



Sun Microsystems AQ Performance Study

Overview

This study examined the following AQ and performance-related issues:

- 1) To what extent, if at all, does AQ or its CORE dimensions predict sales performance in adverse times?
- 2) To what extent does the AQ training improve AQ scores?
- 3) What if any relationship is there between improvement in AQ and overall performance?

The sample was comprised of 120 account executives and sales managers from the Western Area of the United States. During the study period, Sun faced an unprecedented combination of challenges from competitors, delayed product releases, quality concerns, portrayals in the media, and a sagging economy, and plummeting stock prices. Sales leadership provided the AQ training to equip their people with the tools and mindset necessary to deliver strong results in weak times.

AQ was measured twice—during the one-day AQ program and 90 days after the program.

Performance was measured in two ways

1. by how much a sales professional sold as a percentage of quota
2. a general performance rating scale used through Sun

All sales people are assessed by the same measure.

Findings/Results

The following results were found for those who completed the training and measured their AQ again after 90 days:

- *AQ was significantly related to sales performance for the fiscal year 2002 (correlation .629*, second measure)*
 - Those who scored in the upper decile for AQ sold 27% more than those who scored in the bottom decile.
- The C and O dimensions of AQ had the strongest relationship to who would sell the most (correlations .593* and .663*, respectively)
 - Those who scored in the upper decile on the C dimension sold 29% more than those who scored in the bottom decile.
 - Those who scored in the upper decile on the O dimension sold 30% more than those who scored in the bottom decile.
- For the second AQ measure, the C, R and E dimensions of AQ had the strongest relationship to who would sell the most (correlations .623*, .675*, and .652* respectively)
- As a result of the AQ training, the mean AQ score for this group rose from 150.57 to 182.93.

**Statistically significant at the .05 level*

Conclusions

- 1) AQ remains a robust predictor and driver of performance and sales resilience
- 2) The AQ training substantially improves a group's overall AQ and CORE profile
- 3) AQ helps drive sales results, especially in demanding markets/industries

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