



CASE STUDY

Yusen Logistics

‘Tim re-established the credibility of the training in difficult circumstances and stepped it up to an exceptionally high level to a point where delegates re-engaged, learnt and practised how to become professional salespeople in a very competitive market’.

Graham Wood, Head of HR, NYK
(Yusen parent company)

The Client

Yusen Logistics is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Nippon Yusen Kabushiki Kaisha (NYK Line), one of the oldest and largest shipping companies in the world.

European Operations for Yusen Logistics identified that their sales teams were trailing behind other parts of the global organisation. Their first action was to commission sales training from a company based in Holland. It soon became apparent that the training programme was de-motivating delegates and not delivering the required results.

Subsequently, ML&C was commissioned to bring their European sales team up to the world-class standard required to remain competitive.

Asking the right questions...

As a first approach, Tim Woodman, MD and lead consultant for ML&C, decided to banish all assumptions, starting with a blank sheet of paper. He talked to previous delegates, senior managers and HR managers to diagnose previously unrecognised gaps in competency and relevant skills for the target delegate audience.

‘We also identified’ says Tim ‘that an element of company strategy had been thwarting attempts to bring European sales in line with Global targets. Instead of assessing training needs up front, the hiring strategy assumed that by

recruiting experienced sales people, there would be no need for training once in post,’

This assumption was erroneous. Even the highly experienced sales people hired by Yusen were not necessarily equipped with *all* the skills needed for sales success in the organisation. More challenging still, the pattern of the skill gaps was different for each individual. As if that wasn’t enough, the previous failed training programme had by now lost the trust of the target delegates and dissipated their motivation to engage with more training.

... designing the right solution

Uncovering the gap between where Yusen Logistics expected sales staff to be and the reality of where they were was a critical insight. With this we could accurately identify that a knowledge and skills development approach (plugging the knowledge and skills gap) would provide better results than a facilitation approach (facilitating the sales staff to apply their limited knowledge and skills more effectively).



Our thinking was to get the basics in place and build from there to create the world-class sales people that Yusen were looking for. We designed a programme to empower all staff with confidence and capability in the principles of selling, and to motivate them to absorb more sophisticated sales techniques and take on bigger challenges.

The solution proposed included four modules:

- Principles of selling - doing the right things
- Principles of selling - doing the things right
- Negotiation principles and practice
- Key account management

Methodologies that work, adapted to Yusen Logistics specific needs

The programme was specifically designed for Yusen sales professionals from a variety of countries, backgrounds and levels of expertise. By establishing a common platform of sales skills and processes, we looked to introduce these across the European Sales Team.

Practical exercises were used in workshops to establish competency levels and uncover participants' natural instincts and behaviours. We then designed a pathway for building additional skills and sales techniques specifically targeted to provide consistent success stories for delegates.

Delivery was at Yusen's European Headquarters over a total of 2 days, with 4-6 weeks between each day to allow time to put new learning into practice and gain confidence through practical application.



Impact

We measured progress initially through feedback given to senior managers within the European country management structures. The feedback was passed on to the director of European sales who then shared it with us.

The client had previously had a poor experience, yet we received immediate feedback that our delivery style was truly empowering for the delegates. They felt able to open up and share their challenges, which were then addressed by the trainer. As the delegates participated in the four modules, we recorded high levels of increasing confidence in what they were applying, with immediate improvements in terms of sales performance.