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Essential of Sales Representatives' Training In Beverage Manufacturing Firms

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ABSTRACT: This study examined essential of sales representatives' training in beverage manufacturing firms. Specific objective was to examine the result of sales volume after sales representative's training among others. Survey research design was adopted. Area of the study was Nwaugo, Beer Market at Port Harcourt Road, Fegge, Onitsha Metropolis. Population of the study was three hundred and ninety five (395). The sample size was three hundred and eighty two (382) respondents. Two point Likert Scale of questioning was applied. Data was analyzed using percentage of questionnaire.. The study found out that training of sales representatives was essential to the development of firms. The study concluded that sales training is very essential and it is a yard stick to measure the competence of sales personnel. The study recommended that firms' management should ensure that competent personnel should train the sales representatives among others.

Keywords: Essential, Training, Sales representatives, Beverage and Manufacturing firms.

INTRODUCTION

Essential instigates that it is very necessary for beverage manufacturing firms to embark on sales representatives' training. It points out that sales representatives' training is indispensable. It means that beverage manufacturing firms should train her sales representatives for survival. Training of sales representatives in beverage manufacturing firms, build self confidence and encourages sales representatives. Sales representatives' training exposes the sales persons to challenges expected to encounter in the field of sales; especially with the competitors or rivals. Essential means it is necessary, very important to be in basic form and showing its essence. It is obvious that the effectiveness of the sales representatives vehemently depends on the quantity and quality of training

received. Firms that ignore or neglect sales training will become competitively disadvantaged and perhaps find it difficult to survive. Training, to be precise is a survival strategy.

Towel, Schoen and Hilgert (1972) observed that employees who know and understand their jobs very well, and who feel that management values them enough to prepare them for future (and greater) assignments are likely to demonstrate higher morale and greater interest and job performance.

Salesmen therefore need to be trained and re-oriented to adopt the modern marketing concept and the principle of sales morality (Olakunori, 1993). Well trained salesmen will satisfy consumers better than those who are not trained (Olakunori, 1993). Adequately, trained sales persons will sell more and build consumer loyalty for their firms product or products. Trained sales personnel is likely to be a veritable means of achieving competitive edge over other companies in the market place.

Sales training is evident that it has been an all important issue for the present and future effectiveness and survival of any enterprise. No, intelligent firm can endeavour to joke with the training of her sales force nowadays of stringent competition, at this era consumers are well educated. There are two basic approaches to the training of salesmen, to be an order getter; these are the sales-oriented approach and the customer-oriented approach (Kotler, 1980). It will be pertinent after the sales training, that the trained persons should be assigned to sales territories under the supervision of zonal sales manager. Materials required for the sales job should be delivered effectively. These materials would aid the salesman to achieve their sales targets.

Sales representatives are the employees in charge of selling the company's products to prospective buyers. The sales representatives' obligation is to seek, maintain and create a friendly and welcoming environment for every buyer. Sales representatives are to present the company and its products always before prospects and target audience. Sales representatives convert company's products into cash. Training is the activity of imparting and acquiring skills. Training is a means of acquiring skills. Skills acquisition is very vital because it helps individuals and firms to grow positively. Beverage, is a liquid substance that can be consumed; such as beer, tea, coffee, liquor, milk, juice, or soft drink etc. Manufacturing is the transformation of raw

materials to finished products or goods, usually on a large scale. Firms or companies are business enterprises, however, organized. Based on this premise, the training of incompetent personnel will lead to poor administration of duties and it will result to ill development in extension.

The problem of this study is specifically attached to the sales representatives. Sales representatives of beer manufacturing firm make the sales force. This goes to make it crystal clear that these sales representatives are different individuals with different characters, behaviours and from different background. Some of these individuals that form the sales force; act and behave quite differently which means that some are lazy, and some are lousy, and dubious. Some would love to swindle the company.

Some of the sales representatives would love to extort some money from customers and from the company's management through dubious means. This directs that even after adequate training some sales representatives would never exhibit what was imparted in them, in the field of sales and definitely the attitude poses a problem to beverage manufacturing firms, and to the customers; there by some customers will start losing confidence with the beer manufacturing firms. This attitude exhibited by some of the sales representatives leads to product failure and bankruptcy of the firm.

However, the specific objectives are to examine the result of sales volume increase, market share and sales turnover by intermediaries after sales representatives. More so, in line with the objectives, the study raised three research questions and formulated three hypotheses.

