? Is your team on the same page as you are?
3. As you work, your company's vision should be in your mind every day, and you should reevaluate it occasionally so that it stays current with the changing times in which we live. And remember, your staff needs to be just as involved as you are in keeping it up to date if you truly want them to buy in on the vision. Be sure to keep your key players involved. (Vogan, P. 2006).

Therefore, create an atmosphere within the team that stimulates creativity, openness and vision. All team members should be involved in creating a unified vision for the team as well as understanding and adhering to the general vision of the overall organization.

The second leadership trait is passion. Without passion, drive and ambition do not exist. An intrinsic need and desire for success will stimulate passion in individual team

members. However, a manager is still responsible to encourage and increase the level of passion, drive and ambition within their team.

To build an extraordinary team, managers must find a way to inspire team members and encourage passion about the company and products, creating a connection between team member and the leader's vision. Ways managers can increase passion about the product will vary based on the needs of their team. One approach to increasing the level of passion is for a manager to display it themselves. Managers should believe in the product and show excitement when talking about it with team members. As managers display passion for the product and the organization, team members will relate and their belief will increase as a result.

Enthusiasm is infectious: When sharing the vision for the company, allow passion to shine through. Others will feel it and want to be a part of it as well. If the leader doesn't have passion, neither will any of the team members. Therefore, recreate the vision or reframe the description of the vision so it's connected to passion.

The third leadership trait is prompt, effective decision making. To gain this leadership trait, one must understand the decision making process within their organization. Understanding is gained by answering the following questions. How are major decisions made in the company? What is the process for making them? This will be beneficial for a manager to understand before they are in a position to make a major decision.

Some leaders make decisions through a distinct, finite process, others make impulsive decisions. Regardless of the decision making method, it is important to be in control and not second guess the decisions. Commitment once a choice has been made is

important and is explained further by a system developed by Patty Vogan (2006) called Q-CAT. This system was created to make an individual a better decision maker and can be applied to decision making requirements for an Apx manager. Q-CAT's goals and intentions can be summarized by the following;

- Q = Quick. Be quick but not hasty.
- C = Committed. Be committed to your decision but not rigid.
- A = Analytical. Be analytical, but don't over-analyze
- T = Thoughtful. Be thoughtful about all concerned, but don't be obsessive.

When Q-CAT is used, it can assist in determining when to bring outsiders into the decision making process, and what steps are required to make better decisions. This can be related to most decisions a manager will face. Managers should be confident in their decision making abilities. They are usually responsible for making decisions regarding the team and may follow the Q-CAT system when doing so. Remember to be quick but not hasty, committed to the choice, analytical without over-analyzing and thoughtful for those affected by the decision.

The fourth leadership trait is to become a team builder. To become a successful manager with Apx Alarm, it is essential to develop a cooperative and collaborative team. To begin team building, first delegate responsibility to team members; but be sure not to micro manage. Managers must also make themselves available if questions or problems arise. Teach team members to use the Q-CAT decision-making system and give them freedom in the decision making process. Remember to allow natural consequences for decisions made by team members and allow the team to make the decision, if you are willing to accept the choice, regardless of what it is. It is smart to give some guidelines to direct them.

When problems develop, such as projects going off track or deadlines are not met, certain steps must be taken. First, inspire confidence in your employees, and allow them to feel supported. Next, be ready to alter plans and make new ones when necessary. Third, remember to use humor to keep the team's spirits up during a crisis. Finally, when an emergency occurs, the team will recognize the strength and endurance of the leader.

Team unity is vital. Each member must feel they are an important part of the team and it is a manager's responsibility to make sure team members feel valued, supported and important. By creating team unity and becoming a team builder, managers will find greater success during the summer sales season.

The fifth and final leadership trait is character. Without character, all the other traits are invalid. The reason for this is innate character strengths and limitations play a critical role in leadership styles. The question then becomes, are managers aware of what role they play?

Leaders have taken steps to learn about their individual personality and what part it plays in their leadership style (Ziglar, 1978).

