Using Performance Mapping and Gap Analysis to Improve Performance: An Evidence-Based Assessment of Performance Gaps

Bonnie Beresford
AMCI Global, USA

Paige Barrie
Volkswagen Credit, USA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

When the learning and development manager of a financial services firm wanted to improve organizational performance, she stated, “I want to understand what the best performers do, and make the rest more like the best.” By studying high performing salespeople, the organization discovered what such performers did that made them more successful than their colleagues. Using a structured performance mapping process, the project team elicited and documented the unconscious competence of these in-role experts. A gap analysis of all performers objectively identified, quantified, and prioritized the curriculum and performance support needs. This case study examines an organization that went from simply asking managers what courses their salespeople needed to an evidence-based assessment of real performance gaps. The approach resulted in a highly regarded curriculum, the elimination of development costs for unneeded courseware, and a reduction in training time and time away from the field.
ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND

When most consumers think of the automobile business, they likely think of manufacturing facilities and dealerships. There is another group of vibrant players in this industry: the financing arms of the automobile manufacturers. By law, “captive” finance companies like Ford Credit, Toyota Financial Services, and VW Credit, Inc. are registered as independent companies, yet they maintain a symbiotic relationship with the manufacturer. The finance companies service the manufacturer’s two important customer bases: the consumers of the manufacturer’s products (buyers and lessees) and its dealerships who sell and service those products.

For dealers, financing plays an important role in providing capital for facility expansion, purchase of vehicles for their lot and equipment for the service department, and funding for consumers. A well-funded dealer is good for the captive as well as for the manufacturer. For consumers, financing enables them to purchase the vehicle of their dreams at a payment they can afford.

Automotive financing is big business. While these captive finance companies may have an edge due to their connection with the manufacturer, they compete every day with banks and other lenders for the lucrative dealer and consumer financing business. The captives strive daily to get a bigger share of each dealer’s financing wallet. A good relationship with a dealer can lead to the dealer sending more new and used consumer deals to the captive. Thus, the quality of the finance company’s workforce plays an important role in achieving the business goals of both the manufacturer (to profitably sell more vehicles) and the finance company itself (to profitably finance more dealers and consumers).

Volkswagen Group (Volkswagen AG), headquartered in Wolfsburg, Germany, and manufacturer of VW, Audi, Bentley, Lamborghini, Porsche and a number of other automotive products, has set its target to become the global economic and environmental leader among automobile manufacturers by 2018. In particular, they aspire to:

- Be the world leader in customer satisfaction and quality,
- Increase unit sales to more than 10 million vehicles per year,
- Increase return on sales before tax to at least 8 percent,
- Become the top employer across all brands, companies, and regions.

According to an August 2014 study by the Center of Automotive Management, Volkswagen Group is positioned to sell 10.1 million vehicles in 2014 and become the world’s largest car manufacturer ahead of their 2018 stated goal, surpassing Toyota and General Motors. Volkswagen Group’s strategy includes an intentional focus on environmentally friendly and profitable vehicle projects. They believe the
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