

ALUMNI NEWS

FOR CONSALIA GRADUATES + STUDENTS

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Valuing customer relationships

Dr Phil Squire explores the new discipline of relationship capitalisation, how it can be used to measure the value of key customer relationships, and its vital role in generating sustainable revenue from strategic accounts.

Accountants are excellent at telling us the value of a business, based on tangible assets such as the amount of equipment it owns, its property portfolio, and the cash it has in the bank. It's a much trickier problem, though, to understand how much intangible items like client relationships are worth (especially key accounts) and to measure the value of all the efforts that contribute to nurturing and maintaining good relationships with customers. Moreover, intangibles currently don't find their way onto a company's balance sheet until it is acquired or sold, so a huge amount of potential value remains hidden.

That's about to change because a relatively new concept called relationship capitalisation can help us to value client relationships – and this has important ramifications for sales leaders and their

organisations, as well as the wider business. Building the capital value of its clients contributes to the total value of a business (and could potentially feed into the share price) and this has implications for where you allocate your resources when it comes to managing large strategic accounts.

Strategic accounts

We're all familiar with Pareto's Law, whereby 80% of your business comes from 20% of your customers. In this context, driving sustainable revenue from those key accounts is vitally important.

A thorough understanding of relationship capitalisation enables businesses to conduct a degree of arbitrage by optimising the way they allocate resources to specific accounts. It can also allow business leaders to strategise more effectively: for instance, by helping to answer questions like "Do we need to change the way we're contracting with our client to sell less transactionally, with perhaps fewer high-value, one-off solutions, or can we start to sell a more annuity-type business stream?"

However, relationship capitalisation goes much further than that: it feeds into product development, into account support structures, and also into the way in which you incentivise your team. The goal of all of this is to understand how you build a sustainable approach to your key accounts that will give you more chance of obtaining recurring revenue in the future.

Thus, on a more granular level, understanding exactly where to allocate budget, effort and resources is vital: for example, informing a sales organisation how to improve account coverage, perhaps by getting better exec sponsorship; how customer-facing teams can help raise NPS scores; and knowing when to boost service levels. As a result, teams will be better equipped to achieve revenue targets, the business reaps the benefit of improved financial performance, and individuals collect their bonuses.

Welcome aboard

Helena Stoy – Programme Director

"I am a Programme Director for the Master's in Leading Sales Transformation programme. I also run my own consulting business in holistic sales transformation and commercial enablement. This is based on over 20 years of experience from various roles in sales organisations and from building up global sales enablement and operations functions at very large companies in the IT industry."



↑ Helena Stoy

Richard Vincent – Programme Director

My new role at Consalia is as Programme Director and Cohort Tutor for Cohort 4 on the L7 apprenticeship in Senior Sales Management, where I will be mentoring and teaching Master's Apprenticeship students. I also teach Key Account Management and Strategic Sales on the MSc in Strategic Marketing at Cranfield University and on various executive development courses. Prior to becoming a lecturer, I spent 29 years at Hewlett Packard and HP Enterprise, mainly working with global key accounts such as Fujitsu, IBM and Vodafone."



↑ Richard Vincent

Luke Bowles – Business Development Manager

"In my role of Business Development Manager, I will be focusing on our Level 6 and Level 7 Apprenticeship programmes. Whilst building relationships with existing clients, I will be seeking to create new partnerships. My passion for the sales profession will drive me to encourage more people to take the sales education path, so that together we can professionalise the sales industry, and *make sales the world's most sought-after profession.*"



↑ Luke Bowles

The power and value of relationships

Delegates were able to meet in person at the London Stock Exchange for the GST XVI conference on 7 October 2021 after the event took a year out in 2020 due to the pandemic. Focusing on the theme of “relationship capitalisation”, Consalia’s highly respected forum for innovation offered sales leaders various perspectives on how business relationships can be valued, as well as insights into other key topics such as purpose-driven partnerships and the application of predictive analytics in sales forecasting.