Character being honesty and integrity, is required as a personality trait for a manager to be successful. The amount of character a manager possesses will be displayed as one looks at the other four traits. A great leader is someone who has a clear vision and can turn that vision into a vivid picture which others can see. Vision entails a passion which inspires enthusiasm in team members. When major decisions need to be made, managers should use the Q-CAT system and be responsible for the outcome. Finally, managers should continue assessing personal character and keep developing personally and professionally. Following these traits may help a manager gain greater leadership

qualities, as well as assist their team in becoming more unified and successful. Following these leadership traits and knowing how to use them will assist in the pre-season preparation.

Preparation in the Pre-season

There are several objectives necessary for an effective leader to perform when establishing a team. The preseason is when a manager establishes the strength of the team. The most important objectives are recruiting, training, goal setting, product knowledge, gaining enthusiasm, paperwork knowledge, and teaching the sales cycle.

Recruiting the Team

Recruiting is an essential part in most sales organizations. The same is true with Apx Alarm. Recruiting is the hiring portion, or job interview stage. Team members are hired by one manager and assigned to their specific office, where they will work as a member of that team during the summer sales season. In the industry of home security alarms systems, recruiting is a key component that will ultimately determine the success of the team. If there are team members who are not cohesive, then there is a potential for negativity throughout the sales season deteriorating the team. However, if the team members are cohesive and united the benefits will be a productive and positive atmosphere. Cohesion, unity, and a productive atmosphere are directly related to who is hired to be part of the team. Again, the responsibility will fall on the manager to choose to hire an individual to join the team.

Many Apx managers claim they can look at a potential recruit and determine in the first 60 seconds if they will be an asset to the team. Generally, this is an accurate statement. There is some innate quality the recruit possesses which will stand out and makes a lasting impression on the manager. Defining, identifying and describing such a quality is difficult. However, since recruiting is a vital part of creating a strong sales team, an attempt must be made.

The “It” factor

They have “it” or they don’t. But how does a new or first time manager know? Several key factors indicate the innate qualities desired in recruits. Many of these signs are given non-verbally and can be observed without direct contact. Following is a list and a description of the characteristics desirable to find in recruits.

1. Charisma
2. Likeable
3. Attractiveness
4. Verbal skills
5. Aptitude/Attitude

First, it is important to notice individuals who draw others in. This shows a charismatic personality. People who seem to be the center of conversations and carry the attention of others, possess a unique interpersonal quality. This quality may be evident in any situation and will certainly be an asset as a sales person. Aspects of this type of charisma may be confidence, good posture, strong eye contact and self-reliance.

The second characteristic to look for is likeability. Find individuals who are likeable, well respected, and friendly. Customers rarely are buying the product; rather

they are buying the individual who is selling the product because they like something about them.

Customers may not be buying based on personality alone. Along with likeability comes attractiveness. Well-groomed, attractive, healthy individuals will appeal to more people when selling than those who appear messy, unhealthy, and unkempt. Find recruits who appear attractive and seem to take pride in their appearance.

Excellent verbal skills are essential in sales. This is the fourth trait to identify in potential recruits. All recruits must be able to dictate their opinions, thoughts, and ideas in clear and concise ways. They should be capable of informing, as well as relating to others, through their interpersonal skills. Not only will this help the recruit in personal sales but it will also assist the entire team with understanding and unity. Clear expectations and guidelines will be set within the team. Therefore, adequate verbal skills are essential if success is the desired outcome.

Once a potential recruit is identified based on minimal verbal interaction, their drive will then display their potential for success. The level of aptitude and attitude will indicate their determination. Good recruits will take time out of their schedule, possibly making sacrifices or rearranging prior obligations, to meet with managers to discuss joining the sales team. Their level of commitment will also show itself when they are asked to fill out paperwork to begin the licensing process. Since licensing is done at no cost to them, their only sacrifice will be the amount of time it will take to fill out the paperwork and get fingerprints done at the police station. Good recruits will not procrastinate completing this simple process. While many recruits take weeks, even months to complete the licensing process, a determined recruit will complete the

requirement as soon as possible. The time frame in which licensing is completed will show the manager the recruits level of commitment, their attitude, aptitude, and drive as well as desire to be a member of the sales team.

