

Case Study:

Blood Centers of America, Inc.
USA

Develop Selling Skills to Build High Performance Teams

Blood Centers of America, Inc., (BCA) is a cooperative whose members are community blood centers located across the U.S. BCA provides thirty percent of the nation's transfusion requirements, with a primary focus on improving the operations and business activities of their blood center network.

The Challenge: Heather Marreel is the Director of Recruitment for Siouxland Community Blood Bank in the mid-west region. The Blood Bank has 150 employees, and Heather manages a group of seven recruiters who enlist blood donors. She also manages a tele-recruitment team, and oversees fundraising, grant writing and marketing efforts. Heather's background was in sales prior to joining the blood bank. As a seasoned sales professional, she viewed her new role as a sales position, which, until her arrival, had been viewed as a marketing function. Heather explains, "Our recruiters have to prospect for new business to achieve their annual goal, and reach a certain percentage of that goal each month. We measure projection accuracy month to month, in the same way that sales quotas are tracked." Heather delivered the recruiter sales concept to her management team. She met with some initial pushback, but was able to convince the team that this was the right approach. The next critical step in the process for Heather was to find a way to introduce a formal sales training program.

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Heather Marreel
Director of Recruitment

Heather began sales training discussions with her CEO in February of 2008. Within a few months, PI Consultant Deb Scott from P.I. Midwest, a PI Worldwide member firm introduced their sales development solutions: Selling Skills Assessment Tool (SSAT)™, Customer-Focused Selling™ (CFS), and the Predictive Index® (PI), in a presentation to the blood bank's CEO and senior management team. "I jumped at the opportunity to use these tools with my team," states Heather. "Comprehensive sales training is imperative to the recruiter's long-term success."

The Process: Heather's team focused on PI Worldwide's sales solutions, completing the SSAT and CFS. The results of the SSAT identified selling strengths and areas for improvement at the individual and team level. Using this insight, the recruiters attended CFS consultative sales training which provided knowledge and tools for improved sales performance. "The investigate and confirm components of the sales training process were the weakest areas for our organization, explains Heather. Volunteer coordinators who assist with blood drives had never been asked probing questions before. Now they're more open with recruiters, and willing to share a level of information that has resulted in many new donor opportunities.

The senior management team saw the Predictive Index as a strategic solution to ensure strong job fit for specialized positions in the blood collection and lab departments. Both the Director of Blood Collections and Lab use PI and PRO, the PI companion tool that profiles the behavioral requirements of the job, to get the insight they need to make strong hiring decisions. PI ensures the right job fit by identifying the behavioral traits for optimal job performance. "We match an applicant's PI to the job profile. If there is a strong fit, we will use this insight to tailor our interview questions. The Predictive Index has been very good at predicting our lab personnel requirements which are very task and detail oriented with diligence, operational or specialist patterns," explains Anjeanette Barto, Director of Blood Collections.

The Results: The recruitment team has recently uncovered many new sales leads and opportunities - from leveraging speaking engagements with new service groups to increasing their visibility at health fairs, symposiums, and other community based activities. Prior to CFS, recruiters seldom met with their clients 'in person'. They now meet regularly with existing clients to help maintain the relationship, and gain referrals for new business.

Before attending Customer-Focused Selling, a recruiter's monthly projection accuracy (units of blood donated per month) ranged from 70 – 85%. After CFS training, recruiter projection accuracy increased 15 to 20%. According to Heather, this reflects a tremendous increase. "Since CFS, the team has a new found confidence, and they're prospecting more and closing new business more successfully than ever before."

PI has played an equally important role in the development of the Heather's team. She shares, "Individuals are motivated and morale is higher than ever, and it's invigorating to see how well each team member works together." Heather has worked extensively to integrate all facets of the CFS training into the recruiter role to ensure long-term success. She explains, "At an individual and group level, the methods and techniques of CFS are applied to the team's operation. We conduct weekly team sessions to reinforce CFS methodology on an ongoing basis. The results have been extremely positive." Recruiters have not only achieved consistently higher projections since the CFS training, but they have been able to sustain this improved performance. Heather explains, "Now they know the right questions to ask and how to confirm next steps to move new business forward which has greatly improved the team's level of success."

PI Worldwide* is a global management consulting organization that helps companies be more successful by focusing on their most important asset-their people. Praendex Incorporated, the parent company of PI Worldwide, is publisher of the Predictive Index®, the Selling Skills Assessment Tool™ and Customer-Focused Selling™.