

Case Studies

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Pitch Perfect Book Reviews

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Masterclass Feedback Comments

1. Case Studies & Programme Feedback

12 businesses within the tourism and tourism support sector set strategic direction for generating customers, deploying tried and tested development techniques creating a plan to win. By helping them to create a 'future history' for their business at the outset a clear plan was put in place to drive forward growth and change. Creating 15 new jobs, changing the way they do business, increasing sales and setting the path for sustainable growth. This was in just 3 months – we are now on to our 3 programme and the activity has been built into their LEGL bid

Blackpool Council – Economic Development Department

We tried to find fault with the programme, but we could not, we can report 100% customer satisfaction.

Programme Manager – Blackpool Council

All of the companies on the Winning Pitch Programme reported accelerated sales totalling £602,000 return on investment, an average of 17% growth per company.

Business Link South Yorkshire commissioned a second programme to be delivered to 20 High Growth Start-Up companies. All have evidence of increased confidence and motivation in the area of selling skills and dealing with customers. A third programme is planned for 2007.

Business Link South Yorkshire

“Several local engineering companies have recently been involved in a project entitled “Winning Sales Approach” which is aimed at improving their sales and marketing performance.

The initiative rose as a result of discussions at the South Cheshire Chamber’s Engineering Focus Group whose members identified that their most pressing concern was to improve and develop their marketing and sales philosophy.

Winning Sales Approach developed by John Leach, provides an innovative approach to the principle that “finding, winning and keeping customers is the lifeblood of any organisation”.

The Chamber was able to access some consultancy support funding from Business Link Cheshire & Warrington and since then the companies have been involved in a series of joint

workshops and in-house sessions. Clive Workman of KCS Electronics said, “The sub-contract electronics industry is becoming increasingly competitive. We felt an urgent need to improve our interaction with existing customers and become more pro-active in seeking new customers. With its practical action-focused approach, Winning Sales Approach proved to be an ideal framework to help us develop and operationalise our business development processes”.

South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce

“We are 4 months into our second year and already have orders to the value of £575k on a business plan of £1.6m. We also have forward orders to the value of £165k. So we are well on target. We have also set up a new company offering professional (planning) services to our current client base, orders currently run at £30k.

Winning Sales Approach has identified to us the areas we need to concentrate on to keep our business moving forward - People, Location, Client base, Turnover/profit, etc, etc. Whilst Winning Sales Approach has not been directly responsible so far, it can only be a matter of time before it bears fruit for all of us on the scheme. I tell a lie, Winning Sales Approach has been responsible for 3 referrals, 2 of which have produced orders...”

Steve Williams, GW Contracts Ltd

“Winning Sales Approach has been a useful help in sales training. I have only attended one whole day session as I find it very difficult to give up the day times. I have also attended a number of sales training sessions in the past and therefore get 20-30% new content from this. The structured training at our premises has been better as it has been tailored to our needs. The practical experience from John has been useful in getting Alex (our new export sales manager) up and running. 2-3 hour evening sessions would have been better for me for the public training.”

Matthew Tulley, Single Use Surgical Ltd

“The workshop was fantastic! We all thoroughly enjoyed working with the team - especially myself and Sam. We all left the workshops feeling positive and excited about the future and are now all concentrating on following our, 'almost complete' Orbit plan, where in 1 years time, we can show you how The Programme has helped with the development of our businesses”

Ben Barnett - Party House Ltd

“I think that generally the program has been very good and certainly I would give full marks for the presentation sessions. I feel the one to one coaching sessions that are going to be of most value to us and I am looking forward to getting some very tangible gains from this part of the exercise. I would certainly commend all the team as being committed and enthusiastic which is very important in presenting the ideas that they are trying to put over.”

