

Milestones, Inc.

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Developing individuals and organizations one milestone at a time

#13 February-March, 2001

MADE, NOT BORN: TRAINING EMPLOYEES FOR SALES SUCCESS

One common image of a salesperson is Harold Hill of *The Music Man*—a born pitchman, sharp-witted, charming...and unscrupulous. Based on this image, many people shy away from selling, believing that they lack the supposedly innate skills and fearing loss of integrity. If your business depends on making sales professionals out of your employees, how do you overcome this obstacle?

Meridian Project Systems (MPS), recently named to the Inc. 500 list of Fastest Growing Companies, produces project management software for the architectural, engineering and construction (AEC) industry. MPS has been developing AEC project management software for seven years and has over 30,000 users, including many Fortune 500 companies.



When rapid growth created a need for more sales staff, MPS chose

to recruit from among construction industry professionals. In addition to knowing the construction industry, a key requirement for selling MPS' specialized software, many recruits were already familiar with the features and benefits of the products. They had little or no experience in sales, however, and their "natural" resistance to the process hampered the sales program. To meet this challenge, MPS turned to Milestones, Inc.

HONOR THY CUSTOMER

In September and October 1999, Brett Miles held a series of one-day training workshops for MPS' sales consultants. The first goal of the intensive 10-hour sessions was to redefine "selling" for the participants. As an experienced sales professional and sales trainer, Brett knows all the

Milestones



Brett Miles



Madelon Miles

Brett and Madelon Miles will participate in a 3-day workshop in February in Solana Beach, CA on relationship building, forgiveness and emotional intelligence in the workplace.

Milestones, Inc. Senior VP Dr. Natalie Petouhoff will be a featured speaker at the national coaching conference in Irvine, CA March 9-10. The overall conference is about "Coaching: Just in Time Wisdom, A Quantum Learning Experience For Coaches, Mentors, and All Leaders." The title of Natalie's presentation is "Gaining ROI for Business-Focused Coaching."

New Programs

For the latest list of Milestones, Inc. programs, please send an email to Info@MilestonesInc.com and ask for Course Offerings.

reasons why beginners hate to sell. By showing MPS' staff that he had been there and understood their

Continued over

Milestones Performance Management System

1. Assess
2. Recommend
3. Implement
4. Reinforce

Services

- Coaching
- Team Building
- Strategic Planning
- Sales Management Consulting
- Training in
 - Leadership
 - Communication
 - Customer Service
 - Sales

mile•stone \ mī(ə)l -stōn\ **1:** a stone set to measure distance, indicating progress toward desired goals.

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...SALES SUCCESS...

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challenges, issues, and fears, Brett won their confidence.

The next stage was to show them how to sell by running a simulated sales presentation. Brett broke the presentation down into several phases to demonstrate the “six A’s” of selling: accept, appreciate, approve, admire, acknowledge, and agree. “The key is to honor and serve the sales prospect by understanding him and his needs,” says Brett. “Your questions inspire him to take ownership of the sale and make it easier to close.”

The final phase of the workshop focused on the particular challenges faced by MPS sales consultants. Participants worked with Brett to find the most effective ways to present the company’s products. They also discussed how to approach individual sales prospects. By reviewing specific cases, participants came away with customized solutions built on the sales techniques they had learned earlier in the day. Each participant received a comprehensive training manual for future reference and study.

GET REPRODUCIBLE RESULTS

The training had an immediate and positive effect on sales, and MPS has grown significantly since the first workshop. Several of the workshop participants became so successful that they were promoted to management within a year. In November, 2000, Brett held two more workshops, which were

attended by new and veteran employees. More workshops are planned for the future as MPS continues to grow.

Geene Alhady, now MPS Channel Manager, was a construction project manager for eight years before joining the company. He never dreamed that he would work as a sales consultant, but the workshop gave him the confidence to succeed. “Brett helped us understand what our jobs are and showed us the science behind sales,” says Alhady. “He showed us how it works and how to get reproducible results.”

Milestones, Inc.’s sales training is not just for those assigned to

THE SIX A’S OF SELLING

A CCEPT
PPRECIATE
PPROVE
ADMIRE
ACKNOWLEDGE
AGREE

full-time sales. It is useful for sole proprietors, business development executives, “rainmakers” and others who have to sell from time to time. “This is even for people who try not to call their work sales,” says Brett. “It will make anyone who sells more confident, more proactive, and more productive.”

Coach's

Clipboard

Delegate to Develop

Tip Many managers wish to become more effective at developing their staff, and the beginning of the year is an ideal time to start your program. Determine which of your responsibilities can be delegated to a high-potential staff member. Show him how to begin and provide adequate feedback on his performance in the new area.

Example Casey sees Richard as a strong candidate for promotion. She asks Richard to assume the task of preparing the department’s monthly status report for Casey’s manager. Casey informs her manager that she is doing this as a succession-planning step and to ensure bench strength for her team. Casey asks Richard to show her a draft well before the deadline to ensure that he understands how to prepare the report. She also asks Richard for ways in which the report might be improved. This empowers Richard to be creative and helps him buy in to the new task. Now that Casey has delegated one of her monthly tasks to Richard, she can take on additional projects for her manager. It’s a win-win-win situation.

Coaches help athletes achieve top performance. Today, more and more managers and professionals rely on coaching skills to get top performance from their teams. In each issue, the Coach's Clipboard brings you valuable coaching insights.

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