



Developing complete strategies for a specific product or market.

Company: European-based global industrial products company.

Situation: The client had experienced some success with new product launches, but overall, the efforts and results were “hit or miss.” Naturally, this resulted in confusion among the sales force, technical support, and others who were charged with implementing these “strategies.” In addition, there was no way to consistently prepare, implement, and assess the success of new product launches. Successes were deemed the result of great technology and failures were seen as the result of poor products, inadequate support, too little resource allocation, or ineffective guidance from marketing.

Our Philosophy: We believe some situations warrant more applied focus than a typical workshop setting can provide.

Our Role: We quickly determined that, although the company had a disciplined product development process, no such rigorous approach was in place to commercialize the products that emerged from the research and development effort. With this in mind, we assembled managers from R&D, sales, marketing, operations, finance, and technical support to address that very need. We stressed the need for a rigorous and consistent approach to bringing new products to market—and one that wouldn’t slow down the commercialization effort. Drawing upon our experience, we proposed a number of different planning approaches and then worked with the client to create a launch process that was well integrated with the product development process.

Result: We began our approach for a new commercialization process by creating support materials, such as templates and decision-guides, and conducting several workshops that provided managers with the right skills and tools to successfully utilize the new process. We also provided the client with our New Product Commercialization Audit to assess readiness to go to market.

To anchor the new process and skills in the organization, we brought one of the product teams together. Then, using the newly designed product launch process, we facilitated the group through an upcoming launch. Through several product team meetings, the group was able to create a meaningful strategy that (a) was anchored in the reality of the chosen market and (b) exploited the new technology’s most compelling benefits. The strategy also called for a more focused approach to customer selection for the new technology—a decision that was at the heart of the product’s eventual success.

Finally, to ensure the strategy was actionable, we designed and facilitated a “launch simulation” which disaggregated the launch process to make sure each step in the product rollout would go smoothly. In the end, the company reported that the rate of product adoption had been the fastest in company history.