



A STUDY IN SUCCESS

Blended Learning Solution Increases R.L. Polk's Worldwide Success

2010 BRANDON HALL SILVER AWARD, EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING —
BEST USE OF BLENDED LEARNING

The recognized expert in automotive intelligence and marketing solutions for more than 80 years, R.L. Polk & Co. is known for the excellence of its insights and decision-making tools it delivers to clients. So, when picking a partner to design robust sales training for a breakthrough program that builds customer loyalty, Polk turned to Innovative Learning Group (ILG), a company known for its rigorous approach to *creating smart, engaging global learning solutions.*

SITUATION



Prior to this project, Polk's sales training approach was splintered; the company knew it needed to combine both product training and a uniform approach to solution selling into one cohesive program. It also needed to inject a higher level of consistency, care, and attention into teaching the sales teams how to represent Polk.

To accomplish this, Polk decided to develop and implement a product-specific sales certification process. The company wanted the process to integrate single-product learning with training on Polk's recently developed sales process — and to ensure that learning translated into on-the-job performance. Finally, Polk wanted the certification process to be based on an instructional design that could be replicated for its other products.

For the first application of the certification process, Polk chose PolkConnect, an electronic marketing intelligence tool that consolidates and analyzes the client's customer and prospect data, and automates marketing communications. It was chosen because it had been successfully sold in Western Europe and Australia and had significant market potential beyond current sales levels.

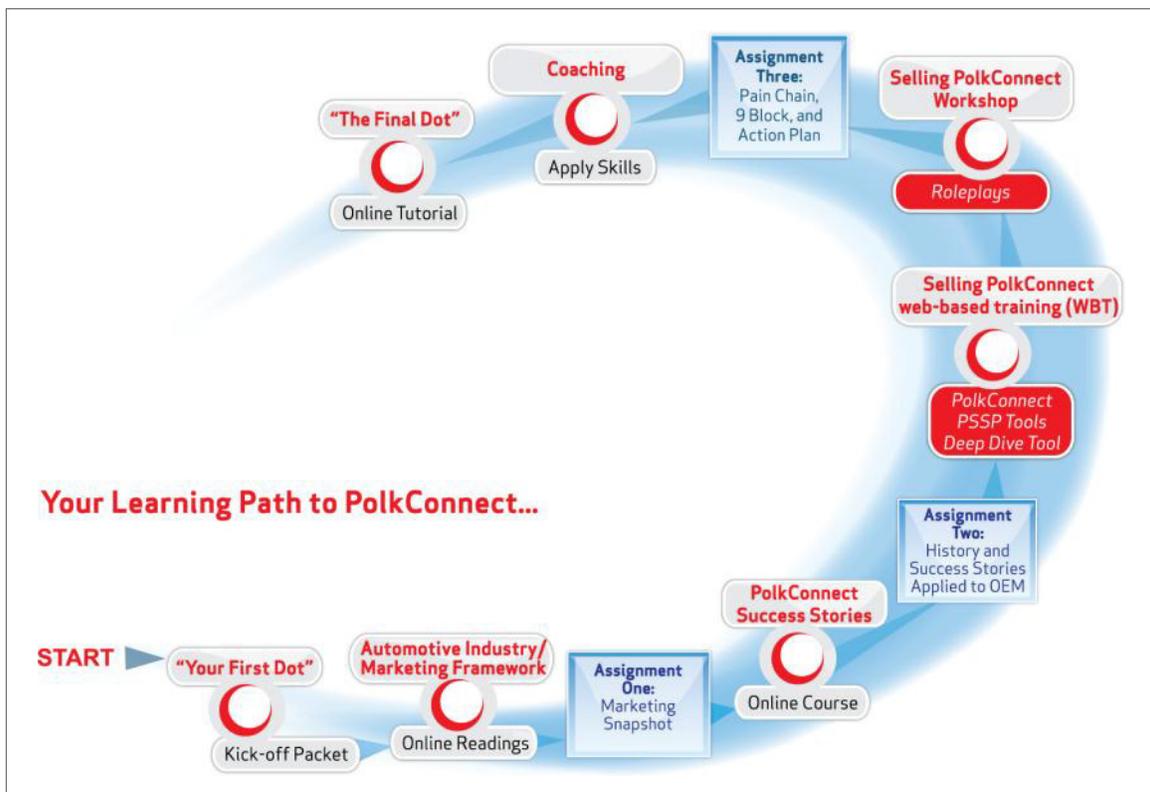


SOLUTION

The PolkConnect Sales Enablement Certification Process ILG developed for Polk accomplished the company's goals for this initiative. The process was designed to train and certify both individual business development professionals and their direct sales managers. All the component training solutions and delivery methods were specifically created to achieve learning and lead to performance.

The multi-hour program comprises multiple delivery methods, including:

- A printed brochure to introduce the certification process
- Online and interactive webbased training that builds consistent understanding of the automotive industry, PolkConnect, and the sales process
- An electronic performance support tool
- An instructor-led, case study-based workshop that provides in-depth practice selling PolkConnect
- Assignments in which the sales team apply learning while working with their actual clients
- Coaching by sales managers and sales leaders at each point along the certification process



POLKCONNECT LEARNING PATH



RESULTS

Participants have cited this training as one of the best programs they had taken part in.

Two types of efficiencies were achieved:

- Time and cost savings were realized in that foundational knowledge was built using web-based courses. “Seat time” for these components was reduced by half, travel was eliminated, and work was not disrupted. (Learners fit the learning into their work instead of fitting their work around their training.)
- Polk gained a “template” for its future product training; it has saved almost all design costs for product training and will only bear future development costs. Furthermore, the PolkConnect model was used for at least one other product, which was developed almost entirely using in-house resources.

Additionally, several types of benefits related to learning and its application on the job were identified:

- All learners passed the quizzes at the minimum 80 percent score, which confirmed new learning was achieved.
- Because application of learning was built into the certification process and learners were required to complete the case studies accurately, Polk knows that 100 percent of participants have used what they learned in real-client situations.

To learn more about how Innovative Learning Group can create custom learning solutions to help improve business results, contact us at info@innovativeLG.com.

ABOUT INNOVATIVE LEARNING GROUP A performance-first learning company, Innovative Learning Group, Inc. creates custom training and tools that help employees of Fortune 1000 companies do their jobs more effectively. Headquartered in Troy, Michigan, ILG is a privately held, certified Women’s Business Enterprise founded in 2004 by CEO Lisa Toenniges.

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