Opening the conference Consalia CEO Dr Phil Squire and Ryan O’Sullivan, Industry Head, Professional Services, Introhive discussed “**Key accounts: where value and values intersect**”.

“We want to explore some quite innovative thinking about the way we place value on our key accounts as a predictor of future performance,” Dr Squire told delegates.

“Relationship Capitalisation is the process to capitalise the value of client contracts and the network of people and organisations that represent employees, clients, partners and suppliers. It is explained as the value created and maintained by nurturing and managing good relationships. It is therefore a predictor of current and future value of (key) accounts and as such can be measured.”

He discussed why the topic is important:

- ▶ There is mis-applied science in how relationships are measured.
- ▶ There are instances of deliberate intent to mislead regarding the value of customer relationships.
- ▶ The pandemic has introduced the phenomenon of relational constraint, with a potentially reduced relationship quality via virtual interactions versus face-to-face.

O’Sullivan, who was previously at Infosys, presented a Barclays case study illustrating how key accounts can be lost without warning if relationships are not well managed or maintained at the appropriate level. Dr Squire added a second case study that further underlined the importance of relationships, illustrating that even when the right processes are in place and a supplier is adding significant value for its customer, this can be derailed when key individual relationships break down.

Dr Squire proposed two metrics for valuing key accounts: 1) structure, and 2) a metric which explores feelings and values. In the context of relational constraint, he noted the current concept of “The Big Resignation” post-pandemic, asking “Are customers feeling the same right now? Are we losing that emotional attachment with our customers?” He noted the work of Professor Julian Birkinshaw (London Business School) which suggests

there are two factors that give companies competitive advantage: 1) adhocracy (agility), and 2) emocracy (emotional attachment to the brand).

Dr Squire set out three components of value: 1) a finance element (current and future), 2) a contract component (current and future), and 3) the relationship capital factor (structure and values).

He noted that sales lags finance and marketing from a systems perspective. However, a methodology is now available to obtain and analyse the data needed to value relationships, via a combination of survey and customer-interaction data and AI-powered analytics. This can sit on top of a CRM system such as Salesforce to power a dashboard indicating the future predictability of your key accounts.

“This is trying to put more science into the way we are looking at relational value,” Squire concluded.

How the finance world values customer relationships

Intangible assets – including the value of customer relationships – are estimated to be worth \$75 trillion today, and the vast majority of these go unrecognised on the balance sheet due to current accounting rules, according to Richard Haigh of Brand Finance, who discussed the “**Science of Valuing Intangible Assets**”.

Prefacing his presentation with a quick tour of the world’s most valuable brands (Apple’s trademark being worth some \$260 billion alone), Haigh differentiated between tangible assets (plant, property, cash at bank) and intangibles such as contracts, artistic property, marketing, IT, and customer relationships with a balancing figure called goodwill. Currently, an estimated \$13.9 trillion of marketing intangible value remains unaccounted for among quoted companies.

He described Microsoft as the most “intangible” company in the world, with 93% of its assets being intangible, and 91% being so-called “homegrown” intangibles (brands, technology, customer relationships) not on the balance sheet.

Turning to the specifics of valuing customer relationships, Haigh identified three key areas: customer lists, order or production backlog, and customer contracts and relationships. However, he cautioned against simply adopting a top-line approach to valuing customer relationships, noting that you have to adopt a more holistic approach to the process that takes into account associated costs. His favoured approach is the snappily named “multi-period excess earnings method” (MPEEM), which looks at the profit you obtain from a relationship. This includes revenue estimation and expected earnings along with associated contributory asset charges and discount rates.

In conclusion, he showcased a snapshot-in-time valuation of professional services giant Accenture, noting that intangibles made up some 86% of the firm’s \$180 billion value, with 43% of the value tied up in customer and contractual relationships – with 38% accounted for by customer relationships.

