



## The Global Sales Managers Workout

Creating an integrated approach for a global sales force

**The media / advertising market is rapidly changing; organisations increasingly want to address their customers and stakeholders using several different media channels such as print, web, events, etc in an integrated way.**

**The Economist Group turned to Apter Development to help mobilise the different businesses within The Economist Group to provide a more cohesive response to meeting their client's needs.**

### The Context

The Economist Group is the primary source of analysis on international business and world affairs. The group consists of a range of print, research, online and conference businesses.

Emerging market trends make it vital that these work well together to produce a client-centred response to media needs, whilst the very success of these distinctive, authoritative entities makes collaboration a challenge.

### The Programme Design

Working closely with the Group Commercial Director and Group Head of Sales Development, we identified that the key leverage point to this challenge were the Sales Managers from each of the businesses. In partnership, Apter Development and The Economist Group took the strategic decision to enable this group to define and formulate solutions to this challenge which they would 'own' and be motivated to, and capable of, driving through.

The decision was taken to hold a three day 'workout' with this target group. In preparation for this, interviews were held by Apter Development with heads of business and representatives from the Sales Managers community. All participants also completed an on-line survey of attitudes and perspectives on the challenge.

These activities provided a critical input into the three day workout. The workout was developed and structured around two typical features of the Apter Development approach. The Performance Equation and the Performance Cycle (see opposite) were used to establish not just a grounded and robust way forward but also to mobilise the group individually and collectively to make it happen.

A particular feature of the workout was the definition of six challenges which covered different aspects of what needed to be tackled. Sales Managers needed to buy-in to these challenges in



***'I don't know of any other consultancy that could compete with the Apter offer as it is bespoke and insightful. They made a real effort to get under the skin of the business: they listened and worked hard to create an intervention that had real impact.'***

Sally Bibb  
Director, Group Sales Development  
The Economist

### The Performance Equation

Performance is a function of:

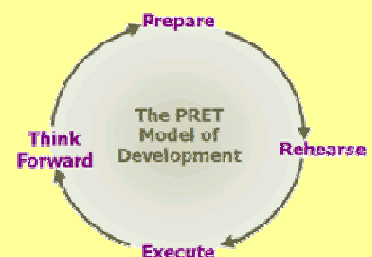
$$A \times M \times O$$

A = Ability  
M = Mindset  
O = Opportunity

This provides a method to reveal the essential 'agenda for change'.

### The Performance Cycle

Enables the 'agenda for change' to be brought about.





order to contribute fully. In addition, this commitment helped to build the social cohesion and leadership capital that would create real momentum for change in the business.

The location of the programme was also very important and needed to create a relaxed yet stimulating atmosphere. Clare College, Cambridge was chosen because the setting was likely to break up usual conference preconceptions. The delegates originated from The Economist Group bases worldwide so an interesting location was crucial.

### Programme Results and Achievements

The 'workout' was extremely positively received and an on-going network was established across the Economist Group with defined goals and an on-going remit. Substantial progress was made in creating an end-to-end process from Key Client Insight Development through to cross-business proposal origination to client management. For the first time, cross-group sales targets were established and a single format for client analysis introduced. Work has also started on aligning reward and performance management with these new demands.

These business outcomes created enormous potential value for the group. Just as important, there is clear evidence of a cross-business network being established. New talent is rising to the surface as those who are motivated to build a global platform take personal responsibility for driving things forward. This in turn will create more and more peer pressure to build on this new approach.

### Next Steps

This is of course not the end of the process, a sequence of activity and action is being undertaken to maintain momentum and pace with the project. However, without a doubt, giving the challenge to those who could most effect it in a carefully structured and innovative way, has created the best possible conditions to meet this essential strategic demand.



Clare College,  
Cambridge, UK

***"The feedback from delegates has been overwhelmingly positive and it has already had a great impact on the organisation."***

Sally Bibb  
Director, Group Sales  
Development  
The Economist

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