

Aligning Talent with Changing Business Needs

The Challenge

An international medical products supply company, faced several business challenges, including rapid and complex technological changes and increased market segmentation. Simultaneously, customers were demanding integrated solutions from the company's diverse product lines, management was requiring more precise forecasting/tracking of financial data and attention to strategic planning, and the organization was concerned that the emerging workforce lacked the knowledge and skills to sell certain products.

To remain focused and globally competitive, the company identified the field sales manager role as critical in addressing these challenges. Field sales managers directly impact the sales force. Sales success would depend on how effectively they could coach, influence, and motivate staff, as well as constructively respond to rapid changes. Field sales managers strategically manage key accounts, train others on integrated solutions, and aggressively develop and manage regional sales plans.

The organization wanted to identify the "readiness" of potential internal candidates for these critical positions, help them identify specific strengths and developmental needs, and assist them in planning for their development.

The Solution

PDI partnered with the company to both define and measure how field sales managers' roles must change to support and drive the specific business challenges and necessary organizational changes. PDI also helped define key responsibilities and future job challenges and identify the competencies, behaviors, and performance standards required of potential field sales managers.

Finally, PDI designed a comprehensive assessment and development process, immersing current and potential field sales managers in simulations that reflected the changing nature and demands of their new roles. The process assessed the fit between individual capabilities and role performance requirements. It also provided a realistic preview of the position's demands and individual feedback on leveraging strengths, while addressing development needs to ensure capabilities matched future role requirements.



The Results

Today the organization has addressed its business challenges and has incorporated this assessment process in its sales management career path. Field sales managers have said the program provides helpful insight into the demands of their positions.

Currently, PDI trains managers to be assessment coaches, which gives management a greater appreciation of the company's bench strength, as well as sharpens their coaching skills in evaluating performance and providing feedback. The organization sees the assessment and development process as critical in helping it make necessary transitions to remain a global competitor.

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