Purpose as a profit centre

Alf Janssen, Sales Director Strategic Accounts, SAP discussed “**Purpose-driven partnerships**”. His team focuses on purpose-led engagements with the tech giant’s strategic accounts (the top 4% of all customers), where they seek to find commonalities between the purpose of the client company and then to connect that with SAP’s own purpose, which is “to make the world run better and improve people’s lives”. Based on that, the team develops new relationships and connections, fostering C-level relationships to build strategic partnerships, as they aim to create purpose-driven partnerships and “try to win the hearts of our customers”.

He stressed that purpose is on every CEO’s agenda and at the top of the agenda for SAP customers in the Netherlands such as Unilever, Heineken, Shell and Philips.

He explained how his research into the value of SAP’s purpose statement concluded that “purpose is now the new normal”. Millennials and GenZ require us to lead with purpose. Ethical and sustainability issues cannot be solved by governments and non-profits alone; companies like SAP need to chip in and contribute to solving societal problems.

Janssen quoted British historian Niall Ferguson, who said: “We no longer live in a democracy. We live in an emocracy where emotions rather than majorities rule and feelings matter more than reason.” He added: “That example inspired me to challenge myself.”

He proposed that the future of doing good business belongs to the “conscious capitalist organisation”. Customers, consumers and employees require companies to:

- ▶ Operate with a purpose other than profit maximization as their reason for being.

- ▶ Seek to create value for all their stakeholders, not just shareholders.

Meanwhile, the role of management is also changing:

- ▶ Leaders are motivated by service to the company’s purpose and its people, not by power or personal enrichment.
- ▶ Strive to build cultures with trust, openness and caring, instead of fear and stress.

He emphasised that sales leaders need to ensure they are motivated by the higher purpose of the company.

Giving an example of the SAP approach, he described how one consumer packaged goods (CPG) customer was procuring raw materials from certain countries where there is potentially child labour. “As a big CPG company, you don’t want to be associated with those kinds of supplier, but how do you know which supplier is clean and which ones are not?” SAP developed a blockchain-based solution to track which suppliers are accused of child labour so they could be excluded from the procurement process. The CPG company was then able to use this stance towards suppliers in its own marketing and sales materials.

Turning to the concept of purpose as a profit centre, Janssen explained how it builds reputation, drives innovation and engages employees, consumers and customers, which manifests itself by driving top-line growth and brand loyalty, with talent retention and attraction also rising.

How predictable human behaviour facilitates sales projections

Knowing whether your organization will achieve quota and what remedial action to take if not is the “Holy Grail” of sales forecasting. Data science specialist Ofer Zilberman, Senior Director for Business Insights and Productivity, ServiceNow, explored “**Predictive analytics in sales forecasting**”.

Introducing the concept of “coverage” in the context of quota (basically pipeline divided by quota) and further refining this as “weighted coverage”, he plotted the position of individual salespeople in a company across two dimensions: the x axis showed pipeline over the longer term (four quarters), while the y axis indicated the mature pipeline across the mid-term of two quarters.

Turning this into a typical quadrant box made it easy to see that ideally you would want your reps to be positioned in the top right of this quadrant. If positioned in the top right, the sales leader’s action should be to validate that rep’s position; if positioned bottom right, then the action should be to get reps to mature what they’ve got; those reps positioned top left are good for the first half but not the rest of the year; however, bottom left is often where the majority of reps are and where you also see the biggest attrition rate.

Because the majority of reps are typically positioned in the bottom left, Zilberman additionally highlighted part of this quadrant as a “red zone”. The reps in the red zone achieved 80% of quota versus 188% of quota for those in the top-right quadrant.

Exploring three-year performance of ramped reps linked to coverage, he found that there is a 40% plus difference in performance (average attainment) between those to the left and right of the two times coverage line (at the beginning of the year). However, he noted that this is not just about data; it’s based on salespeople’s behaviour.

He emphasised that being in the red zone is not necessarily bad because there are lots of resources to help; however, remaining in the red is bad. So it is important that reps don’t just stick some more opportunities into the pipeline to compensate for their position because then those extra resources will be focused on those perceived as needing more help.