Finding People with Motivation and Ambition for Success

Great work ethic is vital when recruiting a strong force of individuals. The process may be difficult. However, learning about team members' backgrounds, can benefit the office in the future. For example, an individual who has been given their desires without working to attain them may be reflective of those actions. In comparison to individuals who have not been given anything but have had to work themselves to earn and attain the things they want. Often times, individuals who have been given much with little effort or requirements, display less work ethic. Therefore, when looking for team members with motivation and ambition, a leader should look at their background to determine the amount of work ethic the individual possesses. To find individual with this motivation a manager must always be searching to find these great individuals.

Do Not Procrastinate and Continually Search

One big mistake new managers tend to make is procrastinating recruiting. This delay can end up costing the manager money. Recruiting is a big process and one which requires adequate attention from the manager. Delaying the hiring of a sales team will cost the manager money in the end because it will leave less time for training, which may affect the success of the team during the sales season.

In order to avoid this mistake, it is necessary to talk with as many potential employees as soon as possible. Potential employees should be invited to a dinner appointment. At these appointments, it is pertinent for the manager to decide if the individual will be an effective employee and then offer the individual a position on the team.

Managers should also continue looking for potential recruits. There is no wrong place to find a great recruit so it is important for managers to be open-minded and continually observe prospective employees, no matter where they may be.

Finally, a team is never finalized until the season begins. Issues may arise with recruits or existing team members and the manager may need to find a replacement. This could happen early in the recruiting phase or at the end when the team is prepared to leave for the sales season. As long as the manager never stops recruiting until the season begins, unforeseen issues can be easily resolved and overcome with a replacement recruit. Starting the process early, being open minded, searching for potential recruits no matter what the situation, and continually recruiting until the sales season begins will ensure success and ease any issues that may arise.

Goal setting

Goal setting is one of the ways to get a sales representative to focus and work hard for the summer. However, it is not the only thing done during pre-season to get team members prepared for the summer. During pre-season there are many distractions hindering the team members from obtaining their goals before leaving for the summer. Some distractions may include another job, school, vacations, and friends. Despite the

distractions, managers must create incentives as well as set goal setting to motivate team members. During the pre-season leaders may give the representative an additional incentive, such as a better pay scale if the individual attains ten sales before leaving for the summer. This accomplishes both providing a motivating incentive as well as outlining an attainable goal to achieve before the season begins.

One major reason to set pre-season goals is to motivate and encourage the team. If small goals are set and met before the summer begins, team members are more involved and will become more excited about the sales season. Since a manager should want excited and encouraged team members who are ready to begin the sales season, goal setting in the preseason ought to be done.

Along with goal setting, managers should be aware of the level of self-efficacy possessed by team members. Goals will be set by individuals according to their level of self efficacy. If the level is high they are more likely to set higher standards for themselves. The reverse can be true of individuals with low self-efficacy. If they do not believe they are capable of great accomplishments, their standards will be set accordingly. Bandura gives further insight on how self-efficacy may benefit a person. He states, “verbal persuasion serves as a further means of strengthening people’s beliefs that they possess the capabilities to achieve what they seek” (Bandura, 1997, p.101).

Product Knowledge

The manager’s next important objective is to teach the representatives about the equipment they will be marketing. Product knowledge will help the team become familiar with the products and understand how they are used. Knowing the products and their use

is a valuable lesson for the representatives and should be taught during weekly pre-season training meetings. It will ensure the representative is able to answer any questions for the customers. A solid knowledge of the equipment, products and services can benefit the team. Similarly, poor understanding will impair the representatives.

Enthusiasm

Enthusiasm is an important personality trait which customers want to see. When marketing the product, it is crucial for the representative to exemplify enthusiasm about the product with the customers. By having enthusiasm, the customer will get excited about the alarm system they have purchased.

Managers can foster enthusiasm in team members during the pre-season. Every interaction between a manager and their team should be positive and enthusiastic. When a manager displays these gregarious qualities, team members will join in the excitement. Once a general positive feeling has been established, managers can work on creating excitement about the product. For most of the recruits, the product and information is new. As are trained and become familiar with the products, services and the organization, their passion and enthusiasm will begin to grow. Managers should see training as a great opportunity to cultivate the attitudes and feelings about the product which will be most helpful to the entire team during the sales season.

