

# Account Manager

## One Day Best Practice Seminar

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**This deck sets out the content for the one-day best practice seminar aimed at Account Managers**

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**Sales & Marketing Consulting Group**

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## Background

- **We have found that ‘little and often’ is the best approach to Account Manager development**
- **This one-day training seminar initiates a 24 month development program, launched by one of our team and maintained by the Line Managers**
- **The seminar can be delivered to any number of Managers**
- **We provide the delegate Work Books, delegate forms and templates and the implementation Work Books to be used by the Line Managers to support the Account Managers after the seminar**
  
- **The aim is for the AM to leave with a self-developed actionable plan which will result in measureable business gain (followed up by the Line Manager)**
  
- **The focus will be on the traits and capabilities of the Best Practice Account Manager**
- **In particular we will concentrate on – attitude, knowledge, account mining/penetration, value, competitive differentiation**

## Format for the day

- **The day is divided into a set of modules**
- **Each module will discuss a core theme**
- **Each module will use the following format:**
  - **Introductory presentation – the main ideas**
  - **Presentation – using the main ideas – success story illustrations/examples**
  - **Summary of the core questions for the Account Manager**
  - **Group discussion to address the core questions**
  - **Review of the learning – the full group will review**
  - **Action from here – each Account Manager will prepare his/her Action Plan**
- **The style will be to encourage thinking, questions and discussion. The underlying aim throughout will be to encourage the Account Manager to take the core points and learning and apply them to his/her own business to produce an actionable plan**

## **Main themes for the day – at the close the AM will have answers and personal action plans for each of these questions...**

- **Who should be my development customers and what type of relationship should I have with my development customers?**
- **What are the traits of the most successful Account Manager?**
- **What approach and attitude is most likely to bring success?**
- **What knowledge and understanding should I have?**
- **How do I go about mining/penetrating the Key Account?**
- **What is value? How do I find it and sell it?**
- **How should I differentiate my company and my offer?**
- **How can I apply this learning to grow my business?**
- **What must I do over the next 24 weeks?**

# Agenda for the day – the day is divided into seven core modules along with an introduction and review

## Introduction to the day – objective, structure, format, output

1. **Key Account relationships** – moving from the transactional price focus to a relationship based on customer value and mutual gain – what does this imply for the AM?
2. **The Traits of the Best Practice AM** – what do the highest performing AM do to develop Preferred Partner status with their selected accounts? The remaining modules will explore these traits in more depth
3. **The right attitude** – we will explore with success case studies how the approach of the AM makes a great difference
4. **Knowledge** – what must the AM know about the market, competition, KA and his/her own company?
5. **Customer mining/penetration** – with whom must we develop relationships, how do we do this?
6. **Value** – identification and presentation
7. **Competitive differentiation** – a model to identify competitive advantage

## Review and Action from here

## Introduction to the day - 15 minutes

- **Welcome**
- **Introduction to the consultant**
- **The aim of the day – to explore the traits of best practice AM and to develop a personal action plan based on these best practice traits**
- **Structure of the day**
- **Format – presentation, case studies, core questions, group discussion, review, action**
- **Introduction to the benefits and dangers of paradigms or established beliefs**

# 1. The different levels of Key Account relationships - 30 minutes

- **Introduction**
- **The challenge of the market – the customer will continue to demand more for less**
- **The paradox of the market – yet in any sector a few companies and AM will be outperforming others – why?**
- **The five levels of customer relationship – characteristics of each level**
- **The concept of the Preferred Partner – the ultimate level**
- **The measure of a Preferred Partner – how do you know?**
- **The importance of selecting, prospecting and working with the ‘right’ customers**
  
- **Core questions**
- **Who are/should be the ‘right’ customers for me?**
  
- **Success story examples/illustrations**

## 2. The traits of the Best Practice Account Manager – 30 minutes

- **Introduction to the concept of Best Practice**
- **Review of the core traits under the main headings – attitude, knowledge, account mining/penetration, value, competitive differentiation – the following sessions will explore each in more depth**

### 3. Attitude and approach – 30 minutes

- **Introduction to the concept of attitude**
- **Review of the core attitude and approach traits**