Zilberman flagged up some important takeaways:

- ▶ For demand generation, pipeline is a lagging, not a leading, indicator.
- ▶ Have a demand-generation plan for each rep.
- ▶ Work towards a mindset of accountability and transparency.
- ▶ Have a clear definition of what is pipeline (not the first meeting) and what are sales stages.
- ▶ Carve equitable territories aligned to the sales rep’s DNA (eg, hunter versus farmer).

He recommended a pipeline conversation once a month between rep and manager, ignoring forecast and quota but focusing on the longer term. This starts to generate activity, accountability and transparency for the organisation and your sales reps.



← Phil Squire: Relationship Capital.



← Ryan O’Sullivan: Barclays case study.



← Richard Haigh: \$13.9 trillion of marketing intangible value remains unaccounted for.



← Alf Janssen: Future belongs to conscious capitalist organisations.



← Ofer Zilberman: Predictable behaviour drives forecast accuracy.

Moving to how analytics can be predictive, Zilberman noted that the peak point for quota predictions was always five months prior to quarter close. Why? Because reps were told to clean their pipeline for the previous quarter and simply kicked those opportunities down the road into the next quarter. He then correlated the five-month peak point to the health of the pipeline to create a projection mechanism. This has enabled him to predict quota attainment with a notably high degree of accuracy over an extended period.

As further takeaways, he emphasised that:

- ▶ Projection must have current context. “You have to keep looking for evidence; just having that projection doesn’t mean you’re going to hit the numbers.”
- ▶ Think pipeline health, not just coverage.

Congratulations to our new graduates!



↑ **Ross Skinner**, Professional Indemnity Insurance Specialist, AON.



↑ **William Squire**, Head of Sales, Consalia.



↑ **Grant Van Ulbrich**, Global Director, Sales Transformation, Royal Caribbean.



↑ **Khadiza Begum**, Contract Manager, BT Enterprise.



↑ **Lucie Davies**, Account Manager, Royal Mail.



↑ **Tyra Hurley**, Business Development Specialist, Hyster-Yale.

Congratulations from the entire Consalia team to all our new graduates, both to those participating in the well-established MSc Professional Practice in Leading Sales Transformation Master's programme and to the pioneering cohorts of graduates collecting their BSc (Hons) Professional Practice in B2B Sales degrees, delivered in partnership with Middlesex University. Well done for all your outstanding achievement and hard work!

It is gratifying to see how the number of graduates coming through the Consalia Sales Business School is expanding so rapidly to create a new generation of highly qualified sales professionals. The graduation of a new cohort of degree apprentices represents an

important landmark in our mission to make sales the number one choice of career and a highly respected profession globally.

Academy Director Louise Sutton, who has been the driving force behind setting up sales degree apprenticeships nationally, said: "Degree apprenticeships are brilliant, rewarding and beneficial for both apprentice and organisation, but they are hard work too; so it's a fantastic milestone, a tough achievement and we are delighted for them. Many of us know that B2B sales is a profession but these apprentices provide the evidence and these programmes help to spread the word further and so clearly."

MSc Professional Practice in Leading Sales Transformation

Tuna Atmaca, Head of Presales, Turkey, SAP

Stefano Ciccorelli, Industrial OEMs Sales Manager

Paul Delebecque, Sales Manager, Consumer Public FSI Media industries, SAP

David Floyd, General Manager – Key Accounts & Segment Development, SKF

Sol Garrido, Presales, Spain, SAP

Brian Kadien, General Manager, Strategic Partnerships, SAP

Susan Krupa, Vice President, South Region, SAP

John Massey, EMEA Regional Business Development VP, Commercial Sales & Channel, SAP

