



RHEMA NEWSLETTER APRIL 2006

Welcome to the Eye

In terms of the ever-awkward UK climate Spring has been very slow to arrive this year, slowing growth, and keeping the environment dull and colourless. But, happily, the same is not true in the area of training and people development, at least not from where Rhema is standing.

We have seen revived interest and enthusiasm, certainly in larger and multinational companies, for giving managers and staff access to high quality programmes – from assessment and psychometrics, through to solid and proven performance enhancement work, to extensive and carefully tailored courses in leadership, management, selling and interpersonal skills.

Our experience is that good companies are sincerely trying to address their long-term people development needs. The best companies are doing so wholeheartedly and successfully by investing generously in training and development, to sharpen their people and hone their competitive edge.

Another current key topic for HR professionals is the need for them to think, and contribute, strategically to their businesses. Rhema cannot endorse that strongly enough.

We believe, now more than in any of our 20-plus years of experience, that training and development are a valuable part of the armoury of Human Resource professionals, and are absolutely essential elements of business strategy. We are very proud to work with many major enterprises who think the same, and to see their people development programmes increasingly contribute to corporate success under global competitive pressure.

This latest issue of The Eye has solid information and some fresh ideas to offer HR professionals and their organisations. The navigation is simple and we trust you will find the content of benefit.

Managing Director

Jeremy Francis



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The Big Issue

Global Networks - the key to building global training capability

What is the single greatest people-related challenge to any organisation once it starts to operate outside its domestic market-place and to develop international or even global expansion plans?

More often than not it is finding a way to build truly effective management and staff teams across international locations and national cultures. And that is distilled into the question "how do you achieve consistency of training programme quality and content as well as sensitivity to local market cultures?"

If this describes your organisation, you have a number of options. You can devise a standard programme in one country- probably your "home" country - and have trainers from that base travel and deliver it, probably using one language, wherever it is required. This can be costly and often means you lose the local market sensitivity.

You can have your own organisation in different countries deliver look-alike programmes in conjunction with local training providers in local languages. This approach can be more cost effective, and it addresses the local market sensitivity issue, but you can lose the consistency and quality of content.

Or you can access a global network of training organisations, under the umbrella of one organisation, which can roll out your global training programme to a consistent quality and in a standardised format, in any location, in any language, using local trainers but with an agreed price for the whole project.

This one-stop approach is increasingly being used by multinational organisations to achieve the balancing act of quality, integrity and cost effectiveness.

They know that the lead organisation can access best-in-class specialist trainers and can organise the logistics from start to finish, providing one point of contact for the client.

Such global training network organisations are relatively rare, but they certainly exist, and they certainly add value by providing local coaching services, online psychometric assessments, and web-based learning resources. And they completely understand that when training and people development has to "go global" the client enterprise needs internationally networked suppliers who are flexible and adaptable, and who can give support 24/7, anywhere in the world.

Rhema is one such global supplier. We know that it can be done, and we know that this trend is a fast growing one.



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Strategic Partner News

Rhema International Partner Development

Demands from our clients for an increasingly customised approach to meeting their global training and development needs has meant that in the first quarter of this year we have been significantly adding to and upgrading our already very strong International Partner Network.

We can now confidently respond to a very wide range of client requirements, and recent examples include:

- A global banking group required us to deliver banking sales training to their Retail Bankers, Investment Bankers, Asset Managers and Private Bankers in over 20 countries in local languages.
- A leading software house needed us to supply a British ex-patriot trainer located in India to deliver training there in English to an Indian audience. Why an ex-patriot? To improve the Indian audience's English language skills as well as their customer service skills.
- A global manufacturer wanted us to deliver account management training in two different South American countries using training material customised to their business and translated into Spanish for each country. There were multiple locations considerable distances apart.
- A leading technology supplier wanted us to deliver a global Behavioural Based Safety Training Programme to be run across all three major regions in multiple locations. The material was partly owned by them but was to be added to by us. A training team of specialists from each country and region needed to be put together to achieve a roll out of training over a six month period. We were to work with a major U.S. based training specialist in this area.

Rhema's network now spans the world and we are confident that no global project is too large or complex for us to handle.

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT – BANKING

Research we carried out in 2005 has resulted in our Banking Sales Academy generating a high level of interest from Investment Banks and Private Banks.