Filling out Paperwork

Paperwork is used to market the product and includes a contract and a summary of the equipment used. The contract is a crucial aspect of the sell. There is no tolerance

for mistakes when filling out the contract or the summary of equipment. This means the representative must have flawless paperwork and it must be done before they are paid for the account.

The responsibility of teaching acceptable ways to fill out the contract resides with the manager. Since there is no time to waste during the sales season, all the information should be taught during the pre-season, before the summer sales season begins. Managers need to make sure all team members have a clear understanding of what the contract is, what it entails, and the correct way to fill it out. This should also be addressed during weekly training meetings in the pre-season. This is the time for corrections to be made. Once a representative understands the paperwork, they can practice filling it out or watch the manager complete an actual sale.

Sales Cycle

During pre-season team members are taught the sales cycle that helps them know how to overcome potential obstacles during an actual sale. The sales cycle has been refined to a simple process. There are five steps to the sales cycle that could be repeated several times during a single sale.

- Contact
- Qualifying
- Presentation
- Overcoming Objections
- The Close

The first step is the initial contact of a potential customer. This is usually done by knocking on their door and making the first connection as they answer. The second step is qualifying the customer, which has to do with asking several questions to get the

person interested in the product. Some examples include: Is this your home? How long have you lived here? Do you know your neighbors the Taylors? How many exterior doors do you have? By qualifying the customer early in the contact, representatives will know if that person is the home owner, as well as a little information about the person, all while engaging them in conversation and creating a connection. The third step is the presentation of the alarm equipment and explaining the information to the customer. Once a potential customer seems interested, the product being marketed can be discussed. This may create some objections on the part of the potential customer. Next, the fourth step is to overcome the objections of the consumer. Understand where their concerns are coming from, what they are, and how to assure them the concern can be corrected. The fifth step and most important part of the sale is the close. The close is how the representative is able to finish the sale and take it from a conversation to making an agreement and signing the contract. As mentioned earlier, this process is sometimes repeated several times throughout the sale and may take longer for some customers. For example, some customers may need more time talking with the representative to feel comfortable before they are willing to talk about the products being marketed. So the representative may need to repeat step two, qualifying the customer, before they move on to step three, presenting the product. Regardless of how long the sales cycle takes, or how many times repeated, once the representative masters the cycle it will help tremendously to increase their sales productivity.

To both learn and master the sales cycle, team members will need multiple exposures to it. They will need to watch various renditions of the cycle as well as practice and attempt their own version of the cycle, numerous times. Finally, they will need to

knock door-to-door during the pre-season, either with the manager observing or on their own, to practice the cycle in a real setting before the summer sales season begins.

This is an important part of preparation in the pre-season and should be facilitated as well as supported by managers. All team members should be involved and eventually should feel comfortable with the process.

All the preparation that goes into the pre-season will result in better team members and greater success during the sales season. The majority of a manager's work clearly is done during the preseason. Continuing with the responsibilities of a manager, leads to training the team members.

Individual Training

Individual training is one of the most important steps in having a successful team and needs to be accomplished before the sales season begins. A manager must be obligated to lead the team by example. Allow the team the opportunity to watch every step of the sales process. This will help them learn how to react in similar situations. Mock sales can assist in providing an example of showing key points and teaching basic fundamentals of the sales process. Watching a sale in person is vital to give a real life demonstration. As a rule a manager must show each team member a minimum of two complete sales. These sales must be shown live in order for the team member to understand all the steps involved and to give them insight into the actual process. Representatives can take notes and internalize each step in the sales process. They will then need to make their own attempt at the sales process as a part of their individual training.

Modeling

One important and often overlooked aspect of sales training is modeling. For some, understanding how modeling works can be difficult. Others may struggle verbalizing modeling in a way that allows others to easily follow the process. Therefore, the process of modeling in relation to sales will be discussed according to Albert Bandura, a scholarly researcher and theorist. According to Bandura's views on modeling, "the studies of model attributes are patterned after real-life conditions in which individuals of limited competence seek to develop their knowledge and competencies by drawing on the skills and strategies discovered by successful models" (Bandura, 1997, p.101).

