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The Modernization of Sales Training for Generation Z Students

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Comprehensive Exam Project Presentation

The Modernization of Sales Training for Generation Z Students

Sam Kanthak

Master's Program – Organizational Leadership

7/30/2020



Introduction

- Poor training causes:

Unhappy employees

Low production

(Amo, 2018)

Loss of customers

Increased turnover

- Generation Z students learn in a unique way compared to previous generations

(Thacker, 2016)



Purpose of the Study

- The purpose of this study is to identify best practices for training Generation Z sales professionals
- The results will be used to update an outdated training program



Research Questions

The following question guided this study:

RQ1: What are the best practices for training Generation Z sales professionals in the workplace?



Research Methodology & Rationale

- Action Research Project
- In an action research project, the researcher and client collaborate to identify a problem and present a plan to correct it
(Bryman & Bell, 2011)

Project Description

- Project Description: Modify the outdated training program to tailor it to Generation Z learning styles
- Work of the researcher:
 - Literature Review
 - Interviews and a Focus Group
 - Made recommended changes to 5 modules



Project Stakeholders

- Project Supervisor
- Director of Training
- Director of Sales
- AAA Sales Trainer
- Sales Managers

Research Question 1 Findings

RQ1: What are the best practices for training Generation Z sales professionals in the workplace?

Theme: Tailored training to students learning styles

Data Collection Method:
Interviews and a Focus Group

Data Analysis Method:
Reviewed the data and compared it with interview and focus group responses

Implement more technology and app-based learning

Utilize a wide variety of visuals for training

Provide immediate feedback

Increase group learning (3 – 4 people per group)

Increase observation followed by in classroom practice

Reassure students how training and development will continue



Project Snapshot

Suggested Change:

Insert an activity after slide 16, divide students in to groups of 3-4, give each group a unique colored marker with a large tip, white sheet paper (3ftx5ft), and have them brainstorm and write in groups for ten minutes. The goal is to come up with as many rapport building questions as they can in the allotted time. Students are allowed to use their customer relationship manager, social media, and search/news engines to generate these questions (ex. review someone's LinkedIn profile and see that you have a similar hobby or charitable cause). After ten minutes are up, teams will share one at a time in a clockwise direction only one question that they posed. If another team has a similar question, they put a large X before the first letter of the sentence. Once all teams are finished sharing their questions, compile each question in to a color coded word doc and share that with the class via email after training is complete.

Purpose of the Change:

Gen Z students have a preference to training that is aided by visuals (Chicca & Shellenbarger, 2018).

Use of social media platforms in training is a great way to boost Gen Z engagement (Shatto, Erwin, Kowalski, & Billings, 2016).

Gen Z students work well in small group settings (Anonymous, 2020; Chicca & Shellenbarger, 2018).

Project Outcomes Linked to Research

Project Outcomes	Research
Implement more technology and app-based learning	Chicca & Shellenbarger, 2018 Adamson, Chen, Kackley, & Micheal, 2018 Montiel, Delgado-Ceballos, Ortiz-de-Mandojana, & Antolin-Lopez, 2020 Kick & Thomas, 2015
Utilize a wide variety of visuals for training	Schroth, 2019 Mosca, Curtis, & Savoth, 2019 Swanzen, 2018 Shatto, Erwin, Kowalski, & Billings, 2016
Provide immediate feedback	Schroth, 2019 Schenarts, 2019 Shatto, Erwin, Kowalski, & Billings, 2016

Project Outcomes Linked to Research

Project Outcomes	Research
Increase group learning (3 – 4 people per group)	Anonymous, 2020 Chicca & Shellenbarger, 2018 Swanzen. 2018
Increase observation followed by in classroom practice	Swanzen, 2018 Shatto & Erwin, 2017 Shatto, Erwin, Kowalski, & Billings, 2016
Reassure students how training and development will continue	Anonymous, 2020 Schroth, 2019 Swanzen, 2018 Thacker, 2016

Leadership Implications

Core Course

Leadership Implications

Systems Thinking

Events, Patterns, and Structure
Appreciative Inquiry

Change Leadership

Understanding leadership vs. management
Strategies for applying academic research to the workplace

Communications

Group dynamics, oral communications, and building trust
Writing for internal and external publics
Communicating to varying groups

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- Montiel, I., Delgado-Ceballos, J., Ortiz-de-Mandojana, N., & Antolin-Lopez, R. (2020). *New ways of teaching: Using technology and mobile apps to educate on societal grand challenges*. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 161(2), 243-251.

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- Thacker, D. (2016). *Preparing your sales course for Generation Z*. *Business Education Innovation Journal*, 8(2), 198-204.