

News

In the pipeline: Top talent for the sales force

The 3M sales force is ever on the lookout for graduates already trained in sales and marketing tools and techniques. 3M's Frontline Education Partnership gives the company an edge in the heated competition for talented college graduates.

The team of six university students had never met before, but they knew they had two things in common: an aptitude for sales, and a prized summer internship offer from 3M. And now they had one day to demonstrate their marketing and sales abilities before an assembled group of 3M sales leaders, 3M talent management staff, and their university faculty. The event was the annual 3M Frontline Sales Conference hosted by St. Catherine University in St. Paul, Minn.

In all, a diverse group of 18 student interns participated in the conference. They were divided into three teams, and each team was presented a challenge: to develop marketing and sales solutions for a business case that was presented to them. The possibilities were: 3M vehicle personalization film, 3M garden products, or 3M pocket projectors. For the finale, each team presented its sales strategy.

The team of six mentioned earlier landed the 3M pocket projector assignment. In a single day, they compiled a complete competitive analysis and tied their sales proposition to how best to capture the awareness of each member of a modern family — father, mother, teen and preteen. Their campaign message was “Bringing innovation to every stage of life.”

The team first recommended rebranding the pocket projector, and then made recommendations on where to market it, which included point-of-sales displays. Remarkably, they also found time to produce a creative online video using social media. (As expected, social media played a role in the strategies offered by each of the three young teams.)

The students attending the



Pocket projector student team members, from left, are Jeff Mable, University of Toledo; Stacey Windon, Xavier University; Caitlyn Reimer, DePaul University; Stephanie Salas, University of Houston; Kelsey Kromminga, St. Catherine University; and Daniel Rodriguez, Indiana University.

conference will soon begin a 10-week 3M sales internship that includes actual in-field or inside sales experience working for one of 3M's many businesses. The ones who display exceptional abilities may land a full-time job offer from 3M.

First-class internship

Tyler Schultz, now sales trainer, Building and Commercial Services Division, was recruited through the pioneering business while a university senior more than a decade ago. “The Frontline program is a first-class internship experience, giving students the skills

and responsibility to represent 3M to customers,” said Schultz, who continues to “give back” by mentoring interns and working with 3M's academic partners.

Today, 3M partners with 10 colleges and universities across the nation that offer a major or minor in sales, with course work designed to develop performance-ready skills and provide guidance in building and managing sales careers and customer relationships.

In 1996, when Frontline began, few sales courses were offered on U.S. campuses. 3M is credited with helping Frontline schools develop a cutting-edge sales curriculum, including customer relationship management.

In return, 3M has access to top talent to fill its sales pipeline. Currently, more than 140 3M sales representatives are alumni of the academic partnerships.

A step ahead of the competition

Talented graduates these days have many options and don't have to move far to find fulfilling employment. Frontline keeps 3M a step ahead of the competition as the “war for talent” heats up.

The program gets much attention and dedication from 3M Sales Leaders, according to Candace Mailand, sales innovation manager, who oversees the Frontline Sales Initiative program.

“Recruitment and retention of high-potential, sales-ready talent is one of the greatest challenges to sales organizations,” Mailand noted. “Not only does the Frontline program give us access to top talent, it reduces the time and associated costs needed to get these hires on board as productive employees. And when employees make good beginnings, the turnover rate is reduced, too.”

3M Frontline Education Partner Schools

Currently, more than 140 3M sales representatives are alumni of 3M partner schools.

- Baylor University, Waco, Texas
- DePaul University, Chicago, Ill.
- Indiana University, Bloomington, Ind.
- North Carolina A & T University, Greensboro, N.C.
- St. Catherine University, St. Paul, Minn.
- Southern University and A & M College, Baton Rouge, La.
- Tuskegee University, Tuskegee, Ala.
- University of Houston, Houston, Texas
- University of Toledo, Toledo, Ohio
- Xavier University, New Orleans, La.

Mortgages without obstacles

A PairsCapital Company

PrimeLending, A PairsCapital Company is proud to announce

Steven Mikkelsen
has made a professional move!

With Steven joining PrimeLending you will find the very best of home financing right here with us!

Sr. Loan Originator

Office: 952.854.6920

Cell: 651.210.0556

smikkelsen@primelending.com

www.stevemikkelsen.com

2920 Metro Center Square, 110-Bloomington, MN 55425 (651) 434-4477
 © 2011 PrimeLending, Inc. All rights reserved. PrimeLending, the PrimeLending logo, PrimeLending.com, and the PrimeLending logo are trademarks of PrimeLending, Inc. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

This is a paid advertisement. 3M has neither reviewed this company's information nor endorsed its services.

Infiniti of Bloomington

3M EMPLOYEE PLAN DISCOUNT!

Infiniti of Bloomington is pleased to offer the "Employee Plan Discount" to 3M employees, our extended Business Associates. The VPP purchase program makes it possible for special pricing on the Infiniti models at Infiniti of Bloomington. All current incentives also still apply. There has never been a better time to get behind the wheel of an Infiniti, this offer is through May 31, 2011.

Contact: info@infiniti-bloomington.com or call 952-888-5555 and ask for New Vehicle Sales Manager for complete details.

www.lutherinfiniti.com

• 1 block south of I-494 on I-35W