

# UPS AND GAZING CREATE WIN:WIN SCENARIO; INCREASING CUSTOMER & STAFF SATISFACTION AT THE SAME TIME

## Management Summary.

Given the magnitude of its client base and the importance they collectively attach to the timely delivery of their packages and parcels, UPS has developed a highly sophisticated customer service organisation which rightly attaches enormous importance to maintaining high levels of satisfaction, trust and confidence amongst its customers.

**T**he challenge facing UPS was how to continuously raise the level of service provided by this group to its customer base, and yet not lower staff morale or increase staff churn. The company turned to Gazing Performance Ltd which was able to design and build a customised training programme that both strengthened the relationship with the clients whilst at the same time increasing employee satisfaction.

UPS has invested a significant amount in building a market leading support service for their customers. Nowhere is this more apparent than when dealing with its largest customers, which are each provided with a dedicated account manager from the sales team and supported by a Preferred Customer Associate (PCA). The role of the PCA is primarily to handle in-bound, telephone-based customer enquiries and generally support the account manager in providing a first class service.

Whilst the PCA's primary responsibility was to provide inbound query support, the company was aware however, that, with the appropriate training, these staff members could carry out additional duties that would help raise levels of customer service. This could also lead to increased sales from each territory.

By becoming more involved, the PCA could, for instance, educate the customer on revised procedural issues or discuss with them new services that they had not previously heard about. The emphasis could, through this proposed change, move towards providing more 'pro-active' customer support. The problem though, was how to effect this, not insignificant, change to the 158 European PCAs' working lives in such a way that they did not feel unduly 'pressured'?



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case study

As Jan Hillman, the European Sales Support Manager responsible for introducing this change saw it, **the real challenge lay in showing the PCAs that the new way of working would add to their job satisfaction, not lessen it.** She said: “we knew that we would meet resistance initially, but once that had been overcome, by increasing the contact the PCAs had with their customers and deepening the relationships they had with them that they would find their jobs more interesting and rewarding, as they would get more involved. The problem was how to handle and overcome that initial resistance, then roll the training programme out across all of Europe quickly”.

She continued, “We had an existing internal training programme in place that works well with our field sales and call centre staff, but recognised that, in this scenario, a different sort of training was required, one that was more flexible and adaptive”.

The management at UPS had worked with Gazing Performance Ltd in the past and knew that the hallmarks of their training programmes were their flexibility and adaptability. Using a deceptively simple training technique, the company’s training programmes provide a ‘map-based structure’ around which delegates can learn new skills and cope with being put ‘under pressure’.

Borrowing heavily from the founders’ work with high performance athletes and sports men and women, Gazing has developed a highly distinctive and innovative portfolio of training services that collectively provide a form of ‘mental coaching’; ie, that help delegates to develop an ability to maintain focus on what is important and ‘block out’ all extraneous activity that might divert attention from the task in hand.

The company had already identified that it was the top sportsmen and women’s ‘mental toughness’ that enables them to consistently deliver high levels of performance whilst under intense pressure. And that this same skill could be transferred to those working in a commercial environment. It was this apparent simplicity, yet highly focused approach that appealed to Jan. She said: **“We wanted to give the PCAs the confidence to ‘go up a gear’, but for them not to feel threatened. They immediately identified with the Gazing approach, which gave them a navigational aid, but without being too prescriptive”.**

Gazing began work on the new training programme in 2002 with an initial pilot in the UK. Within three months, this was quickly ‘cascaded’ throughout Europe to the 158 PCAs via nine trainers.

By 2003 all of the European PCAs had undergone the Gazing training programme and the results have been noticeable in three primary areas. At an operational level, traditional metrics surrounding territory management, such as sales and customer service levels have shown an improvement. At an HR level, levels of employee satisfaction have also gone up. And anecdotally, Jan has also noticed a difference, “In the way the PCAs conduct themselves”.

But most importantly, the staff have accepted their increased workload with alacrity, no mean feat in today’s demanding and highly pressurised working environment.



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