Research regarding modeling, in relation to sales, is interesting and will help demonstrate its vital role in sales training. One study, conducted by Meyer and Raich, (1983) found the mastery of modeling produces multiple benefits in sales. Salespersons in one set of retail stores learned and rehearsed different aspects of a sales transaction with the aid of videotape modeling, while sales persons in matched retail stores did not. The modeling program produced a 7 percent increase in average commission earnings, compared to a 3 percent decline in the control stores. Furthermore, results showed 22 percent of sales persons in the control store quit their jobs within the ensuing year, whereas only 7 percent of those who were offered the modeling training did so. Researchers indicated the difference in sales performance would have been even greater were it not for the high turnover, since less successful performers are most likely to leave. Conclusions drawn from the research indicate modeling training not only increased sales

but also produced organizational cost saving by reducing the rate of turnover in personnel.

Modeling has a vital role in the success of all members of the sales team. In order to have the greatest amount of success, managers should model correct behavior and allow team members to view and rehearse appropriate aspects of the sales process on a continual basis. By doing this, production should increase.

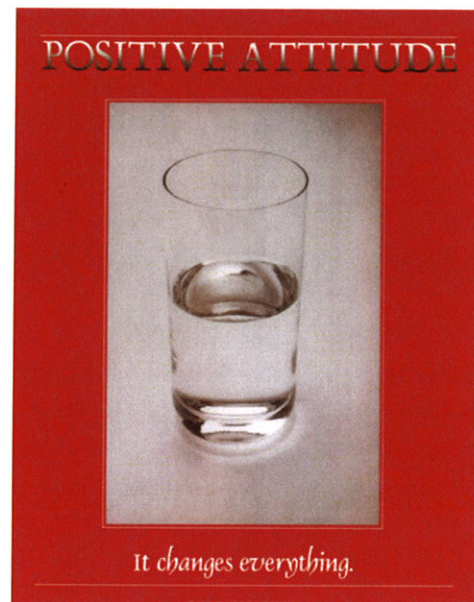
How to Act When Knocking Door to Door

When going door to door with a representative, managers must show them exactly how they should act when on their own. Some examples a leader should specify are quickly walking from door to door, not getting upset when a homeowner is negative, and not wasting time by looking for people who are home rather than knocking on homes which have no cars in the driveway. Therefore, a hand on training with new representatives is crucial. Leaders must be the exemplar and show the representatives how to become a successful salesperson. As a leader, showing these attributes while knocking with the representatives will strengthen the team tremendously.

No Negativity, Always Remain Positive

I think I can!
I think I can!
I think I can!
I think I can!
I think I can!
I think I can!
I think I can!
I think I can!
I think I can!
I know I can!
I think I can!
I think I can!
I think I can!

**Positive
 thinking
 is half
 the work...**



A positive attitude is one of the best attributes to exemplify. One of several company policies is, “NO negativity”! If a manager finds negativity within the team, it needs to be stopped at once. A unified positive attitude will increase productivity and create cohesion within the team. Thus, this is important to focus on in individual training. If one team member becomes negative, it will spread to others on the team. Therefore, staying positive is important no matter what the situation is. When the leader is positive individual’s sales will increase. Leadership persuasiveness also will increase when a leader is positive. A manager must be confident in their abilities and not only think they can, but must ‘know they can’ accomplish anything, because a positive attitude changes everything.

Controlled activities

Within a sales team there is a need for training exercises to help team members overcome mistakes. Always remember the representatives are not as experienced as the manager. They will need reminding about policies, procedures, and expectations. Many activities addressing these issues have been suggested previously though out the handbook. Controlled activities will now be addressed in more depth and greater detail.

Mock presentations

In daily training meetings during the sales season, mock presentations are given by the representatives as well as the manager. Mock presentations could focus on a specific representative’s performance and may address areas of weakness or strength. The representative may be doing well and is asked to present his technique to the team.

