

Alcatel Builds Market Share with *Persona* Selling Skills

A global communications explosion is taking place and Alcatel is right in the middle of it. The French telecommunications multinational is competing with other giants like Siemens and AT&T for everything from high-tech niches (such as mobile phones) to broad new markets (such as China). But technology isn't the only thing that drives competition for companies like Alcatel. Selling and relationship building with clients is another critical competency.

MARKET SHARE INCREASE

A sales training initiative called Cycle of Selling was completed by 2,000 Alcatel employees throughout Europe. In addition to sales process training, the initiative included the *Persona* Communication Styles program.

Communication Styles focuses on building relationships with clients by understanding what makes communication successful. The program includes feedback loops and experiential exercises that participants use to practice the aspects of communication that create long-term client relationships.

Alcatel felt that Cycle of Selling made a significant contribution to the French market share boost. Thereafter, the company decided to expand the training rollout to ten countries throughout Latin America and three countries in Asia.

GLOBAL ROLLOUT

Yvon Dray is Director of Training for Operations at Alcatel Indetel in Mexico City. He is heading the Spanish version of the sales initiative, called PADENOS (an acronym for the seven-step sales process). It is currently being rolled out to managers, supervisors, and sales people in Mexico and 10 other Latin American countries.

"We call the second phase the Persuasive Communicator. It is very important because it deals with the relationship with the client—the human part," says Dray. "We already know that this training helps to increase market share, so we're pleased that it has been received so favorably in so many different countries. In fact, I've been in the training industry in France and Mexico for 20 years and I'm convinced this is the best program I've ever seen!"

The next rollout phase will focus on Asia, a rapidly expanding telecommunications market.

"As we apply these new selling techniques in the field and continue to improve sales results," says Dray, "we are able to share our know-how with Alcatel salespeople in other countries. Like ourselves, our customers are part of the global economy. We are committed to building the kinds of relationships with them that provide superior value whether they operate in one country or many."