Jurgen Matthieu, Distribution & Performance Sales Manager Belux, SKF

Jorge Perez, Head of S/4HANA Cloud Sales and RISE with SAP Program, Spain, SAP

Ian Peverill, Head of Service Delivery at SKF (U.K.) Limited

Darragh Power, Sales Acceleration & Leadership Programs, SAP

Michael Quinlan, Regional Vice President, Midwest, SAP

Carmelo Riso, Head of Cloud Services for EMEA South, SAP

Pankaj Rusia, Regional VP at SAP SuccessFactors (South East Asia), SAP

William Squire, Head of Sales, Consalia

Mario Tordesillas Fernandez, Manager Strategic Accounts Process Industries & Operations, Industrial Market, Iberian region, SKF

Grant Van Ulbrich, Global Director, Sales Transformation, Royal Caribbean

David Wolf, Regional Vice President – North America Midmarket, SAP

Postgraduate Diploma

Dan Schwarz, Vice President Of Sales, SAP

Level 6 Professional Practice B2B Sales Degree Apprenticeship

Al-Amin Al-Hawareen, Sport Product Owner, BT

Nick Archer, Account Manager, BT Wholesale

Catherine Arnold, Key Account Manager at Orange Connex Global UK Ltd (was Royal Mail)

Khadiza Begum, Contract Manager, BT Enterprise

Matthew Bilsland, Sales Development, Representative, Swimlane, (was Royal Mail)

Luke Bowles, Business Development Manager, Consalia (was Royal Mail)

Ciaran Cheung, Sales Apprentice, BT

Mayan Christophides, Furniture Account Manager at Ultimate (Commercial Interiors) Ltd (was Royal Mail)

Heather Clough, Regional Account Manager, Royal Mail

Lucie Davies, Account Manager, Royal Mail

Ebony Ellis, Marketing, BT

Stacey Finn, Account Manager, Royal Mail

James Halliwell, Sales Apprentice, Royal Mail

Tyra Hurley, Business Development Specialist, Hyster-Yale

Benjamin Jarvis, Business Development Specialist, Hyster-Yale

Steph Judge, Sales & Business Development Manager, Stannah

Harrison Leigh, Field Account Manager, Royal Mail

Sean Murphy, Account Manager, BT Wholesale

Christian Nolan, Regional Account Manager, Royal Mail

Oksana Nosulich, Sales Training Manager, Royal Mail

George Parry, Development Executive, AON

Ellie Phillip, Furniture Account Manager, Ultimate (Commercial Interiors) Ltd (was Royal Mail)

Cameron Phillips, Account Manager, Royal Mail

Fraser Pottie, Account Manager, BT

Louis Reece-Farren, Regional New Business Manager, Royal Mail

Keval Shah, Business Development Manager, BT

Ross Skinner, Professional Indemnity Insurance Specialist, AON

Adrian Spencer, Graduate – Digital Experience, BT

Corinna Strajescu, Inside Sales Digital Workplace Specialist – Global, BT

Joshua Travers, Sales Apprentice, Royal Mail

Nabeel Umar, Digital Account Executive, Royal Mail

Chris Woodhead, Channels Contract Manager, Royal Mail

Yi Liang (Tony) Zheng, Account Manager, Royal Mail



Transforming from the inside out

Cristina Ricaurte
Director Spain: Solutions & Innovation, SAP

"How I got involved in the Master's is a funny story, because I actually didn't ask for it. I had looked at programme in the past; however, because they are also very expensive and I was working all the time, I never really made the next move. Then one day I was having coffee and cookies in the office, and our COO (who was my manager at the time and also my mentor) said to me: "Listen Cristina, you have been nominated for this programme, so congratulations, you're now going to do a two-year Master's." I basically choked on my cookies! I couldn't say no. There were a lot of mixed feelings: of course, I was grateful and happy, but it doesn't mean I was not scared.

"The Master's in Leading Sales Transformation was not what I expected. I thought I was going to have some classes, maybe a finance module, a leadership module. I thought it was going to work from the outside in, so someone teaching me something and then I would have to do a test and make sure I understood it. But I was very, very surprised, because it was something for me from the inside out.

