

Closed Circuit TV in Sales Training

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Closed circuit TV is neither a panacea nor a monster as an aid to a sales training program. However, if used as a panacea, it could turn into a monster. On the other hand, if kept in the proper perspective, it can contribute much to the development of a well-rounded sales training program.

Like any innovation in training, there is a tendency for it to be overused and even abused to the extent where its whole value is pushed out of proportion. We have incorporated CCTV into our program with a high degree of success. I base this conclusion on the salesmen's terminal behavior after the course is concluded and they return to their territory. What actually happens when they return to the real world is that they don't revert to their bad habits that we have tried to correct. Handled correctly, CCTV can change behavior and attitudes under proper environment and with the proper motivation.

Behavior and attitude change from the influence of CCTV must be fol-

lowed up in the field by district managers if retention is to be gained.

Some of the techniques we use to train and develop salesmen may be of interest to those who have CCTV equipment, those who contemplate its purchase or perhaps those who are undecided about its value.

A First Step

One of the first steps we take to acquaint the salesman with CCTV is to put each man in front of the camera and let him do anything he wants from making faces to reciting Shakespeare. This is done in small groups and played back immediately so that the man can see, hear, and get over the shock of observing what he really looks like. The shock and/or amazement that engulfs a man's expression as he sees himself for the first time makes you a believer in the impact value of this medium.

After proving to the man that CCTV is harmless, we explain our objectives. We let the salesman know just what

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we are trying to accomplish, and how it will benefit him. We also drive home the point that the tapes they make will not be kept as a TV taped record of their training session. We gain their confidence by letting them know or see that their performance on TV will be erased.

During the initial phase of our orientation class, regular course material covering product knowledge, competitive information, is presented in preparation for their advanced debut.

Salesmanship Training

The focus on salesmanship, which consumes a goodly portion of our orientation class, is where the value of CCTV plays its most important roll.

We take groups of five men or less and role play a simulated doctor-salesman detailing situation. One instructor plays the physician while a second instructor, with the other men, view the timed selling situation on a monitor. To keep everyone at ease, the first demonstrations are dry runs and are not critiqued by anyone but the salesman himself.

Upon completion of the salesman's first seven-minute detail, he reviews himself on the monitor. First, with both audio and video, then again with just the video portion. We ask him to take note of any facial or physical gestures he has made that are hostile. Usually, you can point out the section of his detail he is presenting just by his facial characteristics and physical movements.

Some of the feedback you get is, "I never realized that I don't smile when I'm detailing," or "How come I look so angry," "Boy, I really use my hands when I talk," and "No one ever told me I was a pencil tapper."

Self Criticism Benefits

Actually, the result of self criticism is fantastic. Men who are veterans of

many years of selling suddenly realize that they have idiosyncrasies that no one, not even their wives or best friends, have told them about. The observing instructor is noting the bad and good habits of each man during this trial run. The reason is to see if this man is consistent in these habits throughout his detailing experiences.

When every man has had a trial screen test, we continue our practice detailing or sales techniques to insure improvement on our next CCTV role playing experience.

Use of Role Playing

Role playing is an invaluable aid to any type of training program, especially selling. It's almost a real world experience and when mistakes are made, the trainee finds himself in a traumatic situation that he usually doesn't forget and thus a need for change is experienced. Role playing is only as effective as the instructors controlling it. If not kept in hand, the situation can go from the absurd to actual damage to a person's personality.

In a controlled situation with groups of five salesmen and two instructors, the role playing begins.

The salesman, during the orientation class is taught to handle a multitude of prospects, also how to overcome various objections and stalls, and other situations encountered in everyday selling. Now is his chance to prove what he can do—and then, see for himself if he does.

The salesman is brought into the simulated physician's office and starts his sales presentation with the other four men and instructor watching on a monitor in another room. The camera is fixed and can hardly be noticed by the salesman. Thus, he is at ease and, besides, the situation is familiar to him—he's been through it before.

The salesman is timed for seven

minutes maximum. A buzzer sounds at the end of the time limit. He has to sell his prospect on the product in that allotted period.

Meanwhile, the other four men are observing and filling out critique forms on the man as is the instructor.

When the salesman comes out of the office to see himself, we let him review the whole scene without comment. When the playback is through he is asked what *he* thought of it. Then his technique is constructively criticized by the group. He is asked why he did this or why he didn't. He can defend himself or agree. The tape can be replayed at any time to prove or disprove a point.