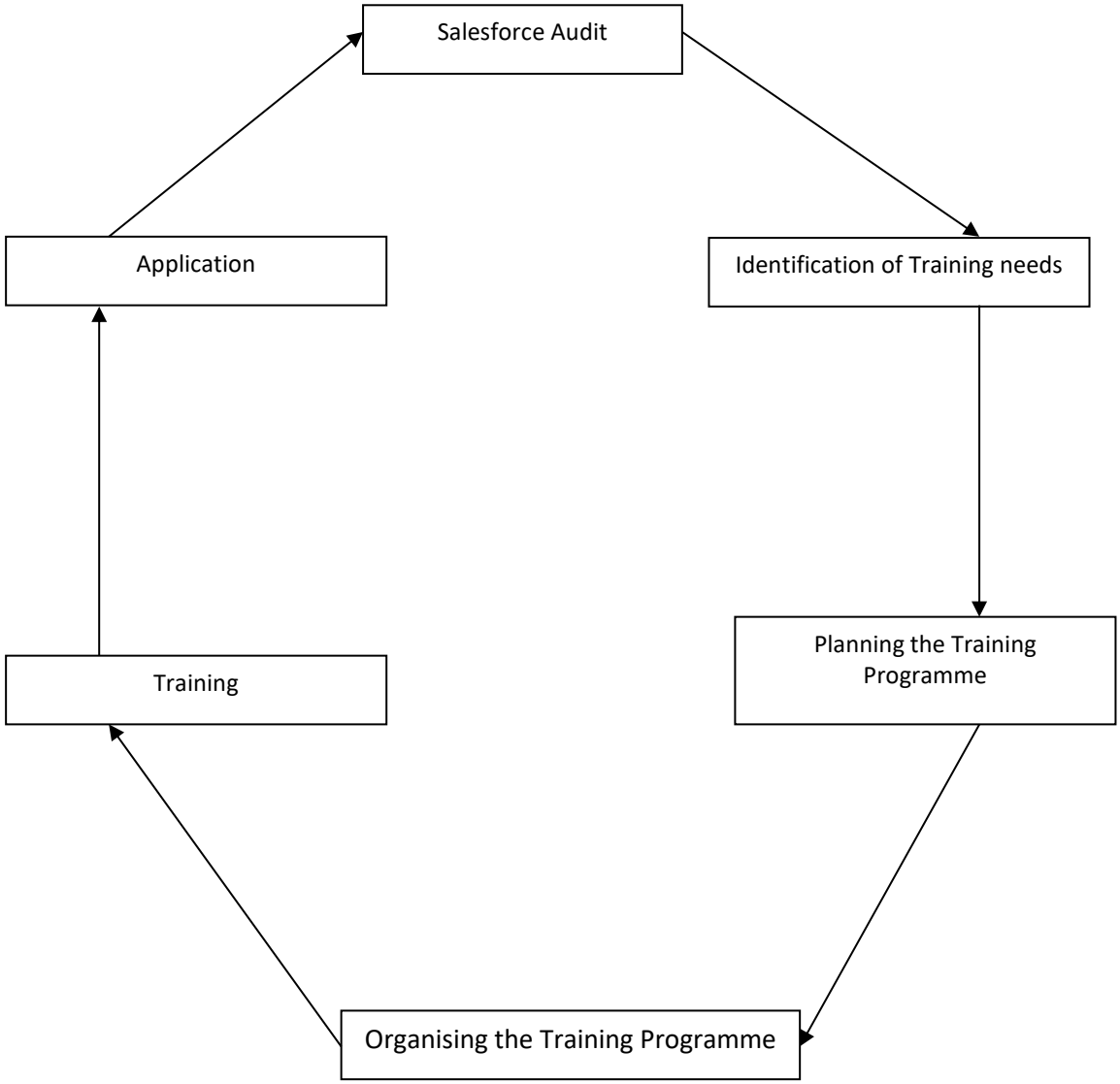
LITERATURE REVIEW

Sales Training: It is evident that sales training is very essential in every manufacturing firm. Any firm embarking on sales training is indispensable because some individuals naturally possess fear and lack of confidence. Sales training is required immensely because it is not easy to convince a prospect to make a purchase. It is as well very difficult to convince a brand loyalist of a company’s product to switch to your own company’s brand.

What matters most is sales training generally, is quality of training and not quantity. Quality training is actually needed in order to compete effectively with competitors. Training is

based on goal oriented. Following the schematic steps is very encouraging. It is comprehended that training is a continuous process which does not end anytime soon. Moreover, training can be assimilated as an on-going process in which six distinct phases of activities are performed. Training seems to comprise of an audit of the sales force, leading to the identification of its training needs, planning the training programme; organizing the training programme, actual training to meet the identified needs, and the application of training at work place.

