

A sales training programme in an international hotel company

Summary case study of the ROI Institute methodology in use for programme evaluation

In August 2004 Le Meridien Hotels introduced a training programme for its hotels' conference coordinators to reinforce a series of customer promises which were part of a marketing campaign to increase conference sales and achieve budget goals. The training programme rolled out in four European cities and included directors of sales and international sales representatives, as well as the conference coordinators who had been designated as Meeting Champions for their respective hotel.

Research prior to the training highlighted poor rollout of the customer promises which included quoting promptly, use of a standard proposal template, use of standard online planning tools and a reward programme for the meeting planner. A thorough pre-event evaluation determined the knowledge level of participants so that an appropriate training programme could be developed. One result of the pre-event evaluation was the decision to invite the regional sales directors to the training programme. This decision made a crucial difference to the success of the programme. Discussion at the training events identified some of the reasons for non-compliance-- for example the reasons for compliance were not always well understood, and the standard proposal template was unsuitable for some technologies. The training enhanced the mutual understanding of the regional sales offices and the sales coordinators on the ground.

Following the training compliance improved, as did sales and margins. Conservative ROI analysis attributed only 27% of the improved results to the training. Even so, the return on the investment in the training events was calculated to be 203%. Intangible benefits included improved customer loyalty and satisfaction.