After the group discusses the critique, the instructor goes over his list of good or bad points and then collects the critique forms and gives them to the salesman. He keeps a copy of his form for future reference.

This procedure continues until every man has had his turn on CCTV at least five times or at least until some change or improvement has been shown.

Follow-Up

The critique forms are tabulated and consistent bad habits and idiosyncrasies are noted. These notes are then forwarded to the salesman's district manager for follow-up. This follow-up is all important if you don't want the salesman to slip back into his old patterns of behavior. It is pointed out to our managers that only one bad habit or slip back can be corrected at a time. Working on one habit until it is corrected, then starting on another is our policy.

It must be remembered that these men see themselves on CCTV both with audio off and on. We try to correct any surface type personality mannerisms that may be offensive to a prospect.

Some Cautions

This project is time consuming and interest levels of the men watching and critiquing must be kept high. Criticism must be fair and kept under control. We don't want to destroy anyone with CCTV. We want to teach and develop the men with its help. This critiquing session is always supervised and we try to maintain a learning atmosphere.

Training and development exercises are not always an easy job. Most salesmen who are worth their salt are egoists and well they should be. Ask a good salesman who's the best salesman in the world and if he doesn't answer "me" he shouldn't be selling. Consequently, you have to prove to them that a change is needed.

Now, with CCTV, you don't have to say you've done this wrong or that right—they can see for themselves. CCTV can help develop poise, improve mannerisms, make them conscious of their grammar, appearance, annoying habits and ability to communicate and sell.

CCTV is not a toy and shouldn't be thought of as such. It is not the last word in training, it's not a substitute for a training director or something to be feared, if used correctly. CCTV is a tremendous asset to any training or development program and is an ideal way to teach correct selling techniques.

We train district managers and regional managers in a somewhat similar manner but with a little more depth in corrective procedures and other management problems.

CCTV Potentials

Programmed Instruction is another area of endeavor that I feel has good possibilities with CCTV. Just imagine having your training class being instructed by your monitor and the stu-

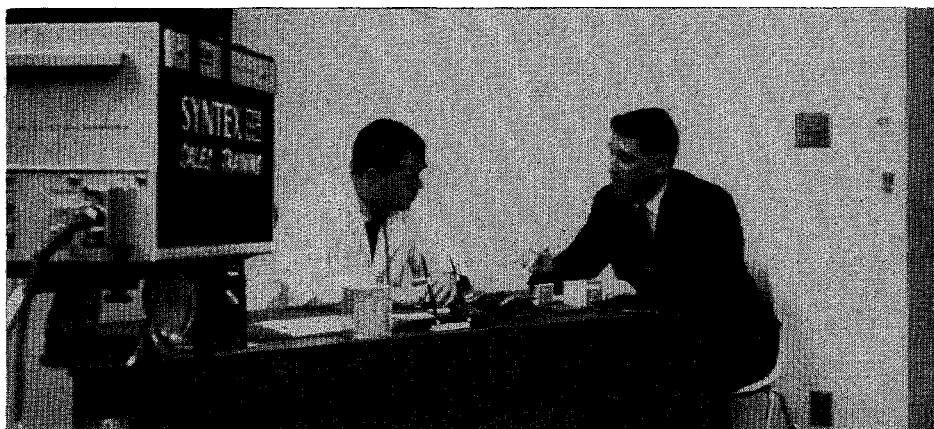
dents participating in the P.I. via CCTV with oral and/or written responses.

Another interesting and unlimited aspect of CCTV is to transpose video tape onto 16mm film. The cost of making movies is high, but with video tape, it's relatively inexpensive. However, I suggest you hire technicians and consultants to insure good results.

To show video tape, you need a recorder and monitor. If you wish to distribute a taped program on a large scale, your districts and regions need the equipment which is expensive to rent and not always available, whereas 16mm projectors are easily obtained. The potential for CCTV is almost as unlimited as it is unexplored in this field.



1. In preparation for detailing before CCTV. The critique sheet and what to look for are thoroughly explained.



2. Simulated doctor's office in a role-playing situation with the trainee detailing the physician. The room is empty except for the physician and the detailman. The camera is in a set position and functioning without a cameraman.



3. A moment of antagonism between the simulated physician and detailman during a role-playing situation.



4. During critique, the moment of antagonism is pointed out on the monitor by the instructor, much to the surprise of the detailer.