

Case Study

Accomplishing Sales Growth outside the Core Business

The leadership issue: How to achieve sales growth beyond the core business.

Background

This privately held telecommunications client is the leader in its market. Their key challenge was to identify and evaluate real growth opportunities outside of the core business, as long-term government contracts were coming under increasing price pressure due to tough public sector austerity measures.

What we found

While the company is well respected by its public sector customers for high standards of operational management and network reliability, we found that commercially it:

- ◆ struggled to understand and respond to existing customer needs in a timely, cost-effective way
- ◆ lacked the capability to engage successfully with potential private sector clients
- ◆ was not getting the best out of its technology and go-to-market partners

Significant opportunities for growth existed both within the public sector and beyond. However, attempts to exploit these were held back by the business's product-centred rather than customer or solution-centred approach. Product development and sales worked in a siloed manner, limiting the business's ability to respond effectively to customer demand or to stimulate new sales. The sales force culture needed to move towards more consultative solution-selling, to engage the real decision makers in a more co-ordinated and timely way, and with the right resources.

What we did

- ◆ An extensive in-market assessment was carried out to explore the opportunity for incremental growth in new markets
- ◆ Substantial opportunities in oil and gas, public transport, utilities, and other sectors were pinpointed, amounting to nearly £60m EBITDA over the next three years, which if realised would represent nearly 40% growth
- ◆ External customer interviews and internal workshops to scope the resource and investment required to realise the opportunities were undertaken
- ◆ Planning and design sessions were then run across the business's functions to properly factor the incremental growth opportunities into the company's 5 Year Plan, in which a high level of ROI and resource forecasting certainty was required by the Board. Working closely with the sales, commercial and product development teams, we helped them shape and adopt the '*accelerated sales and solutions*' model with their customers, to penetrate prospects in unfamiliar sectors and win new business
- ◆ Our role then moved to new sales delivery, by coaching the joint team in applying this model to cultivate and convert the first targets in the Utilities sector

Results

The project yielded important commercial and organisation wins for the business:

- ◆ The new ways of working were piloted to break into new Utilities accounts, allowing the Joint Team to accelerate value proposition development from 6 months to just 7 weeks
- ◆ Within 12 weeks the sales pipeline was increased from 2 prospects to 14 active sales pursuits, and 2 completely new customers were brought on board
- ◆ Instead of reacting to market demands, we helped the business create market demand and customer pull amongst Utilities for leading edge technology solutions