The key issues that our new sales training programmes address include:

- Building client relationships in an e-banking environment.
- Differentiating the service offering using consultative selling and insight selling skills
- Co-creation and Cross Selling of Complex Structured Products.
- Creating a one team approach to selling.
- Account management skills to achieve long term sustainability.



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Client Projects and Outcomes

Rhema creates and delivers Influencing Skills training for Burberry

Burberry, the 150-year-old world famous clothing design and manufacturing multinational, is offering managers and staff at the Haymarket, London corporate head office, an Influencing Skills training programme which has been created for them by Rhema Group.

The half day programmes are being delivered by Rhema on demand from Burberry's HR Training department in response to internal requests. Sessions for groups averaging six people have so far benefited more than 35 managers and staff, who identified influencing skills as a development area in which they were particularly interested, and where they believed tailored training would improve their performance.

The course focus is twofold: *influencing skills* which embraces firstly helping each trainee to understand his or her own natural influencing style and then to apply different influencing styles to dealing with others; and *assertiveness*, which deals with identifying behaviours in others and improves the verbal skills for dealing with them assertively but not aggressively.

During the concentrated half day training programmes managers learn about influencing and the organisational context, and review different behaviour types (aggressive, submissive and assertive) with particular focus on assertive techniques.

Rhema Director William Burton says: "Burberry responded to requests from people working at the corporate centre of the company. They asked us to create and deliver this training because these skills lead to a range of corporate benefits – as managers and employees improve their inter-departmental negotiations, achieve constructive change more easily, and make faster progress with processes and projects.

"Rhema applied its experience to create a short, intensive instructor-led programme which fulfils the corporate aims and the personal objectives of each trainee without taking people away from their work routine for more than half a day."

Feedback from delegates who completed this Influencing Skills programme is positive and enthusiastic. Comments include:

- the session on assertiveness was particularly interesting
- analysing how best to respond to specific situations using different influencing styles was very helpful
- learning different ways to speak to others and involving others in a positive was of great benefit to me



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Client Projects and Outcomes

Crisis Management Training in leading financial sector company rapidly proves its worth

Rhema Group continues tailored training programme

These days there is no question that every company has to think very seriously and constructively about crisis management. This applies not only to issues of business continuity in any crisis situation, but also the best ways to handle people who are directly or indirectly involved and need immediate sympathetic and knowledgeable help.

The larger the company the greater the recognition of the need for a well-balanced and broad based crisis management organisation - sponsored and supported at the highest level, and encouraged through regular training exercises to be in a state of readiness for action.

Staff at the City offices of Société Générale, the French corporate and investment bank, have invested a lot of time and effort to achieve a high level of crisis management skill and readiness. Preparations have included a range of internal training workshops and exercises, along with participation in the UK Tripartite Authority's market-wide exercise in November 2005 which tested the financial markets' reaction to a Major Operational Disruption (MOD).

Société Générale has previously benefited from Rhema training sessions for its Crisis Help Desk staff last year, but it is now again using Rhema to deliver Call Handling training for its Operational Human Resources advisers (OHRs). The OHRs would be at the front line of the bank's handling of any serious incident, handling calls from staff and families and acting as the interface between the staff population and the bank's crisis managers.

This customised, instructor-led Rhema course covers the OHR role and responsibilities in this particular company, in terms of the type of calls which might be received and best practice in handling the calls. It uses likely situations and role play to deal with anticipating the challenges of the call; handling the caller and diffusing the situation; developing communication, building rapport, listening, questioning and summarising skills.

Rhema Director William Burton said: "While the intensely stressful nature of such calls cannot be simulated to anything like the level which would be experienced in reality, Société Générale London is asking Rhema to deliver training which will really make their OHRs think about, and work at, the skills which must instantly come to the fore when crisis hits and very anxious people have to be managed calmly and firmly.

"The Société Générale London approach to crisis management training - which has seen the company avoid quick fixes in favour of rolling out planned, tailored courses to a gradually extending range of staff, needed to bring the whole crisis plan into action quickly - is admirable and meticulous, and showing excellent results."

"The training we are running with Rhema is proving to be extremely valuable in developing our crisis management capabilities, as well as providing staff with skills and awareness which have real benefit in their day-to-day work." – Emilie Billault, Business Continuity Team Société Générale London



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Case Study

Rhema brings E-learning into cost-efficient customised Account Management training

Rhema has turned a two-day instructor-led consultative selling course into a blended solution approach with less classroom time for International Financial Data Services (IFDS)

Rhema met that challenge, which involved halving the amount of classroom time for IFDS' Account Management training programmes for Client Relationship Managers.

