

Growing a Global Travel Business by Transforming Sales Performance

The volume of clients I have signed is above my target, and I am sure that Value-Based Selling has contributed to that. Clients that I have won were not the easiest and most straightforward tenders. Value-Based Selling has taught me to really learn what is important to the client and what value the client is after.

—Salesperson

We have won our largest deal, worth \$60 million.

—North America VP of Sales

The Situation

The company is a world leader in business travel management partnering with large corporations, small- and medium-sized companies, and government institutions. They design and implement superior travel management programs for clients based upon its recognized consulting expertise, strong purchasing power, technological prowess, and consistent delivery of high-quality service. With operations in more than 150 countries, it services 60 of the *Fortune* Global 100. The company generates more than \$19 billion in annual sales.

The company's aggressive growth strategy required that its sales organization, including 550 salespeople, account managers, and solutions consultants, increase its effectiveness in winning new business and managing existing relationships. The company set the specific objectives of implementing a consistent global sales process, gaining more wallet share from current accounts, differentiating itself from major competitors, meeting target profit margins, and demonstrating to clients how it delivers superior value and return on investment by deeply understanding their business and needs.

The Solution

Forum worked with the company to develop a comprehensive learning system for its "SAMS" audience: salespeople, account managers, solutions consultants, and managers around the globe. The learning system, Value-Based Selling, involved executive sessions on planning and rolling out the global sales process; sales and account team programs that assessed and enhanced consultative selling skills and trained participants to become strategic advisors to their clients; and manager programs that trained participants how to lead, coach, and reinforce their teams in applying the new approach. In addition to participating in classroom sessions, participants have also gained substantial on-the-job experience in applying the Value-Based Selling skills in growing relationships with key clients, and exchanging feedback and best practices with colleagues. Forum partnered with the leadership team and steering committee early on, and it continues to play a strategic role at the company's global conferences, local meetings and events, and strategic planning sessions. The Value-Based Selling way of doing business is being incorporated into all aspects of the organization, from program optimization to rollout and management of products and services.



The Results

A follow-up survey found substantial evidence of salespeople and account managers applying the new approach by asking more effective questions, understanding and addressing clients' unique needs, negotiating more effectively, working upstream with clients to avoid rebid situations, and ultimately shifting focus from price to value. Several participants reported that they had won, retained, or expanded multi-million dollar accounts by applying the Value-Based Selling approach. Additionally, the VBS approach has instilled a common language throughout the organization and has enhanced the client experience. A consistent approach to selling and managing client relationships, it is anchored in the value the company brings to its clients.

Forum helps business leaders execute their strategies through people. Using a combination of advisory and learning services, Forum accelerates strategy implementation, minimizes risk, and maximizes earnings for clients.

Drawing on nearly four decades of experience and research-based insights in learning design, consulting, and facilitation, Forum brings about changes in attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that enable employees to achieve and exceed the desired benefits of strategic change, to reduce time to improved performance, and to sustain the change over the long term.

Forum helps organizations transform their sales force, refocus on the customer, shift to a performance culture, and develop leaders at all levels. Its work contributes not only to increased profitability for clients, but also to increased market share, revenue growth, and customer and employee loyalty.

Since 1971, clients worldwide have trusted Forum to bring their most important strategic initiatives to life.

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