

ORIGINAL SITUATION

Nalco needed to define and formalize the process of what Nalco has done since its founding in 1928, deliver customer solutions based on a thorough understanding of their customer's needs.

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENTS

Despite changes in ownership and accompanying shifts in senior leadership, CSP continues to be a core foundation of the company's success. In fact, many attribute the company's resilience and high rates of customer and employee retention to a corporate-wide belief that every interaction focuses on the customer's needs – a key CSP principle.

Strategic Enhancement Group's Commitment to Success at Nalco.

Twenty-Eight Year Partnership Stands the Test of Time.



In 1986, Strategic Enhancement Group, Inc. introduced a revolutionary new sales process called *Counselor Salesperson (CSP)* to ten sales representatives at Nalco Company, a leading global provider of integrated water treatment and process improvement services, chemicals and equipment programs for a variety of industrial customers. Few would have predicted that 28 years later this experiment would touch tens of thousands of employees and support the consulting mindset that has defined Nalco's culture since it was founded in 1928.

Since those ten participants attended that first *Counselor Salesperson* almost three decades ago:

- More than 14,000 Nalco employees worldwide, including senior managers, have participated in the consultative sales training.

RESULTS ACHIEVED



- *CSP* is now required for any Nalco salesperson hoping to move up in the sales organization and advanced sales training and sales management training that builds on *CSP* principles is required for all sales managers.
- The curriculum has been adapted to reflect the unique cultures and social norms of over 130 countries where Nalco has operations and has been customized and translated into eight languages, including Mandarin Chinese, Japanese, Italian, Spanish, French, Portuguese and German.
- The sales effectiveness curriculum has grown to include two additional specialized programs – *Versatile Salesperson (VSP)* and *The Leader Manager (TLM)* – that expand *CSP* principles.
- Nalco's sales culture has thrived, despite dramatic changes, including major industry consolidations, mergers, changes in ownership, related leadership changes and an intensely competitive market.
- Nalco has come to be regarded as one of the chemical industry's leading sales organizations.

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HERB SISTRUNK
Nalco Global Education Manager

Humble Beginnings

“From the outset, Nalco management was open to taking an unconventional approach. That was key,” explained Bob Parks, President and CEO at Strategic Enhancement Group, Inc. “At the time, most companies saw a sale as a one-time transaction. Nalco approached each potential sale as part of an ongoing relationship and a chance to solve a unique problem.”

“They recognized the importance of consultative sales and value-added service long before it was popular,” said Parks, who has worked with Nalco since the relationship began. “Nalco understood that every solution was customized. They didn't offer

‘off the shelf’ solutions like many competitors. Customers choose to work with Nalco as much for the way they arrived at a solution as the solution itself.”

“*CSP* suits Nalco's needs perfectly because it is designed to help salespeople look at a business challenge from a customer's point of view using a comprehensive discovery process,” explained Parks. A thorough understanding of the client's situation, concerns, challenges and requirements allows the Nalco salesperson to make sound and accurate recommendations. Many clients find the discovery equally enlightening.

“The *CSP* process helped formalize what Nalco was doing already and integrated consultative selling into every aspect of the sales process,” he explained. “*CSP* helped ensure that everyone approached customer situations from the same perspective.”

Herb Sistrunk, Global Education Manager for Nalco, said that since embracing *CSP*, Nalco has never seriously looked at another sales development approach because *CSP* helps showcase what Nalco has done best since the company was founded: Deliver customer solutions based on a thorough understanding of the customer's needs. “We sell experience, problem-solving and chemical expertise. The three are intertwined,” he said.

Solutions Grow, Change with Company

The *CSP* approach quickly became the foundation of Nalco's sales and service. Over the years, Strategic Enhancement Group, Inc. has helped the company incorporate enhancements to the curriculum that include the latest research on human behavior, current technology and best practices learning over the years.

Over time, more advanced sales training has been added to the Nalco sales development curriculum. *Versatile Salesperson* provides a more in-depth understanding of the consultative process and focuses on adapting the sales approach to reflect a customer's personal style. *The Leader Manager* process focuses on leadership and building the skills sales managers need to maximize the efforts of their sales teams. *TLM* is used throughout the company, in all departments and functions, as the primary leadership course at Nalco.

In fact, Nalco's integration of *TLM* principles into real sales leadership situations is so well-known that the company was asked to act as a test site for the most recent version of the new *TLM* program, offering practical insights before it was introduced worldwide.

COMPANY PROFILE

Nalco is an Ecolab company. A trusted partner at more than one million customer locations, Ecolab (ECL) is the global leader in water, hygiene and energy technologies and services that protect people and vital resources. With 2012 sales of \$12 billion and 44,000 associates, Ecolab delivers comprehensive solutions and on-site service to promote safe food, maintain clean environments, optimize water and energy use and improve operational efficiencies for customers in the food, healthcare, energy, hospitality and industrial markets in more than 170 countries around the world.

Very early on, Nalco decided to facilitate the training internally to control costs and ensure that the curriculum reflected the company's strategies, goals and markets. Strategic Enhancement worked closely with Nalco to certify a team of sales managers and training managers to take on facilitation.

As Nalco's training needs evolved and grew (an average of 500 employees per year go through at least one of the three curriculums) Strategic Enhancement's role shifted as well.

Strategic Enhancement's partnership with Nalco now focuses primarily on advanced sales and management development rather than facilitation. Ongoing coaching programs and manager development help to ensure that the *CSP*, *VSP*, and *TLM* sessions are not just "one-time" training events and help Nalco managers to reinforce key principles regularly. Strategic Enhancement also provides administrative support, such as managing logistics for more than 40 sessions held worldwide each year, coordinating pre-class surveys and assessments.

"We have had a very positive, fruitful working relationship with Strategic Enhancement," said Sistrunk who has worked with the firm for over 15 years. "We expect them to bring best practices and we're never disappointed. Bob pushes us to think differently. He uses the same *CSP* principles we teach. He asks great questions then uses our responses to create a solution."

A CSP Culture

Not surprisingly, *CSP*, *TLM* and *VSP* have become deeply embedded in the Nalco corporate culture over the past two-plus decades.

At a minimum, all sales employees are required to take *CSP* and, as a result, *CSP* has become "the sales vocabulary at Nalco," said Sistrunk.

CSP language, sales and leadership principles can be found in all sales-related documents, call planning, hiring practices and sales discussions. They are integrated into the coaching process and form the basis of promotion criteria for higher sales and sales management positions. Nalco also now requires all participants to complete a web-based self-study course before attending *CSP* so they are familiar with its vocabulary and terms.

Despite changes in ownership and accompanying shifts in senior leadership, *CSP* continues to be a core foundation of the company's success. In fact, many attribute the company's resilience and high rates of customer and employee retention to a corporate-wide belief that every interaction focuses on the customer's needs – a key *CSP* principle.

"*CSP* is alive and well among Nalco employees," said Parks. "The Company's core beliefs about customer service and sales have deep roots."

Looking ahead, Sistrunk sees many opportunities to further enhance its sales development efforts and expects Strategic Enhancement to play a key role in realizing opportunities.

As the saying goes, "no matter how good you are you can always get better!"

To learn more about these concepts and how Strategic Enhancement Group, Inc. can help you in addressing these issues, contact us at (630) 377-4300, (888) 668-9382 outside of IL or StrategicEnhancement.com.