

## ***Case Study:***

Workforce Performance Enhancement Project for a Consumer Goods Client

### ***Summary:***

In a worldwide marketplace where consumer electronic goods are rapidly becoming commoditized, CLIENT X needed to differentiate itself, and the value it provides, in the eyes of consumers and retailers. With ALLIANT's help, the electronics company transformed its sales function by identifying the core roles required within the sales force, and then devising a curriculum to train employees for those roles. The training is now carried out within a newly established the *College of Sales Success* and has been responsible for improved skills and behaviors among the sales staff, as well as higher-than-average customer satisfaction levels.

### ***Business Challenge:***

CLIENT X felt that it was beginning to lose much of the brand leverage that it had gained during the prior two decades since the company's inception. CLIENT X concluded that a transformation of the sales function—and the way salespeople were trained and rewarded—was essential to ensuring competitive advantage. More specifically, the sales function would need to shift from its traditional focus on volume to a more consultative approach emphasizing mutual benefit. For instance, salespeople would need to be able to work with retailers to create and execute joint marketing initiatives and design more effective displays. These efforts would enable retailers to sell more of the client's products, thus benefiting both parties. The company's approach was consistent with how high-performance businesses view their people. In its ongoing research into the characteristics of high performance, ALLIANT has found that one of the building blocks of high performance is a performance anatomy—the culture, leadership and workforce elements that enable a company to drive important differences in employee behavior that lead to better business outcomes.

### ***How We Helped:***

Working closely with the client's executive team and key functional managers, the ALLIANT project team began by synthesizing the sales roles into eight new core roles specifically designed to achieve the client's transformative goals. The sales function was involved at every step of the process ensuring they understood why particular competencies were chosen and courses included in their curriculum. For example, the curriculum for Account Executives emphasized skills like relationship management and negotiation, while Sales Administrators were trained extensively on problem solving and teamwork. In fact, a curriculum for each role was designed specifically to help them do their jobs better and ultimately drive higher levels of differentiation with retailers. Finally, to ensure that this training had a lasting impact, the *College of Sales Success* was closely integrated with the client's performance management system, enabling more objective, accurate and strategically driven performance appraisals and personal development plans.

### ***High Performance Delivered:***

As a result of implementing the College of Sales Success, CLIENT X has made impressive strides toward high performance. For example, the company's differentiation and perceived value among retailers has been directly improved: While the client's account management team had lower-than-average customer satisfaction levels prior to implementing the sales training program, it is now ahead of the competition in this area.