

Chapter X

Performance

Enhancement of Team

Retailing Through Six

Sigma Applications

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‘Team’ conceptualizes group of people engaged in delivering a common task. In ideal situations the individual and group behavior in a team is integrated towards common objectives and the task delivery process is shared which leads to set the group dynamics. The basic attributes of a good team include clear identification of goals, clarity of roles, common feeling, motivation, commitment and collaborative attitude (Rajagopal and Rajagopal, 2006^a). The team selling approach is followed by many multinational companies for various products and services, which the customer faces as a first-time buy and salespeople need to support such negotiations with comprehensive information needs. Team selling would also be advantageous when an account requires special treatment or a large number of people are involved in the process of buying decision. In addition, team selling is more likely to be employed when the potential sale is large for the representative firm and when the product is new to the product line of salespeople (Rajagopal, 2007). In a sales team each member of the group shows interest in the achievement and follows a systems approach which provides the framework or organizational principal for evaluating task in parts (Cumings, 1980). The members develop confidence, trust, and commitment to work in a team and rely on group communication on the given tasks and schedule.

Team may not function effectively if any of the above factors or associated variables are incoherent. The reward and punishment issues in a team emerge as a post-process synergy of all associated variables and are largely governed by the factors such as common feeling, motivation, commitment and collaborative attitude (Rajagopal, 2006^b). Hence teams are collections of people who must rely upon group collaboration, if each member is to experience the optimum success and goal achievement. Changing technology and markets have stimulated the team approach in multinational companies for performing the organizational tasks. Moreover, complexity of the society and human needs has prompted team work as a significant tool in managing the corporate tasks (Dyer, 1987). Team management is employed largely in the organizations where activities are less repetitive and predictable. Such an approach demands effective liaison, appropriate delegation of powers, judicious allocations of roles of team members, sharing of information and accuracy in evaluation of team performance (Harris and Moran, 1999).

Team control has emerged as a behavioral control mechanism. The sales engineers become a part of a quasi-firm arrangement, along with the client's engineers and managers, who supervise their work. Management efforts to ensure detailed documentation emerge as a second control mechanism (Darr, 2003). Industrial organizations largely implement direct management control and influence the activities of employees leading towards improving their efficiency (Anderson and Oliver, 1987; Eisenhardt, 1985; Ouchi, 1979). The extent monitoring of sales managers, and directing, evaluating, and rewarding activities in an organization intend to guide sales team behavior through team control processes to achieve favorable results to the organization and the employees (Anderson and Oliver, 1987). Team control in a sales organization, is thus recognized as an important performance indicator of the task performed by the salespeople (Cravens *et al.*, 1993; Oliver and Anderson, 1994).

Result oriented control and market volatility are positively related to new product selling performance. The effect of sales team adoption on selling performance is stronger where outcome based control is used and where the firm provides information on the background of the new product to salespeople through internal marketing (Hultink and Atuhene, 2000). It has been observed that salespeople, who simultaneously exhibit commitment and effort, achieve higher performance in sales activity. Measuring sales performance has been emerged as significance managerial control to sustain competitive advantage (Magrath, 1997).

High technology sales organizations evolve in a highly turbulent environment, hence external conditions can be expected to modify the relationships between the antecedents and the control system in these industries. The uncertainty of environment and technological turbulence modify the relationships between most of the antecedents and the control system (Lapierre and Skelling, 2005). A study of

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