

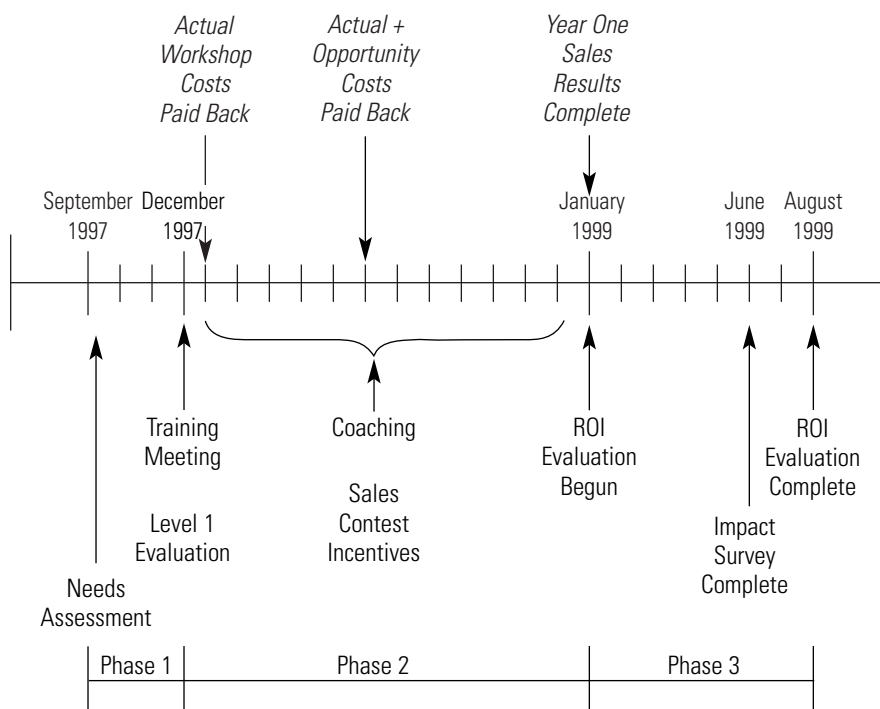
ditional face-to-face sales reps. It was to cover high-availability services as well, though not with the same intense focus on qualification, best practice modeling, and roles plays for telephone sales situations. But if it was to offer high-availability training, why create another workshop for Inside Sales? How could Inside Sales management and the Field Development department justify this effort?

Purpose of the Evaluation

The intervention was so successful that the Inside Sales team sold over half of all North American custom high-availability computer support service deals in 1998. The Inside Sales team had more than doubled its 1998 deals by the third quarter of 1999.

The Inside Sales management team had not originally planned to create an ROI evaluation. For the Inside Sales management team, not holding the training was never an option. As the sales

Figure 1. Timeline of events.



results appeared, the team did not think an ROI report was necessary. The results were self-evident. The Inside Sales team was sold on tailored training and annual training meetings.

When it came time for the next year's training meeting, however, controversy arose again. Other sales and marketing departments, headquarter divisions, and even very senior level sales managers raised questions about the need for customized training and the timing of the cost outlay. The ROI evaluation became an opportunity to help HP's extended sales and marketing management community gain confidence in supporting Inside Sales annual training meetings.

Evaluation Methodology Model

This intervention and evaluation were completed in three phases, as figure 1 shows.

Phase one started with the review of the needs assessment and completed with the delivery of the custom sales skill workshop for high-availability services. Phase two consisted of coaching and sales contest incentives. Phase three was evaluation activities. It took two years to complete all phases for this intervention and evaluation.

Data Collection Methodology Level 1 Data Collection

It is mandatory at HP to collect Level 1 reaction data after sales training classes in North America. Instructors distributed a standard evaluation form to all participants and stood by the doors as they left to ensure everyone turned one in. Norms have shown that no matter how badly done the course is, North American sales training Level 1 evaluations rarely average below a four and above a 4.5 on a five-point scale, where five means "strongly agree with the question" or "excellent."

For this workshop, the average score for the standard Level 1 quantitative questions was a 4.54. It is interesting to note that three-quarters of the qualitative written responses regarding what the reps liked most about the workshop were about role-playing. The reps declared the role-playing and practice the most valuable portion of the workshop. The single most consistent comment about what the reps liked least was that there was not enough time for role-playing and practice!