

Case Study: Mark Honey – Sales Trainer of the Year

Mark Honey reveals how he uses the principles outlined by Hugh Alford in the article [Boost your Impact](#) to great effect.

Mark Honey, lead call centre trainer for HBOS is the winner of the 2005 'TACK International Sales Trainer of the Year' award presented by the National Sales Awards.

Beginning his career at BT in a sales role, Honey discovered a flair for selling services. Whilst enjoying the challenge of shift work, he realised his ability to help others and began to develop a taste for coaching. After a period of climbing the corporate ladder, he is now sharing his knowledge, sales talent and ability to effectively train and improve performance of the call centre workers at HBOS.

Since joining the financial services firm, he has gained a certificate in training practice and impressed the award judges with his unique approach to training. "Interaction is the key to engage and inspire delegates. Each course is different because of the array of personalities in the room, all of who want to learn. Theory based work is useful, but to make a real impact and help build confidence to deliver results, revealing your personality as a salesperson is vital. If there is one lesson that today's salesperson should remember, it is everyone likes to buy but no one likes to be sold to."

One of Honey's approaches is to gain the trust of his current and former delegates by regularly joining them on the sales floor and making calls himself. "I think that being able to demonstrate the skills of effective sales first hand to your delegates is imperative in gaining their trust and also serves to establish a platform of pragmatic, observational learning. Delegates new to a sales role are far more likely to try methods they have actually seen work.

"Some of the attendees have not entered a classroom environment for over 15 years. You cannot lecture them – these are adults with varying life positions, so my approach is a mixture of entertainment, activities-based learning games, cartoons, colours and humour as well as having the competency and confidence to explain how to sell successfully."

Honey's advice for sales trainers who wish to win over and succeed with their audience includes, "Converting the non-sales believer to believe in sales. Before you can build an individual's skills and confidence in a sales environment you must first address any preconceived ideas or negative views of sales they may have.

"Skills gaps including soft skills, learning styles and confidence will need careful management to help employees build a strong rapport with customers. We have an opportunity as trainers to instill a real sense of self-belief, enthusiasm and passion for an individual's role.