

mortgage originations in 2004. To compound this issue, as part of a larger banking organization, WMC was tasked with doubling its current market share by 2006, regardless of market conditions. These issues challenged the mortgage corporation to find the answers to the following questions around the mortgage loan origination process:

- How can the organization build and retain a high-performing sales workforce?
- What are the critical components of high-performing sales organizations?
- What processes should sales leaders implement to sustain sales performance?
- How can the company maximize mortgage opportunities with existing bank customers?

Problem/Opportunity

Due to internal organizational changes and external mergers, by the end of 2002 WMC comprised mortgage operations from several organizations. The result was a lack of a companywide sales vision, process, and strategy. Not only did each legacy company use or have access to several sales training programs, many of them did not effectively address sales management and process needs. In addition, tactical learning needs for the salesforce were not being adequately addressed by channel. These issues, combined with the challenging economic

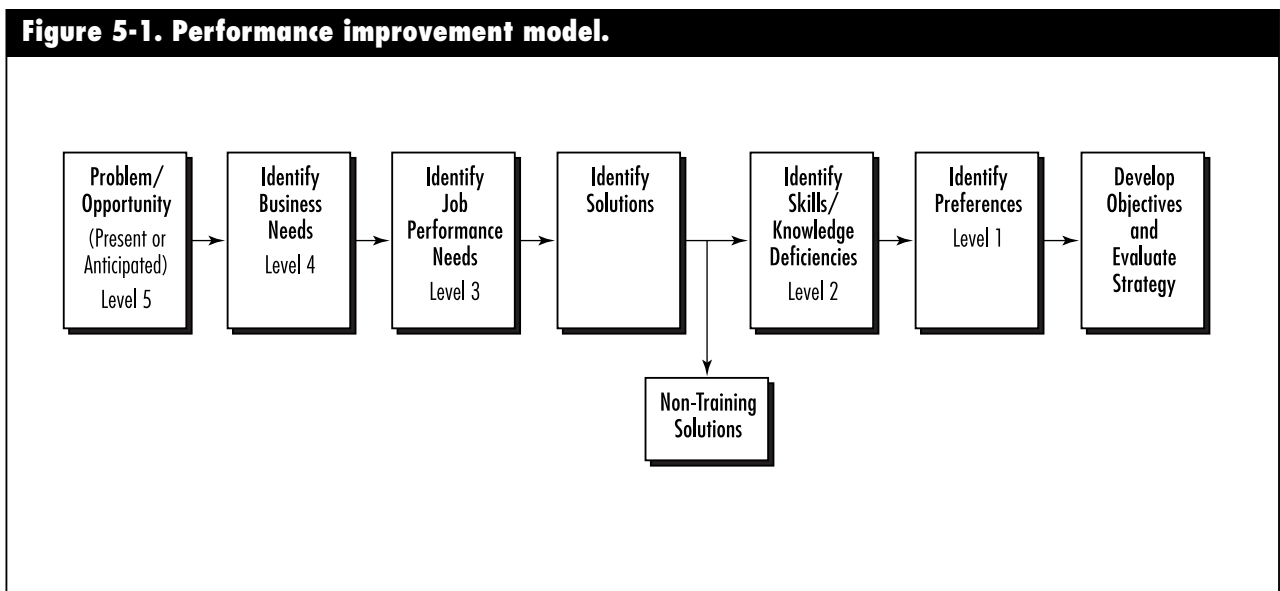
environment, were the catalysts for examining the WMC sales training and management processes.

Performance Improvement Process

The model in figure 5-1 depicts the process used by WMC for assessing performance issues in the organization. This is the foundation on which the ROI forecast presented in this case was based. The process begins with identification of the problem or opportunity and moves to a point where learning is prescribed and an evaluation strategy can be defined.

This performance-based approach has four important and very significant benefits (Wachovia Corporation, 2004):

- *More efficient use of resources:* This approach ensures that learning interventions are only undertaken if they are adding value and impacting important goals, strategies, and objectives of the business unit.
- *Improved business impact of all learning interventions:* Because the process is focused on important business unit needs, the success of learning opportunities will be enhanced to show improved business impact.
- *Increased client satisfaction:* Participants will clearly see the connection to business unit performance. Managers will have useful information to assist them as they coach and



inspect expected behavioral changes after training.

- *Increased support and commitment from senior management:* Quantifiable results of learning interventions and performance indicators will provide senior leaders with the hard and soft data required to assist them with measuring attainment of their business unit goals. Increased support of and commitment to the HR organization will follow.

This process drives the assessment, measurement, and evaluation (AME) work of WMC and requires effective partnership and collaboration between the human resources business partners (HRBPs), training teams, and the business leaders they support.

Business Needs

Integration efforts provided the perfect opportunity for the WMC training team to proactively identify and partner with their client to address the business and performance issues in the sales organization. In response to a routine question regarding a vendor invoice for sales training, the training team leader provided the information requested in addition to a summary of all the various sales programs currently deployed in the organization and their incumbent costs. The response from the training leader included a proposal that the training team be engaged to evaluate not only the existing sales programs, but more importantly the business and performance needs of the sales organization and the potential ROI of a proposed intervention.

The response closed with an offer to facilitate in-depth discussions around this issue. This overt request for inclusion, along with the focus on business and performance needs supported by business impact information versus just training, was a key driver in the collaborative nature of the relationship between the business unit and the training team on this initiative. As a result, training team members were at the table during strategic business discussions, and over the next several months the following business needs and opportunities surfaced:

- Double the market share from 1 percent to 2 percent by 2006.
- Design and retain a high-performance sales culture and workforce.

- Deepen customer relationships through cross-sell penetration by maximizing mortgage opportunities with the existing 13 million Wachovia households.
- Develop comprehensive sales and marketing plans for all business channels.

Job Performance Needs

As a first step in identifying the job performance needs, the training team conducted an assessment designed to identify performance issues and their causes. Although the leadership team began the process with training as the focal point, the performance analysis influenced them to think more broadly about what would be needed to attain the stated business objectives.

The WMC training team conducted a performance analysis that included written self-assessments and a focus group meeting with local and regional sales managers from all channels, account executives, mortgage consultants from all channels, and relationship managers. HRBPs participated in the meetings and collaborated in this performance assessment process. The analysis revealed the following skill/knowledge gaps for mortgage consultants and sales managers:

- identifying, understanding, and addressing customer needs
- applying sales skills effectively
- selling against the competition
- establishing and maintaining strategic relationships
- overcoming obstacles and objections
- developing business sales and marketing plans
- giving clear direction, setting goals, and establishing effective processes
- finding niche markets in the mortgage industry.

The analysis revealed the following environmental and resource gaps or issues:

- lack of a consistent coaching model/process
- poorly defined and communicated sales vision and culture
- no tools for measuring and reporting sales results