Ian Atkinson – Coronation Rock

“We found the workshops excellent as they made us really stop and think about the strategic direction of our business and where we want to be in 3 years time and what we have to do to get there. This has enabled us to focus on only the vital essential deals with key customers, rather than trying to do everything. I look forward to seeing an improvement in our sales and

profits over the coming years. We are very impressed with `Richard, Dave and the content of the course that John gives....thank you for the time with us”

Alex McCracken, Commercial Director, TISS Trailer Security

“Having steady, but modest growth over the years we at Kalkwik enjoyed a comfort zone of achievement, until Winning Pitch impacted with a re-awakening to regenerate expansionist enthusiasm and greater success. The effect of the Programme is to make a business look further into the future, have a vision and define the actions necessary to really significantly grow the Business. Our plan is nearing completion but already we recognise the need for adding two employees in year 1 of the plan. The Programme has given a kick start and a framework to a longer term ambition. I have no doubt that many, many businesses could benefit from this influence.

Jack Henderson - Kalkwik.

I have had nothing but fantastic reports about what you do and how you motivate, whilst keeping it simple. (YCDBSOYA - have I got that right? Love it!) I asked Andy to pass me some direct feedback from those present on the day - again this was superb.

RBS - Head of learning and Development

We had an almost immediate 10% increase in sales!

RBS – Regional Manager – Northern England

“I have found both the Winning Sales Approach program and all those involved in the delivery of it absolutely excellent. These days there are many schemes around and some leave one feeling it has cost more in time than the program delivered. Not so Winning Sales Approach, it has been absolutely invaluable to my organisation and we are seeing real and tangible benefits already and we still have most of the one to one sessions to go.

Anybody who gets the opportunity to attend any future programmes will deeply regret it if they do not grab this golden opportunity with both hands. If anyone would like to use me as a personal reference I have no objection to potential delegates contacting me via e-mail initially to discuss any concerns they may have”

Tony Vickerman, Webb Worlds Ltd

“Despite being in business for 12 months already, the start of Winning Sales Approach coincided with a big change in my service and business model. From June, I started to offer

a seemingly unique service in the marketplace and was therefore unclear of my target market and the most suitable marketing methods and messages. My work with Duncan Clifford - along with the workshops - has been immensely helpful and I'm very confident that the support I've received will have a real impact on my sales over the next few months.

If Business Link can identify companies like mine that have the attitude and ambition to succeed as substantial players in their markets, then I think that the extra cost of implementing a scheme like Winning Sales Approach will be clearly justified by its results. The consultancy and financial support I've gained are invaluable and have put my company in a strong position that would otherwise only have been achieved through many months of trial and error. Many thanks for your help."

Paul Brooks, And Then There Was Light Ltd

"I have attended all of the Winning Sales Approach sessions and found them excellent. I come away feeling very positive and eager to implement all I have heard. We seem to have a much better relationship with our clients now. I maintain a one to one relationship with them by keeping in touch and meeting with them once a month. Excellent, Excellent, Excellent - I can't wait for the next one!"

Tracy Collins, Refund Exchange Ltd

"John Leach really got his message across; Winning Sales Approach served up an intoxicating mix of subtle observations about what drives customers' purchasing decisions and hard-hitting techniques to achieve the order.

The Winning Sales Approach team was not afraid to admit the truth: selling can be a demoralising experience.. But by encouraging us to turn the buyer-seller relationship round and 'live in our customers' world' we were able to focus our activities on prospects that wanted to listen to what we could offer. This course was all about having the confidence to approach key purchasers with a finely tuned message, and understanding that there was a lot more we were able to bring to the negotiating table than simply the perceived stumbling block of price.

All the theory is great of course, but it has to be seen to work in reality.

By implementing the skills learnt and making full use of the on-site mentoring days of, we were able together to formulate an approach to six new fabric companies with 100% response rate success.

Their positive reaction to our approach, with subsequent meeting and new company presentation, has resulted in samples for their sales force to carry with them thereby ensuring that we are involved in any joint initiatives. Sales have witnessed an upsurge and more importantly it is as a result of using our time wisely to target the right contacts. There is much more emphasis on the discipline of background research, such as reading the trade journals to hunt for clues about who we need to be approaching with our (one day, eventually) perfect pitch!

I would certainly **not** recommend the course to any of my competitors...it was energising and intensive, thought provoking but certainly never boring. What really drove the message home was putting it into practise and getting a thrill from achieving the impossible – just like learning to ride a bike as a child all over again!”

Liz Bolton Clic Designs

The Winning Sales Approach has been perfect for our business needs, like many businesses we are very ambitious and want to grow further.

