

SIEMENS and Huthwaite reach for economic growth – and pick up an award in the process





SIEMENS

The relationship between Huthwaite and Siemens spans several decades, market segments and continents, and has covered the adoption of many practical skills for improving complex sales and negotiations. Every project has had its notable achievements, but perhaps none has been as visible as the current work in Greece.

Not only has it begun to have a measurable impact on the selling habits of the 165 Siemens sales people who have participated, but it has also resulted in a prestigious national award.

The project began in 2012, with a realisation that, even for a company as renowned and consistently excellent as Siemens, the Greek market was one of the toughest sales environments in the world. All the relevant agencies in Greece were keen to nurture and foster excellence in order to gain competitiveness, and so government funding to consultancy projects was identified and set aside for an initiative to supercharge the commercial capabilities of already large companies who

could, with a bit of help, lead the Greek economy to better times. Siemens was one of those. The industrial giant was looking to improve selling skills, at both the face-to-face level, and across the whole opportunity management process, and turned to Huthwaite International's Greek operation in the shape of ICAP Training Solutions. Siemens and ICAP designed a project combining two of Huthwaite's most popular and successful training programmes: SPIN® Selling, a consultative and listening model which helps sales people to sell to the specific needs of the buyer; and Account Strategy, which provides the skills and processes for handling a complex sales opportunity, where there are many stakeholders and competitors involved.

Because practice, based on realistic cases, is so important to the Huthwaite approach to effective learning, there are one-to-one roleplays and simulated group sales meetings throughout the training. And because Siemens sales people from the Healthcare, Infrastructure & Cities, Industry Automation and Energy sectors were involved,

the instructional design team at Huthwaite worked closely with the client for many days of pre-training consultancy, to ensure that those roleplays and simulations really would match the kinds of sales challenges that each of these Siemens divisions faces.

“That preparatory work,” says George Pastidis Country Manager of Huthwaite Hellas, “is the key to ensuring that the training has credibility for the delegates, aids in skill improvement during the course itself, and can become integrated and embedded in the lives of the sales teams once the training is over.”

In all, the sales teams experienced some 72 days of intensive training. Not only that, but the General Managers and other managers (some of whom were already familiar with SPIN® from previous Huthwaite/Siemens initiatives) were closely involved, representing the role of the customer in the simulations, and being on hand to give feedback based on real experience. That's quite a commitment from Siemens. Has it been worth it?

“I’ve been in the Sales & Marketing field for many many years and I think everyone should take this world class sales training programme.”

Georgios Panagiotarakos, Country Sector Lead of Siemens Healthcare Greece & OSWE





SIEMENS

As a first measure, this highly educated and experienced audience – many MBAs among them – were asked to rate their immediate impressions of the training events themselves. Out of a possible 7 rating, each event across the entire project averaged between 6.5 and 6.7 – a strong vote of confidence in both the usefulness of the content and the quality of the training consultants. This was echoed by Georgios Panagiotarakos, Country Sector Lead of Siemens Healthcare Greece & OSWE.

He called the intervention: *“A great sales toolbox we all can use to be more effective. The exercises and the full of life instructors, made it more educational and extremely impactful. I’ve been in the Sales & Marketing field for many many years and I think everyone should take this world class sales training programme.”*

Looking at the longer term business impact, there already seem to be gains there too.

Irene Karamani, Human Resources Manager for Siemens Hellas certainly believes so:

“Huthwaite’s training programme was exactly what they needed to keep them alert and motivated in the current difficult period for the business.”

And most importantly, they finished the programme full of enthusiasm, passion and strong belief that if they use the knowledge they can change their results immediately. ICAP Training instructors’ professionalism, enthusiasm, concentration to detail and understanding of our working environment and finally the training’s customisation were outstanding.”

As if to add an impartial and prestigious affirmation of everything that Siemens and Huthwaite Hellas have said about the project, recognition of a different kind came in February 2013 when, at the Sales Institute of Greece annual awards in

Athens, the initiative won the Sales Excellence Award. The prize is designed to reward the best sales practices in all business sectors and to highlight those who have demonstrated best practice and initiative in sales. It was a proud occasion for all involved – but not the end of the story.

“Learning is a continuous process,” George Pastidis argues, “and we are now talking with Siemens about the best ways to embed and reinforce all this work so that it becomes second nature to the Siemens Hellas sales force. We are also in the early stages of work with some of the management team in improving their negotiations skills too.”

So, a successful project from many angles, but most importantly, one that aims to give Siemens the best possible chance of winning more business in the years ahead.





© Huthwaite International. This document is the copyright work of Huthwaite International and may not be reproduced (in whole or in part, in any form or by any means whatever) without its prior written permission. SPIN, Huthwaite, the Buying Cycle and the Company logo are trademarks and are registered in many countries throughout the world. The copyright notices and trademarks on this document may not be removed or amended without the prior written consent of Huthwaite International.



Visit the website



Follow us on Twitter



Connect on LinkedIn



Huthwaite International Headquarters
Hooper House, Wentworth, S62 7SA, South Yorkshire, UK
Tel: +44 (0)1709 710081 | Fax: +44 (0)1709 710065
Email: info@huthwaite.co.uk | Web: www.huthwaite.co.uk