When the period of training elapses, it is identified that the trainees gain knowledge from the training, the sales force will be assigned, to sales territories. The firm's management will delve into observation. It is right that each of these activities will be scrutinized.



Source: Adopted from Olakunori, O.K (1993); Modern Salesmanship and Sales management: Reference point, business systems Ltd. Ogui Road, Enugu.

Theoretical Framework

This theory of training effectiveness was propounded by Atanu and Debasish in the year (2018). Theory of training effectiveness is very pertinent to this study of essential of sales representatives' training in beverage manufacturing firms. Theory of training effectiveness is very essential to sales representatives in the sense, that it will have insight at sales volume, market share and sales turnover. Training effectiveness scrutinizes the employee's skill, knowledge and behaviour which will be observed by trainers. A well trained sales representative will be careful with prospects and customers. The knowledge acquired, will be a guide to ensure that there is increase in market share, sales volume and sales turnover.

Skills, which will be imparted on the trainees by the trainer or trainers, are very essential because the skills will be practiced and exhibited in the field of sales, in order to retain, maintain, and as well seek for new customers. Skills acquired will prompt the sales representatives to exhibit adequate customer relationship. Customer relationship matters a lot because already retained customers by word of mouth can convince

more prospect to become customers. Trainee's inspiration and orientation to learn to add to envisage the training effectiveness (Tziner, Fisher and Weisberg, 2007). Diversity training helps to encourage training effect (Holladay and Quinones, 2008). Although, training diversification positively leads to employee's performance and manager's strength (Combs and Luthans, 2007).

Empirical Review

Gunu, Oni and Tsado (2013) carried out a study on empirical study of training and development as a tool for organizational performance; case study of selected banks in Nigeria. The objective of this study was to examine whether employees' training and development enhances work efficiency in the banking industry. Primary data were used for the study, which were generated through the use of questionnaires. The study took a sample of 395 respondents from a population of 35,386 from the five banks used as case study. Simple random technique was used to select the respondents. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics and Pearson's moment correlation. Multiple regression was employed to test the hypothesis. Major findings indicated that there is a positive correlation among all the variables. The study therefore concluded that for training and development to have significant impact on organizational performance, employees need to be motivated during training programs. It was recommended that banks should introduce reward system for outstanding performance so as to motivate employees to always put in their best during each training session.

Bharth and Fabiyola (2017) had a research on an analysis on effectiveness of training - empirical study. Training as a human resource management function, is one of the activities that impact most critically on the performance of an organization. While it is understood and accepted that training methodology if not implemented correctly, it will affect the organizational performance and limit goal achievement. Training is a learning process that involves the acquisition of knowledge, concepts of rules, or changing of attitudes and behaviors to enhance the performance of employees. The study concluded by stating that most of the organizations believe that a realistic approach is the most optimal way to use the new learning.

Rajesh and Vemula (2016) conducted a study on an empirical analysis of the training program characteristics on training program effectiveness: A case study with reference to international agricultural research institute, Hyderabad. The study applied descriptive analysis, correlation techniques, inferential statistics and multiple regression analysis to arrive at conclusion. The study focused on evaluating the training program characteristics using six independent variables and its impact training program efficiency. Objective of the study was to determine the effectiveness of training. Research hypothesis was training participants; perceive there are some mean differences in training program effectiveness due to lectures. The sample size was 200 participants who attended the training program spread over three years (2008-2010) across India and some overseas African countries. The research instrument used for survey is a structured undisguised questionnaire, a main source for the primary data collection. The Likert scale with items 1-5 was used for the independent dimensions. Cronbach's Alpha values for variables used in this study. The study found out that the research did not find any significant differences between the younger and older training participants even in over all training program efficiency. The study concluded by stating that the training course content will change to some level in each course, and is need based.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted survey research design. Survey research design is very pertinent to the study because it allows respondents to be interacted with it as well creates transparency

for the findings to be achieved. The area of this study is specifically at Nwaugo beer market, in Port Harcourt road, Fegge, Onitsha metropolis. Population of this study was the intermediaries at Nwaugo beer market that is situated at Port Harcourt Road, Fegge, Onitsha metropolis. The population of the beer intermediaries was three hundred and ninety five (395).

Sampling Plan

Sample plan, consists of sample designs, which refer the different ways, a researcher draw samples from any given population according to Nnamdi (1991). Sampling plan comprises of sample procedure. The sample unit concerns the intermediaries at Nwaugo beer market, Port Harcourt Road, Fegge Onitsha. The sample size of the study was three hundred and eighty two (382) respondents that duly filled their copies of questionnaire and the copies used for the study. Method applied was administration of questionnaire. The procedure adopted was non-probability sampling and the type applied was the convenience or accidental sampling procedure.

