



Case Study: Absa Personal Bank Sales (Absa PBS)

About the Company

Absa Group Limited (Absa), a member of the Barclays Group, is one of South Africa's largest financial services groups offering a complete range of banking, bancassurance and wealth management products and services. Absa's business is conducted primarily in South Africa and on the Africa continent, where it has equity holdings in banks in Mozambique, Angola, Tanzania and Zimbabwe. Absa became a subsidiary of Barclays Bank PLC on 27 July 2005, when Barclays acquired a controlling stake in the Absa Group. Barclays is an international financial services group engaged in retail and commercial banking, credit card issuing, investment banking, wealth management and investment management services.

Absa Personal Bank Sales (Absa PBS), one of the bank's business units, is a conglomeration of sales forces from the various segment and product business units. It was formed with an aim to provide an integrated sales approach to Absa products and services.

Business Challenges

- Absa PBS was constituted in March 2005 and was primarily facing the challenge of identifying the right set of key business drivers/performance measurements. In the absence of these, the business was not able to gauge whether it was on the right track to achieve the set mission, vision and goals. There was a gap between individual actions and the overall goals set by the business unit. This led to lack of focus in the business and under-performing stakeholder expectations
- Absa PBS did not have an integrated performance management solution that could not only provide a scientific basis for measuring and managing individual performance, but could also bring alignment with the overall business strategy/objectives. The performance management technique being used emphasized on a generic set of Key Performance Areas (KPA's) and lacked objectivity in measurement

Nihilent's Role

- Applying the Balanced Scorecard framework, Nihilent designed a set of measures for the key business drivers. This helped Absa PBS track performance on a timely and regular basis and notice any trends well in advance that could have a serious impact on the business
- An integrated performance management solution was suggested that considered the Key Performance Area for an individual to focus on and also identified competencies that enabled one to excel in these focus areas. This provided the SBU a scientific basis for not only a rational performance assessment and evaluation, but also for assessing, managing and developing the existing skills pool available

Business Benefits Delivered

- The solution has enabled Absa PBS to synergize their efforts towards attainment of the defined key business drivers and provided focus to the entire business unit
- All the roles in Absa PBS have explicitly stated performance expectations and criterion defined for assessing the same. It has removed the subjectivity involved in performance assessment and brought in a fresh perspective of objective performance management
- The Key Performance Areas for individual roles in the SBU are aligned to the objectives set by the Business Unit. This ensured that the business unit had a clear line of sight and synchronized their activities to achieve corporate excellence



- The Integrated performance management solution also provided a basis for formulating the reward structure. Rewards can now clearly be linked to the attainment of expected results in each of the Key Performance Areas
- Performance on the competencies identified in the performance scorecard for each role also provides inputs for individual potential development. The competencies assessment would derive the development path for individuals that can be utilized to develop the training plan for the Business Unit