"The transformation happened from within. It made me reflect a lot on my current way of doing things, on my professional practice, on my leadership style, and even as a person. It allowed me to ask what is it that I have to transform to be able to make a change and have an impact? It was nothing that I expected, to be honest. It was more than changing sales, transformational sales; it was more like transformational leadership, if I could rename the programme.

Becoming a leader

"How did the Master's change me? Firstly, it really changed me from being an individual contributor.

"Then SAP started to notice my change and the good things the team was doing, so I got promoted three times during the Master's. That was pretty cool but also super challenging, because every time I got settled in a job, it was time for the next one. I went from managing a really small team to managing a region, and then to managing a whole team for all the lines of business and becoming the director.

"The thing that has impacted my career the most has been taking the time to reflect on what I am doing. That has helped me to reinvent myself every time."



Becoming the best version of yourself

Dante Ricci
Global Marketing Lead for Public Sector, SAP

"A typical day for me is ensuring that marketing is leading the way to consistently tell the SAP Story in a compelling and less complex way across brand, physical and digital touch points. Our aim is to help drive leads for sales to build pipeline and promote adoption. Our aim is to reach people in new ways, drive customer success.

"During my career, I've been in operations, presales, business development and marketing; so when I did the Master's of Sales Transformation it actually brought together a lot of the components of all those roles. I was able to look at perspectives that were just not focused solely on sales but the holistic approach that the cross-functional team can bring to bear.

"Because the programme was founded on workplace, blended learning, I was able to develop deeper insights into my professional practice. I was able to take what I learnt during the programme and be more effective at what I did, but also understand the approach from the sales side. That has helped me learn how I can become a better version of myself at work, and also to incorporate those learnings to help others in the sales group, development, and presales.

"One section of the Consalia programme that was especially interesting to me was the module on coaching – learning about a process that inspires coaches to maximize their personal and professional potential – and I wanted to dive into that further. I've actually just completed a further programme and I am now a certified coach at SAP as well. The reason I did that is because one of the areas that I found most interesting was how to help others become the best versions of themselves, and coaching is the most tangible way to do that.

Since the Master's

"The Master's programme has helped me refine my personal leadership style and to continuously practice the right behaviours to unleash my potential and help others reach their peak performance. The programme helped me become a better contributor to our company no matter what role I take on. It has helped me contribute more to the larger corporate community and create a real positive impact on the larger business."

Dante's tips

You can't put your life on hold – that's the number one thing. You have to continue that work-life balance because otherwise you're not thinking as effectively as you could; all work and no play doesn't help you as a student or as somebody who's working for a company, because you're just not as effective if you burn out.

I prioritised a lot. I made sure that the urgent actions for work were taken care of, but I also carved out blocks of time on my calendar, typically in the mornings of the weekends to write papers and to read. I also blocked out times on weeknights, after the kids and family time, to read and also work on my papers. I took advantage of the times when I typically didn't do much and replaced that with study. It worked out really well.

The Master's programme will enrich your life beyond work. Give yourself a break; don't beat yourself up if you can't do it all while you go through the programme. Managing your priorities will help you manage your time along your path towards a degree.

How to make the best of the Master's programme

Cristina's tips

Don't leave everything to the last minute, as that can be painful. At the beginning you tend to do that, because the first time you get away with doing everything last minute. But it doesn't hold up; it's too much stress. So do everything little by little; really be disciplined and find time.

Secondly, during the trainings you will get a lot of ideas and become very motivated. Write the ideas down; write what you're feeling so that when you're back to your day-to-day life, you won't forget things. Keep a journal. It's going to be very helpful for your journey and for your final dissertation. It's also going to be very rewarding when two years later you find that journal and you read it, because you will really see how you transformed – and that's pretty amazing!



Moving into large-customer B2B sales

Christian Nolan
Regional Account Manager, Royal Mail

"I've generally been customer facing for a long time, in both customer service and in sales. B2B sales really came to life for me with the apprenticeship programme, and the job I was doing at the time.