This was achieved by putting the content of the first day – the information section – into an e-learning format. Rhema Director William Burton explains: "This was ambitious and unusual – training and coaching for account management teams is normally instructor led because of the nature of the work. This involves dealing directly with people and therefore requires communication skills and a demonstrable grasp of the information, tools, and techniques gained through training.

We had to show that a major part of such training could be done outside the classroom, at trainees' desks and in their own time. This eliminated the cost of an entire day of instructor-led training in exchange for the far lower cost of the e-learning element."

Rhema brought in its strategic partner, Intellego Systems, to put its own robust, highly adaptable and user-friendly enabling technologies into the blended solution for IFDS. This then delivered the precise customised content created by Rhema, including information on:

- the types of consultative selling
- the process (including building rapport, matching features and establishing benefits)
- networking skills
- account management (segmentation strategy and the account management process)
- skill in assertiveness, influencing, meetings management and negotiation

On Rhema's recommendation the project used Intellego's RapidBuilder product, a multiple Brandon-Hall award-winning e-learning tool which combines powerful software simulation capabilities and simple, "programming free" media-authoring and editing. It is branded for and owned by IFDS, which has the option via Intellego's licensing system, to continue developing and editing its own proprietary e-learning content in-house in future.

The second day of the IFDS Client Relationship Managers training remained instructor-led and practical, focusing on role play and consolidation.

Burton added: "Rhema and Intellego together answered the question 'how do you make account management training as time and cost-effective as possible'? Rhema created every aspect and detail of the programme content. Then Intellego turned it into a tailored e-learning course with tests at the end of each of the four modules. IFDS had all the benefit of this e-learning element during this course, and because they own it they can update it and expand it for themselves."



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Rhema People

Terri Anderson , corporate and marketing communications

Rhema Group is a rapidly expanding enterprise – a growing and diversifying client roster, a fuller international network of consultants and more strategic partnerships are being supported by an increasing and strengthening HQ team.

Terri Anderson of Big Red Kite Communications is part of that team, as corporate/marketing communications consultant. With a brief to advise and work on strategic development of communications, she has been creating and contributing to Rhema's information and marcoms output via new tools such as the regular newsletter and E-zine, and the recently redesigned and updated website. She liaises closely with other "external team members", especially web designer Carolyn Cherry of Cherry Creative. The other key element of her role is Media Relations.

Terri's career in communications began with journalism – newspaper and news agency general reporting, and then focused on writing and editing in the specialist business press. She became a respected business writer on the Music Industry, but eventually decided to move into corporate PR, at the invitation of the UK industry body BPI. This was a demanding start to a new career phase, with the intense lobbying and communications around a new Copyright Act and the (totally different) demands of launching the Brit Awards on TV.

She went on to other corporate communications director roles before making the major change to consultancy at the start of 2003, wanting particularly to diversify the issues and enterprises with whom she works. Her clients have included the global copyright organisation CISAC, a Strategic Health Authority, St Martin-in-the-Fields (a business as well as the Royal parish church), internet entrepreneurs and the Association of Independent Music.

She is passionate about the range and quality of effective communications, and is a Council member of Human Communications International. Her interest in the value and contribution of SMEs to UK plc's success has led her to work as a branch committee member for the Federation of Small Businesses; and her parallel interest in education, particularly its communications aspects, drew her to become an LEA Governor of a special needs school.

Having enjoyed and been greatly impressed with Rhema's management training while she was an executive in one of its client companies, Terri was delighted to be asked to work with MD Jeremy Francis and his Directors; and to explore the (new to her) Management Development and Training supplier sector through association with practitioners of the calibre of Rhema Group.

"My strong impression is that the marketplace for Training and Development expertise is diffuse – remarkably, no supplier has more than 3% of the business - and difficult to define structurally," Terri observes. "It is unlike most other professional markets for professional services, and it is therefore very challenging to reach in terms of marketing, launching fresh ideas and innovative products, identifying trends and thought leaders, getting constructive (or any) feedback, and generally communicating with effectively. But it's a challenge Rhema is more than ready to tackle and I'm very happy to work with such a creative and totally professional Group from a corporate communications perspective."