

IBM sales staff expand their skills portfolio

IBM, historically the giant of the IT industry, is now once again showing strong business performance. Across Europe, Huthwaite has been involved in various projects to hone the interactive skills of the customer-facing staff.

One of the changes in the re-made IBM is the freeing of sales teams to negotiate terms, as well as simply sell products and services. That is a very different — and new — skill.

Sean McElwain, IBM Ireland's director of sales and marketing, is in no doubt about the part Huthwaite has played. "Many's the time," he says, "where it's been clear just how much Huthwaite has helped us to conclude a successful agreement with which both parties are happy."

Similarly, what began as a pilot course on negotiation for IBM Nordic region sales managers led to immersion in Huthwaite skills for all

the key sales people in those countries. And as IBM's Rolf Ellertsen points out: "One of the crucial lessons it taught us was when to negotiate, and when not to. The programmes were perfect for us, and even made allowances for the behavioural differences between Swedes, Danes, Norwegians and Finns — which are greater than you might imagine!"



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