The programme has shown us how and where to channel our energy and resources most effectively to meet our challenging business targets. Myself and my sales team have learned a great deal from the programme and we have been able to implement exciting and fresh ideas into our business.

I would like to thank the team for truly worthwhile consultancy service to RealtimeUK.

Tony Prosser, Realtime UK,

The Winning Sales Approach programme provided Dynamic-Ceramic with:

- Research methodologies yielding new prospects
- External view of customer profile and selling methods
- Structured approach to sales development
- Step-by-step actions to achieve goals
- Sales Management Tool to ensure activity is aligned to specific goals and projects
- Focus for sales team
- Integrated planning tool to be used each year or for specific projects

Harry Hodgson, Managing Director Dynamic Ceramic Ltd

2. Pitch Perfect Book Reviews

Brand Republic, 20 July 2004

“This book is definitely worth a read, especially if you are new into a business development role, or looking to manage your own company or agency for the first time.

It is a straightforward, no nonsense guide to attracting and winning customers. Its premise focuses on 3 areas for business development success: Functional Mastery – consultant speak for “knowing your offer”; Customer Connectivity; And Momentum (which is all about having confidence in yourself). Although reasonably generic and probably written with traditional client-side sales people in mind, it is relevant and applicable to agencies and would certainly provide useful background material for training teams on pitching.

One of the main points it makes – unlike material I have read on this subject, is that it places a great deal of importance on the link between the personal goals, values and motivators of the individual business developers and the goals of the business. It even gets you to do a

self-test and it paints four rather scary pictures of typical business development people, the kind of thing when three out of the four are nerdy, annoying or dull, and one which is glowing and all becoming. You spend the whole time trying to convince yourself that you are profile number four, and thinking about your fellow industry colleagues that surely must fit into the other profiles. Joking aside, it's an important point. Your business development will only be as good as the level of drive and motivation of the person at the "sales" helm. Something we sometimes forget to consider in the agency world.

Overall, an interesting and easy read. Even the most experienced of business developers might find it useful as an annual MOT."

Amanda Phillips, Business Development Director at Proximity, London.

Media Week, 29 June 2004

"What is one of the most important components of a successful company – and one that is most lacking in corporate life today? Yes, the skill of business development and customer retention.

We all know that in today's crowded marketplace, more than ever, competitive advantage needs to be articulated and differentiation needs to be demonstrated. Yet in environments where we are overloaded with information, we need to be able to sift out and implement the most effective business and management innovations quickly. The Pitch Perfect view is that business development has evolved, with the sales role becoming a problem solving and consultancy one. Consequently, a complete new set of skills is required. However, much of what is covered in the book is about understanding the subtle interactions between people and what motivates and satisfies these relationships.

All too often, we make life difficult for ourselves by over complicating ideas. Winning Sales Approach is a simple, down to earth book that offers practical solutions. If you really do want to win, then this is the book for you. Read on!"

Melissa Pell, New Business Director, Tri-Direct.

Chartered Institute of Marketing, Books 04-05

"This excellent book outlines the core principles integral to boosting development skills and sales success. It shows organisations how to review their sales approach, prioritise prospects, and build on and enhance existing relationships. The authors, directors of the management consultancy Strategem, write in a direct and down-to-earth style, that makes for an eminently practical book, packed full of useful advice gleaned from real-world experience"

Mind Your Own Business, Vol 27 No 5, May 2004

“Any sales person worth their salt will tell you that you can never think you know everything about your craft. A good thing, then, that books such as these are routinely published to allow sales professionals a chance to brush up on their skills. Of course, Winning Sales Approach doesn’t purport to be a brush-up guide, but in fact it fulfils this function perfectly well.

Author Leach has put together a wonderfully stimulating product, which, while often going over predictable ground (“first impressions count”) still manages to do so in a concise and entertaining way. It would be easy for a book like this to tackle sales motivation in a hackneyed way, but we’re impressed by the relaxed and easily digestible way in which the book’s Pitch Perfect principles are, ahem, pitched.”

Amazon.co.uk Reviewer: Antony Hiley from UK

“Irresistible!” August 3, 2004

“Having just started a club promotions business, my partners and I, looking for some concrete guidance and ways to implement our ideas effectively, read 'Pitch Perfect'.