However, the opposite may be the situation and a mock presentation is designed to give constructive criticism to help the individual overcome their mistakes. If the latter is the case, managers need to increase confidence, support, and empathize with the representative by letting them know everyone goes through those struggles, and encourage them to overcome the weakness. It may be helpful if the manager knocks door to door, observing the struggling representatives, and provides correction, hands on training, and constructive criticism regarding the representative's appropriate and inappropriate sales techniques.

Mock presentations can address a variety of areas needing improvement. Examples include: the door approach, question based selling, closing the sale, resolving customers concerns, explaining paperwork, introducing products, solidifying the sale, customizing the deal, and inappropriate sales tactics. These nine examples can differ depending on several factors, such as demographics and income level of the customer. Thus, it is important to help team members adapt their door approach in different areas. Finally, one important aspect of selling is remembering basic steps in the door approach. At times representatives get comfortable with their door approach and forget the basic steps outlined in the sales cycle. Continually reviewing the steps will engrain them into the representative's mind. Remembering and using every step will help team members be successful. The manager needs to focus on certain responsibilities to be effective.

Management

Management is directly related to a variety of responsibilities, many of which have been identified previously. The variety of responsibility is due to constant

observation from team members who are interested in management behavior, technique, and attitude. Managers must remain consistent with observing team members. Just as a managers behavior must remain consistent, so should expectations. These expectations may vary in number depending upon the individual team member. Still, all representatives should be treated with consistency.

Throughout the sales season obstacles will create barriers for the representatives. Obstacles such as burn out, mediocrity, and negativity will be faced and must be overcome. Always be prepared for obstacles and know how to motivate the representatives to help them overcome the obstacles and attain their goals.

Starting with Yourself

Management skills begin with a manager's experience and internal motivation. If a manager expects the representatives to remain motivated until the end of the season, the manager must remain motivated themselves by exceeding their personal goals. The momentum of the team partially is determined by the performance of the manager. Information researched and gathered by Apx Alarm, found the performance of the team correlates closely with the performance of the manager. When the manager executes sales successfully, so does their team. Likewise, results found that when the manger performs poorly so does their team.

Outlining Expectations

As a manager, specific expectations such as goals and objectives should be outlined for the team. Goals may include a specific number of sales needed before 7pm

that day, or informing team members that the day's objective is to collect the maximum number of activation fees possible. By creating objectives for the representatives, goals can be set accordingly to meet outlined expectations. Managers should also be aware of unexpected issues and plan for them. This will allow a margin of error, but still allow goals to be met. Therefore, the designed outcome can be attained.

Goals

Team members set daily, weekly, monthly, and overall summer goals. These goals are designed to help each representative meet the overall team goal. If basic daily and weekly goals are attained, representatives are enthusiastic and better prepared to meet long term goals. When any goals are achieved, the representatives are confident and realize they are able to accomplish their long term goals. All goals are written on the goal board, which is hung on the office wall, and are referred to daily. Representatives are able to visually gage their personal progress, as well as team members' progress. This visual reminder adds increased incentives for self improvement. By creating a visual display of goals and creating milestones each representative will have greater success in attaining their goals.

Motivation

Motivation is an important aspect of sales. It has been said that, "a hungry salesman is the best." This is because a hungry salesman will work harder than one who is satisfied. If there is no motivation to sell, then there will not be success. In sales, the

only way to make money is by selling. Thus, finding a strong motivating factor for the team and continually remind them of it holds high importance.

Goals and Aspirations

As mentioned earlier, goals and aspirations are wonderful motivating factors. Many representatives are competitive and strive to hit their daily goals. This is a great way to keep the team members motivated and performing well throughout the sales season. Another motivating factor is the aspiration to be the best representative on the team, in the company, or in the industry. These aspirations are a great reminder to keep team members motivated to continue working hard throughout the entire sales season.

Incentives and Incentivizing Reps

Another way to keep team members motivated is by playing games, creating challenges and giving away prizes. Such games could be physical or mental, such as relay races and obstacle courses, or Apx Jeopardy, and product knowledge games. Prizes can range from free lunch or pool parties to extra time off or monetary compensation. Team goal setting is important for managers to do, as well as identify possible incentives for attaining their goals.