"What got me into sales was doing my first retail job at Halfords. I sold a satnav, which was worth around £450 at the time; it was a large screen TomTom that I sold a van driver in 2005. I remember feeling a moment of elation by providing somebody with a product that was right for them, and also by generating some additional revenue for the company I worked for. Admittedly, at the time I didn't think of it that way; I was only 17, so I was excited that I was selling products, and I got a real taste for sales.

"I had very few qualifications prior to the degree; I left school with GCSEs and I didn't attend further education; I went straight into work. With the apprenticeship at Royal Mail, I got paid by my employer and also earned a degree. One thing I would say is that being in the classroom was incredible: something that stood out for me during the course was the range of real-life examples that our lecturers were teaching us. That was really interesting and exciting. It was here where I first started to see the real value of education.

Applying the theory

"My role then was inside accounts. Doing that alongside managing the degree modules and programmes was a big learning curve for me, but something that I really enjoyed. One thing in particular I found really good was learning some of the modules on campus and the next day applying them to my work role.

"My new role is to account manage around 50 large business customers. I had a temporary promotion offered to me at the end of October, and I've gone from desk based to remote working with some customer-facing (physically customer facing). I account manage some of the biggest international, parcels and letters users in Royal Mail. The actual application of some bits of the programme just made perfect sense: the third-box thinking module is a prime example of what works perfectly with Royal Mail customers. What's going to get an ecommerce business more business, is having happy customers who receive a great buying experience.

"The apprenticeship has had a positive impact on my career development, but importantly it's about personal development too. I definitely understand more about my sales personality and I have learnt to reflect on situations in my working and personal life. The better you know yourself, the better you can enhance yourself. Ultimately, the degree gives you the tools that you need to perform, and your performance will determine your successes in your career."

How to make the best of the B2B Sales Apprenticeship

Christian's tips

Once you've done your learning sessions on a module, get into your assignment straight away, because you come away from those learning sessions with a huge amount of energy. In my experience of the three years doing the programme, if you start to leave things till a week or two later, OK you may have applied some of it in your job, but have you got things in writing? If you don't do that, then you might find it harder going in the latter parts.



From trainee to trainer

Oksana Nosulich
Sales Training Manager at Royal Mail

"I'm Ukrainian, and due to family circumstances, I moved to the UK. Previously, my background was in applied linguistics, so I was teaching Ukrainian as a foreign language to foreign students at the university. This teaching experience was essentially the only experience I had. As you can imagine, Ukrainian teaching is perhaps not such a popular sector in the UK, so I had to completely rethink what I was doing with my life.

"There I was at 24, with no practical experience related to potential jobs that I could apply for here, and my education was very specialised in Ukrainian, so I ended up being in the same sort of boat as 18-year-olds in the UK. But then a friend of mine sent me a job advertisement about the Royal Mail sales degree. When I looked at it, I thought, "This looks too good to be true: a job, getting paid, and being able to study." I thought, "You know what? Why not apply? I've got nothing to lose."

"The apprenticeship started in October, and we had induction for the first ten weeks: an introduction to the role, to Royal Mail, to what our future jobs would be like. We would perform the role of an account manager, but we didn't start until three months or even more into the programme. Royal Mail was really good about how this was planned because it gave us time to learn about the company, and we did quite a lot of job-shadowing sessions. We would listen to the calls our colleagues made, learn about what they do. Each person is different, so it was a great opportunity for us to look at how different people operate within the same setting.

"We did SPIN training (delivered by Huthwaite), and then we were given a portfolio of 100 customers. Royal Mail was really, really good from that perspective. It didn't just give us a whole portfolio full of high-value customers. We were taking it step by step. We had an opportunity to make mistakes, to learn from mistakes, but also to start talking to customers on the phone, and to understand what they wanted from Royal Mail. After that, Consalia gave us a much wider sales education: everything from sales pipeline management to strategic selling to stakeholder management.