The chapters on Momentum, Findings Opportunities, Winning the business and Keeping the business also within the Functional Mastery chapter, 'What makes you different?' have all inspired a great deal of innovation in my business,

I think John Leach's expertise is differentiation in the business world, and it is his, practical, direct, cutting edge approach that will make any company stand out in a very competitive area.

All in all I seriously recommend this outstanding guide to business development.”

Amazon.co.uk Reviewer: mhirtes3 from Loughton, Essex United Kingdom

“An Idiots' Guide to Selling”, June 15, 2004

“The two Johns have come up with a (far from) rough guide for business bods. Their top tips cannot help but improve the technique of those employed in sales. Yet their book is of benefit to lay people too, written as it is in easy-to-understand language. David Brent would probably not like this book, free as it is from the type of management speak he was all too fond of spouting. So, all in all, perfectly pitched.”

3. Masterclass Feedback

Comments included

- ✓ Book him again, very inspirational - Nick Brown, Sound Ideas
- ✓ Much higher quality than the norm - Andy Cribb, Smith Craven
- ✓ John Leach was powerful, fast and very interesting - Jan Parkin, Appletree Yorkshire Ltd
- ✓ Excellent speaker, great motivator - Chris Johnson, GP Surveyor

- ✓ The event was run well and John was brilliant - Dave Cottrell, Corporate Trends
- ✓ Enjoyed presentation, met expectation and indeed exceeded it - Richard John, Corporate Trends
- ✓ More seminars and workshops like this, I'm a designer by trade and sales doesn't come easily to me - Beverley Roome, Fireworks
- ✓ Really great talk, superior quality - Ant Clifford, Ant Clifford Design
- ✓ Very inspirational - Bev Knapton, Bizzy Bees
- ✓ Will send two of our people to this event, probably Rotherham - Peter Holmes, Anchor Magnets
- ✓ An excellent speaker and well organised event - Toby Rhodes, The Wizards Network
- ✓ Fantastic presentation, inspirational - Michele Mason
- ✓ Very informative and enjoyable - Jenna Downie, Jenna Downie (ARTIST)
- ✓ All business is show-business - Tom Beatson, Beatson Fans & Motors Ltd
- ✓ Very good speaker - Steve Hall, S Hall Photography
- ✓ I was expecting more pointers on marketing, but what there was there, was excellent - John Power, Appletree Yorkshire
- ✓ Very interesting morning - Jon Howlin, Competence At Work
- ✓ Very good event, enjoyed it - Kath Harding, Kath Harding PR Ltd
- ✓ Best pitch seen for a long time - John Elliott, Qlick-IT
- ✓ Excellent presentation, very informative, good atmosphere - T Wadsworth, CQM Training
- ✓ Excellent speaker, very motivating - Dan Statham, GP Surveyors
- ✓ Very energetic and enthusiastic speaker - Deborah Adshead, JD Approach
- ✓ Excellent presentation - Sufian Abdullah, The Defence Group
- ✓ Slightly too long, half way through I wanted to get out and apply the principles - Haydn Suckling, 221 Creative
- ✓ How about a masterclass on 'keeping existing customers happy' - Lynda Race, Magna Mews
- ✓ Brilliant day - Mel Watson, Present Heaven Ltd
- ✓ Thank you for a great morning, it's made me re-look at my networking skills - Jacqui Johnson, Travel Counsellors
- ✓ Thank you - Robert Lewis, South York Pub Tours
- ✓ Inspiring presentation - Lyndsay Murfin, Russell Richardson & Sons
- ✓ Very good - Dave Biddle, Qualichief
- ✓ Very Good - Len Wells, JMS Ltd
- ✓ Very useful morning - Matthew Ridsdale, McConnells Public Relations
- ✓ Useful event, worth attending - Dave Pickersgill, Sheffield College
- ✓ Good motivated speaker, English 'Brian Tracey' - John Belk, Sheffield College
- ✓ Excellent presentation, professional communicator and very effective - David Grayhurst, First Finance
- ✓ Excellent John, (as usual) - Tony Vickerman, Webb worlds Ltd
- ✓ A very entertaining and informative way John delivered his pitch - Ross Banerjee, Sheffield Technology Parks