RESULTS

On the collection of the copies of questionnaire, it was recorded that three hundred and eighty two (382) copies were to be in a useful form.

Table I: Gender of Respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentages
Female	05	01
Male	377	99
Total	382	100

Source: Field Survey, October, 2022.

From the data collected, there were five (5) female respondents that filled their copies of questionnaire accurately. The percentage of the female respondents was (1%). While three hundred and seventy seven (377) male respondents duly filled their copies of questionnaire properly. The percentage of the male respondents was (99%).

Analysis of Attitude Questions; on essential of sales representative's training in beverage manufacturing firms.

S/N	Question	Agree	Disagree
1.	Do the trained sales representatives possess self confidence?	350 (92%)	32 (8%)
2.	Do the trained sales representatives aid in sales volume?	362 (95%)	20 (5%)
3.	Do the trained sales representatives encourage sales turnover?	370 (97%)	12 (3%)
4.	Do the trained sales representatives exhibit honesty?	351 (92%)	31 (8%)
5.	Do the trained sales representatives	375 (98%)	07 (2%)

contribute to obtaining more market share?		
6. Do the trained sales representatives acquire empathy charisma?	360 (94%)	22 (6%)

Source: Field Survey, October, 2022.

Analysis of Likert Questions

1. The researcher, requests to know the respondents opinion on do the trained sales representatives possess self confidence. Out of three hundred and eighty two (382), three hundred and fifty (350) respondents agree which was (92%). While thirty two (32) respondents disagree, which resulted to (8%).

2. The researcher, demands to know the respondents opinion on do the trained sales representatives aid in sales volume out of three hundred and eighty two (382), three hundred and sixty two (362) respondents agree which resulted to (95%). Meanwhile, twenty (20) respondents disagree and the percentage was (5%).

3. The researcher obliges to know whether the trained sales representatives encourage sales turnover. Out of three hundred and eighty two (382), three hundred and seventy (370) agree and the percentage was (97%). On the other hand twelve (12) respondents disagree which resulted to (3%).

4. The researcher was interested to know the respondent's opinion on do trained sales representatives exhibit honesty. Out of three hundred and eighty two (382) respondents, three hundred and fifty one (351) respondents agree which was (92%). Thirty one (31) respondents disagree the percentage was (8%).

5. The researcher beseeches to know the respondents opinion on do the trained sales representatives contribute to obtaining more market share. Out of three hundred and eighty two (382). Three hundred and seventy five (375) respondents agree and the percentage was (98%). While seven (07) respondents disagree and the percentage was (2%).
6. The researcher seeks to know the respondents opinion on do the trained sales representatives acquire empathy charisma. Out of three hundred and eighty two (382), three hundred and sixty (360) agree and the percentage was (94%). While twenty two (22) respondents disagree and percentage was (6%).

Discussion

The study investigated on essential of sales representatives training in beverage manufacturing firms. From the finding it was discussed that training of the sales representatives is very vital to the development of firms. It also allows firms to compete effectively with her competitors. Training will be a guide to sales representatives; they rely on it in order to remain in business. Sales training motivates the sales representatives. Sales training encourages the sales representatives to convert prospects to customers. Sales training provides self confidence thereby removing fear, which means that there will be no daunting. Sales training provides empathy as a charisma which sales representatives depend on in the field of sales.

It was also identified that salesmanship is very tedious and tasking profession; to the extent that some sales representatives are often daunting, in the field of sales, especially without adequate training. Some sales representatives out of fear could not command the language required of them before prospects and customers. Lack of communication skills, make some sales representatives not to convert some prospects to customers and thereby could not convert the firm's products into cash.

CONCLUSION

This study concluded that sales training is very essential and it is a yard stick to measure the competence of sales personnel. In measuring the competence of sales personnel, adequate administration is assured and the development in sales volume, sales turnover, market share will be achieved. It is reckoned also that sales training provides self confidence for the sales representatives. It creates room for empathy, it also directs sales representatives to be honest always and exhibit a fair play before the company and customers. The study concluded by advising every firm to embark on sales training.

The study recommended that these ideas should be properly practiced. The recommendations were;

1. The firm's management should ensure that competent personnel train the sales representatives.
2. The firm should ensure that training of sales representatives will be mandatory.
3. The firm's management should insist that quality services are discharged by the sales representatives.
4. The firm's management should place an achievable sales target for each sales representative.
5. The firm's management should assign an executive sales manager to each sales representative as well visit each sales territory at a reasonable period of time.

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