Incentives create competition and team work, which can be effective tactics. However, don't allow the competition to reach unproductive levels. If there are any signs of team members getting too competitive, such as negative comments or down grading others, it may be time to adjust the incentive and alter the competition. Remember, the

manager must remain in control at all times in order for incentives to be an effective form of motivation.

No Mediocrity, Remain Consistent

With regard to motivation, settling for mediocrity has no place in sales. As the sales season progresses, some representatives feel they have worked hard and lose motivation. This leads to losing sight of their original goals. Other representatives become discouraged and negative because they realize they won't make as much money as they had hoped for. At this point when motivation is low, managers need to make some changes within the team.

When mediocrity happens, the manager must let the team member(s) know this negative behavior is not acceptable and a potential cause for dismissal. Managers must find representatives who show signs of mediocrity and get them motivated immediately. Ideas of motivating a discouraged team member were mentioned previously. The most important step is addressing the issue with the team member individually and identifying what the feelings are, why they are there and what it will take to eliminate these feelings. By tailoring an incentive for the individual, the mediocrity can be stopped.

Consistency also is important for a team to remain motivated. Individuals should remain consistent while working toward personal improvements, and managers should remain consistent with their individual sales as well as with expectations and interactions with team members. If a leader is able to keep the team on task and working hard consistently, while never settling for mediocrity, the team will be effective and goals will be met.

Conclusion

The intention of this leadership handbook provides direction and insight for Apx Alarm managers. The goal is to be a guide and reference on how to be a successful manager in the summer sales industry by providing direction and examples based on personal internship experience with Apx Alarm.

Important goals have been compiled together with key objectives for Apx managers seeking understanding and knowledge regarding leadership improvement and successful management techniques used in summer sales.

Although the roles and responsibilities of a leader vary, this handbook identifies and defines specific tactics used by successful managers. Techniques and tactics identified in this handbook are based on three years of previous sales and managerial experiences with Apx Alarm. The collected information should serve as a guide to those with little or no experience managing a summer sales team. The five important leadership methods identified and discussed within the handbook include: creating a vision, passion, effective decision making, team building, and character.

As mentioned previously, recruiting is an essential part in all sales organizations. Two key components of successful recruiting are: hiring ambitious team members and being proactive in searching for team members. Another essential part of managing a successful team is the amount of preparation during the pre-season. Pre-season preparation includes recruiting, training, goal setting, product knowledge, gaining enthusiasm, paperwork knowledge, and teaching the sales cycle.

For the sales team to experience success, individual members of the team must find success. Therefore, the amount of individual training will ultimately determine the

success level of the individual as well as the team. Managers train by example. Hands-on experience and a positive attitude will increase productivity and create cohesion within the team. Managers must conduct training exercises to help team members overcome mistakes. Exercises may include mock presentations in daily training meetings, role playing or observations of actual sales technique while knocking door-to-door. Examples of quality technique may be shown as well as poor examples, in order to clarify appropriate and inappropriate sales techniques.

In order to have success, managers must begin with themselves by maintaining a positive attitude. Managers should also outline and clearly define expectations and goals.

The final objective for successful leadership which is addressed in this handbook is motivation. To maintain motivation, managers are challenged to find goals and aspirations to inspire their team. Managers may also create incentives, such as competitions and prizes to encourage and motivate team member to work hard. By not allowing mediocrity and pushing for consistency, managers help their team to continue pushing towards and beyond their goals.

Leaders are not born, but are created. Dedication, perseverance, ambition, and aim are essential in becoming a great leader. Leaders have the potential, power, and magnitude to influence and inspire individuals.

References

Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-Efficacy: The exercise of control*. New York: W.H. Freeman.

Dean, S. (2008, Aug, 29). Apx Alarm, from http://www.apxalarm.com/docs/APX-BOY-press_release.pdf

Meyer, H. & Raich, M. (December, 1983). An objective evaluation of a behavior modeling training program. *Personnel Psychology*, 36. Retrieved November 1, 2007.

Vogan, P. (2006, April 17). 5 key traits of great leaders. Retrieved October 27, 2007, from <http://www.entrepreneure.com/startingabusiness/expandbeyond/article175386.htm>

Ziglar, A. (1978). *See you at the top*. Gretna LA.: Pelican.