"Being taught in a foreign language was, for me personally, quite a big challenge. I had to completely change my mindset and forgive myself for making mistakes – and for being a perfectionist. That's where Middlesex University and Consalia really helped me to overcome some of these struggles. The best thing that I took out of this whole experience – apart from the sales practice of course – was the reflective practice.

"Two weeks ago, I started a new role as a sales training manager. My previous teaching career, plus what I learned during my apprenticeship – the most up-to-date sales practices available – helped me to end up where I am now."

Oksana's tips

Go and ask for help if you feel you need it. Don't just sit there and struggle. Of course, there were some hoops to go through, but the programme was joined up, so you didn't feel that whatever you were studying was completely disconnected from what you're doing. There was lots of support available. I could go to the university asking for help, or to Consalia, and all of that was available – it's there for us to reach out.

In terms of juggling work-life balance, planning was important. Everyone was motivated by deadlines, so plan ahead for the tasks that are coming. With good planning, it's not going to be a struggle for anyone.

Bringing the power of AI to relationships

One of the fastest-growing AI-powered sales and revenue-acceleration platforms has announced a partnership with Consalia, focused on the new science of relationship capital. Introhive empowers sales professionals to put their data to work, which improves the accuracy and reliability of their customer data, maps relationships, and helps to automate processes.

By enriching CRM data, the Introhive platform increases the accuracy and completeness of a “single source of truth”, while seeking to deliver actionable insights that allow individuals on a sales team to grow relationships, retention and revenue while also increasing sales efficiency and maximizing performance.

“Relationship intelligence is key for a salesperson to be successful and Consalia sees that,” Jody Glidden, CEO of Introhive, tells *Alumni News*. “Our sophisticated AI-powered platform frees up salespeople to build relationships and experience peak performance.”



Consalia believes that identifying tools to help salespeople become more efficient and more consultative through relationships is crucial to its goal of elevating the sales profession.

Dr Philip Squire, Consalia CEO, explains: “We strongly believe that the relationship-building capability of sales teams, whether it’s with a customer, internal stakeholders or prospective clients, is a source of competitive advantage. Through insights highlighted by Introhive’s technologies, we can now analyse, plan and monitor this capability in real-time and are very excited about how this has enhanced our CRM capability and our consulting value proposition.”

Glidden added: “Consalia’s students are learning how to be quality salespeople by using software that helps them focus on what matters, the relationship between them and the customer.”

New coaching programme for sales managers unlocks potential for performance improvement

By implementing a high-quality coaching culture, sales leaders can sustain high engagement, accountability and high performance within their teams, while supporting everyone to achieve their full potential. Accredited by the Institute of Leadership and Management, Consalia’s new “Coaching for Sales Transformation” programme is designed to provide sales managers with the coaching tools and frameworks to become effective and competent coaches.

“Coaching is one of the most powerful learning and development interventions helping individuals to unleash their potential. Our programme provides sales managers with the tools, framework, knowledge, skills and behaviours to be a Level 5 accredited Coach and Mentor,” explained Academy Director Louise Sutton.



What does it involve?

The programme brings in hands-on coaching experience and introduces coaching models that are underpinned by academic research, enabling sales leaders to transform the engagement and performance of individuals and teams. Additionally, participants receive five days (two-two-one) of training as well as their own coaching support from Consalia’s team of expert qualified coaches, with the opportunity to take those learnings and apply them in their own businesses.

Through their own coaching practice and observation of other coaches, sales managers are able to become the most effective sales leader they can be. Upon completion of the programme, participants receive formal accreditation from the Institute of Leadership and Management, with a Level 5 Certificate in Effective Coaching and Mentoring.

Recent participants have described the programme as transformative. “It’s a total mindset change,” said one. Another added: “100% this is the way forward for sales leadership.”

The programme also helps to position the practice of coaching among the range of performance-enhancing tools available to sales managers. “By observing other coaches, coaching gave me areas of focus where I can improve and add value,” one coach told *Alumni News*. “There is a lot of value in understanding models, techniques and the broader value of coaching,” another student added.

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