



Case Study: Business Development Training

The Challenge:

An international Contract Research Organization wanted to increase sales, improve their win rate, and increase the average value of each contract. They wanted to be seen as a strategic partner to their clients in order to participate in mission-critical projects and win no-bid repeat business based on trust.

Two obstacles stood in their way: the business development representatives needed to become true consultants to their clients, rather than order-takers; and the operational staff needed to probe for information to share with business development in order to capitalize on opportunities for new and expanded scope of work.

The Avoca Solution

Step One - Analysis/Assessment:

Avoca reviewed the entire business development process, including information sharing procedures, existing training and mentoring, career development, marketing support, compensation, and sales methodology. Rather than simply producing a "training solution" to a problem that encompassed much more than training, we look at the entire system by which business development professionals were equipped to do their jobs. We "triaged" the many training topics and chose the four training modules with the largest immediate impact.

Step Two – Approach/Action:

Avoca rolled out a global training program for senior business development and operational staff to attend together. Because much of the missed opportunity lay in the two groups working together to share information, the training focused on creating a common vision, common language, and common skill set for operations and BD. The training consisted of analysis, practice, and brainstorming for actual business opportunities with current and prospective clients.

The Challenge:

A comprehensive e-learning and teleseminar support program was implemented immediately after training, to reinforce the skills and behaviors learned in training, and to provide support as close to the point of action as possible.

Initial Results:

- Immediately following the training, several participants reported dramatic progress in accounts that had been stagnant/in trouble
- One business development representative rewrote a proposal that was due the following day *as a direct result of a brainstorming session that occurred during training* and won the business

Senior Business Development executives report that Avoca training terminology has become a "common language" among business development and operations staff, facilitating collaboration within the sales process