

# absolutely business



Case study: Building the foundations for success

Dates: November 2008 - December 2010

An international recruitment agency commissioned Absolutely Business to help the organisation improve staff morale and employee retention for the benefit of the agency and its customers.

## Background

The client was referred to us initially for in-house training for the small team of consultants. This is a small specialist, UK-based recruitment consultancy, providing staff to organisations across Europe. Despite some fantastic successes, staff attrition had been an issue and the MD was keen to grow the business, based on strong, solid foundations and he knew that retaining key staff was vital.

Following an initial meeting, the MD chose to take advantage of the business analysis service to start with. During a day on-site with a number of key staff, the following was examined:

- The vision for the business
- Business performance
- The people
- The market
- Marketing strategy
- Sales strategy
- Operations and service processes
- IT
- Finance management
- Standards and values
- Strategic planning and management

The client was provided with a detailed report, which included comments and advice on specific areas of the business, a SWOT analysis and a summary of current limitations and areas for improvement.

## The challenge

From the business analysis, it was clear that, despite some notable strengths, key areas for improvement were service processes; sales (strategy, technique and processes); HR; and strategic business planning and management.

At the same time, it was also necessary to develop the sales team as a priority, so that sales performance could be improved as soon as possible. The MD was also keen to move the business from providing a mostly telephone-based service to being much more face-to-face and consultative in their approach. This would require careful change-management processes.

## The solution

A programme was designed to include:

- Desk-side coaching
- Group training
- Provision/design of processes, templates and tools
- Weekly updates with the Manager
- Monthly updates with the MD

Denise Walker spent one day per month on site, initially delivering bespoke desk-side coaching to consultants, group training was delivered and where appropriate, tools and templates were designed and introduced.

## The outcome

For the first stage of this project, focus concentrated on service, sales, HR, strategy and business planning. The team embraced the new methodology and this made consultants much more effective in their roles; conversion ratios improved dramatically and, within three months, matched the best in the industry. May 2009 was the best month of sales in a year and sales grew steadily, despite the challenging economic climate.

Through clear and concise communication of common goals and expectations, the team began to understand exactly how to properly qualify and maximise all opportunities, so that they focused their efforts appropriately.

Feedback from the team of consultants indicated that they were excited by the long-term, attainable growth plan for the business. They had already worked well as a team and felt that this project, with the joint-learning experience and positive outcomes, had helped them bond further and engender a feeling of motivation and pride.

The project evolved and moved onto delivering management and executive development services. This included training, coaching and consultancy for the Manager and MD and strategic and business planning.

The MD's vision to build a multi-disciplined, global business is now becoming a reality.

### Quote from the MD:

*"I initially asked Denise to come in once a month to provide desk-side coaching for my sales team.*

*This evolved to include working with everyone in the business at every level and has covered to date: group training workshops; establishing sales and service structure and processes; improving our HR infrastructure; management development and business planning.*

*In difficult economic times, like many others in our field, we are affected by external factors outside of our control. So I measure our investment in terms of improved effectiveness; enhanced team work; the dramatic improvement in activity conversion rates and the general movement in the right direction of our sales figures!"*