

“We chose Michaels & Associates from three potential providers to work on this project because in their presentation, it was clear that they really listened to us.”
~ Director of Operations

“ From our first meeting, I always knew that the project would be in good hands. ”
~ Director of Operations

CHALLENGES

Provide the sales team with the knowledge and tools to successfully sell the reimbursement solutions offered by the company

Offer flexible training that meets the sales team's busy schedules

Use the company's preferred presentation tool for the training

APPROACH

Identify business objectives and learners' knowledge gaps

Work with the presentation tool vendor, Brainshark, to make the most of the tool's capabilities

Develop an instructionally sound training program to meet the business and training needs

RESULTS

A blended learning program consisting of e-learning modules, self-study and a workshop

Multiple opportunities for learning and success throughout the training program

Long-lasting partnership between the client, Michaels & Associates and Brainshark



HEALTHCARE PRODUCT DISTRIBUTOR WANTS TO FILL SOME GAPS

One of the nation's largest distributors of specialty healthcare products wanted to help its sales force understand the company's complex reimbursement service offerings. Leaders in the company spent thousands of dollars each month supporting the sales team—flying to sales meetings to deliver the reimbursement services sales presentation to potential customers. How could the company reduce these costs and meet the training needs of a sales force that was spread all over the country and had very limited availability?

From the several training vendors interviewed, the Director of Sales Operations selected Michaels & Associates to help.

“We continue to enjoy the work that your team accomplished last year for us. Thank you.”
~ Division Vice President



BUSINESS OBJECTIVES HELP DETERMINE TRAINING OBJECTIVES

When Michaels & Associates met with the client, the business objectives were clearly defined:

- Provide the sales force with the knowledge and resources to increase the sale of customized reimbursement solutions.
- Decrease expenses by enabling the sales force to confidently present these solutions to their customers.
- Minimize selling “down time” by allowing salespeople to complete training in short segments, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, 365 days per year.

Upon consultation with the Director of Reimbursement Services and Director of Sales Operations, Michaels & Associates learned that the client used online presentation software called Brainshark for some of their training needs. The directors hoped to use this cost-saving tool for the reimbursement services training, but they were unsure if it could support their needs. Michaels & Associates’ consultants met with Brainshark on several occasions, researching how to make the most of the tool’s capabilities. We were determined to offer an innovative, unique and effective training program within the client’s constraints.

In the meantime, Michaels & Associates’ consultants worked with the client to identify the sales team’s knowledge gaps. We determined that salespeople needed to understand what reimbursement was, how it was addressed with the company’s solution set, how to build a customized solution for a customer and how to sell that solution effectively.

By forming a strong partnership with Brainshark and identifying appropriate and focused learning objectives, Michaels & Associates worked within the client’s parameters to design and develop an effective training program to meet the business and training needs.



SPOTLIGHT

At the end of the project, the client was so pleased with their cooperative and consultative relationship with Michaels & Associates and Brainshark that they decided to share best practices that each group realized from the project. A representative from each organization co-presented a workshop called “Best Practices for Managing Vendors and Consultants” at the annual SPBT (Society of Pharmaceutical & Biotech Trainers) conference.



BLENDED LEARNING PROGRAM “WOWS” THE COMPANY

The best answer to the business and learner needs was to develop a blended program that consisted of e-learning, self study and a workshop. To prepare the sales force for the learning experience, the client’s training department sent a series of e-mails to the participants, announcing the training and creating interest in the program. The training was presented to learners in stages:

- First, the sales force took five 10-20 minute e-learning courses over a period of six weeks. These courses used audio, Flash interactions and job aids—all enhancing the effectiveness of the Brainshark tool. The learners also answered checkpoint questions along the way to verify what they learned and build their selling skills.
- Then they completed a case study in the form of a self-study workbook. This case study introduced a fictitious customer, their product and their issues that may require reimbursement services. The learners completed the case study on their own and then discussed their solution with their manager or other designated coach. This gave learners the opportunity to analyze their solutions in a safe environment and receive valuable feedback from a trusted expert.
- Finally, at the company’s biannual sales conference, the sales team participated in a fun, interactive game to review the e-learning content. Participants also shared their case study solutions in small groups. At the end of the workshop, they also received job aids and templates they could use on the job.

The stakeholders were delighted with the training, and the sales team felt very comfortable selling and supporting the reimbursement services. Word about the successful training program spread throughout the organization, which led to several additional opportunities for Michaels & Associates to help the client meet their business challenges.