**The will to win**

**The will to lead**

**The will to learn**

**The will to challenge the current thinking**

**The will to find the creative solution**

**Illustrations and examples for each**

**Core questions**

**How do I score?**

**What would my customer say?**

**What opportunities do I have right now?**

## 4. Knowledge – 90 minutes

- **Introduction to the concept of knowledge**
- **What does the Best Practice AM know?**
  
- **Market**
- **Competition**
- **Own company**
- **KA**
  
- **Explain the idea of ‘static’ knowledge i.e. the standard information we hold to provide an understanding about the customer and ‘dynamic’ knowledge i.e. knowledge which leads to understanding the customer’s drives**
  
- **Dynamic knowledge can be considered in terms of - objectives, plan, needs, concerns**
  
- **Illustrated example**
  
- **Core question**
- **For one key account/manager, what do I know about the KA’s objectives, plans, needs and concerns**

## 5. Customer mining/penetration – 90 minutes

- **Introduction to the concept of mining and penetration**
- **Consider the company decision making process**
- **Consider the various roles of departments and managers during the decision making process**
  
- **The difference between responding effectively and anticipating proactively**
  
- **Responding to a brief/rfq compared to writing the brief**
  
- **Mapping the customer's managers**
- **Defining roles, needs and interests**
- **Defining who we must talk with and when**
  
- **Defining how we should access and maintain the relationship with the identified managers**
- **Overcoming the challenge of getting beyond the buyer**
  
- **Core question**
- **Who should I be talking with?**
- **What about?**
- **How?**

## 6. Selling value – 90 minutes

- **Introduction to the concept of value**
  - **Value is defined by the customer**
  - **Different customer managers see different value**
  - **Illustrated example using Nike**
  - **Valuing value - what is it really worth?**
  - **Discussion about value and price**
  - **How do we know if it is really valuable?**
  - **Illustrated Example**
  - **How do we sell the value story?**
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- **Core questions**
  - **Take one customer – what is value? What is it worth?**
  - **How can I enhance the value we deliver?**
  - **How can I sell the value story?**

## 7. Competitive differentiation – 90 minutes

- **Introduction to competitive differentiation**
- **Thinking like the customer - what do you see?**
- **Competitive positioning through creative thinking**
- **Illustrated example**
- **Introduction to the competitive positioning model**
- **Worked example of the model**
  
- **Testing our current proposition - using the 'so what' model**
  
- **Exercise**
- **Apply the competitive positioning model to selected current customers**

## Review – Action from Here – 30 minutes

- **Review of the main points from the day**
- **Each manager to complete the Personal Action Plan for the coming 24 weeks**
- **Close**

## Using the Line Manager to support the resulting action

**This seminar is often used to initiate a phase of directed business development by the Account Manager**

**If so then the content of the seminar will give the managers the core knowledge and understanding along with an Action Plan to support the business development**

**Normally we will position this as a 24 week development plan based upon the learning from the seminar**

**If we structure the Action Plan to last for the coming 24 weeks then we can ask the Line Manager to oversee the progress and outcome of the Plan. This means that the Line Manager becomes primarily responsible for the implementation by the AM**

**To support this approach we provide a short Manual for the Line Manager to explain what to expect from the AM as a result of the seminar and to structure the Line Manager's support activity over the next 24 weeks**

### **We will:**

- Write the one day seminar to our agreed content
- Write the Delegate Work Book which will support the seminar (as an electronic copy)
- Provide within the Work Book the necessary forms, templates and so on to support the work during and after the seminar
- Write the Line Manager's Implementation Guide to oversee the Manager's action and progress after the seminar – structured as a 24 week plan (as an electronic copy)
- Write the short introduction for the Delegates to be sent out by email
- Deliver the one day seminar

### **You will:**

- Manage the administrative arrangements for the venue
- Manage the Delegates and their travel requirements
- Send out the short introduction for the seminar
- Produce paper copies of the Delegate Work Book (assuming the Delegate uses a paper copy)
- Fund the consultant's travel, accommodation and subsistence

## **The Key Account Management Group is a global network of academics, senior practitioners and consultants**

**The Group exists to identify, develop and share best practice thinking in all aspects of key account management – this means our members are engaged in many areas...**

- We run a Linked In Group – KAM Best Practice Knowledge Share**
- We publish the KAM Journal**
- Team members publish books and papers**
- We provide expert commentators and speakers**
- We provide consultants to support corporate development**
- We develop programs, processes, tools and skills to support individual and teams**
- We provide skills development training and coaching**

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