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Case Study - Olex

Olex Australia uses Objective Assessment to identify unused capacity in it's salesforce

Olex manufactures the widest range of power cables in Australia, supplying the country's electricity, mining and rail industries, a burgeoning international market including China, Sri Lanka as well as electrical wholesalers in Australia and New Zealand. Many among Olex's 800 strong workforce are long term employees. So when a management buy-out accelerated the pace of change, the company sought Objective Assessment's independent expertise to assess its sales team. The pilot test in Victoria led Olex to restructure its sales team and introduce a new sales management process using SalesTrack. Plans are now afoot at Olex to extend the process nationally.

Long term sales team faced changing role

Dennis Willingham, General Manager Sales at Olex describes the company's sales culture, "People stay a long time at Olex. In Melbourne many exceed

20 years and the previous State Manager was there 30 years in various roles. As often happens, he'd moved through the ranks and taught his team the same ways. The problem is the role of Account Manager and the market has radically changed since they were employed at Olex."

"The Sales Force Profile and SalesTrack have created the framework we need to manage our sales people, their performance and their value to the Company."

*Dennis Willingham, General Manager Sales
Olex Australia*

Acquisition left multiple sales networks to consolidate

He continues, "After the MBO and all the challenges that come with it, we had to rationalise two sales and logistics networks into one. After consolidation each State Manager was asked to assess their sales team, but managers tended to be paternalistic and protective towards their own team."

Objective Assessment tailors the evaluation to Olex Australia

Objective Assessment offered, as Dennis explains, "The perfect chance to get someone to do the assessment for us. I was sold by the fact that the evaluations are online so there's no personal bias in the interpretation or personal influence at interview. Our Business Manager for Wholesale and myself answered Objective

"Objective Assessment has given us an independent view of sales performance from someone exposed to all types of salespeople."

*Dennis Willingham, General Manager Sales
Olex Australia*

Assessment's questions about how the organisation should look, and that formed the specific profile for the online test."

He continues, "Victoria was chosen as our trial state. Following advice from Beverley Jones, Objective Assessment's Managing Director, we were able to communicate the aims of the evaluation to our six salespeople there in the constructive way it was intended, and they took it positively."



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The evaluation delivers insights to restructure our sales team

He continues, "The Sales Force Profile identified those on the team who are:

- going through the motions
- uneasy asking for orders above a certain value
- a good fit but have no ability to be trained
- hindered in their ability to close the deal by their non-supportive buying habits
- in need of training, and the specific areas for training."

"We're not assessing how good or bad a salesperson is. It's their capacity to be trained and potential to improve their performance that are important to us."

*Dennis Willingham, General Manager Sales
Olex Australia*

Dennis explains, "Previously each salesperson had a mix of customers across our total business segments. As these require different skill sets, we used the evaluation findings to restructure the salesforce. The wholesale business was allocated to two Account Managers best suited to the

"The report identified those people that were being criticised internally actually had the best ability to improve."

*Dennis Willingham, General Manager Sales
Olex Australia*

relationship nature of wholesale selling. The four Business Development Managers were given a clearer customer base and defined territories. Some people have been taken out of their comfort zone, others are happier, but everyone is more accountable."

SalesTrack keeps sales team focused on what they need to do

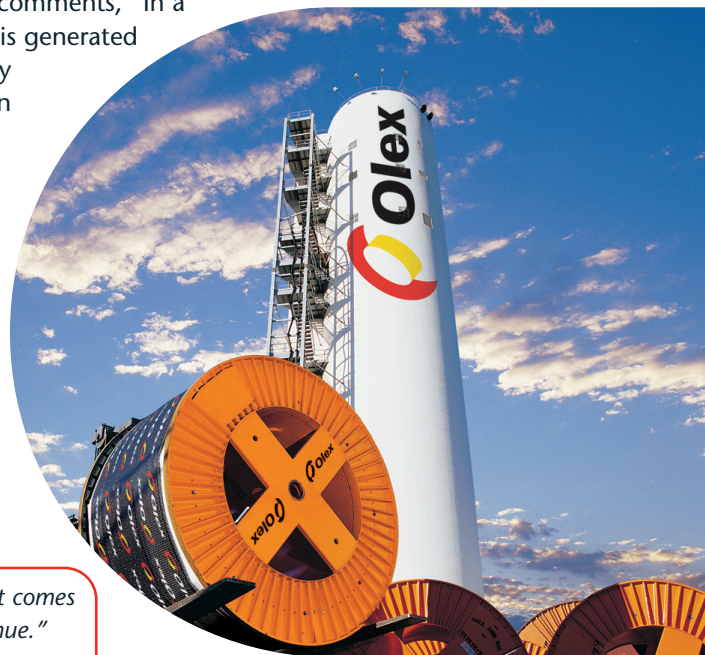
For greater accountability and continuous evaluation, Olex is using the online sales performance system, SalesTrack. Dennis comments, "In a few keystrokes each person logs their work, a report is generated weekly and monthly, keeping the State Manager truly informed of activity and results. In the past a call plan would look fantastic but the reality at the end of the week was less so."

SalesTrack gives Olex:

- the confidence that their sales team in the field are visiting the people they need to
- if needed, an audit track to see if people are being visited
- the level of 'soft calls' and cold calls
- performance tracking against the agreed call rate

"SalesTrack is straightforward and gives us what we need when it comes to measuring cold calls, conversations, meetings, closes and revenue."

*Dennis Willingham, General Manager Sales
Olex Australia*



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