

OUT OF BOX SALES TRAINING BY LINK NATURAL

Training of its human resources is an area where Link Natural places much emphasis on. Training is provided at all levels of staff, enabling the company to maintain a competent and reliable team.

Recognizing the dearth of quality sales professionals, the company recently conducted a unique training for its newly recruited sales staff. This training was a three month programme, where 20 youths from all over the island including Embilipitiya, Polonnaruwa, Monaragala, Hambantota, Matara, Dickwella and Kuliyaipitiya participated. A brain child of Dr. Devapriya Nugawela the Chairman of Link Natural, it was an special residential programme. As a sales representative needs to be in good physical condition to make several sales calls per day, the initial month was spent on developing the endurance of the participants. The participants had to undergo drill and physical training under an ex-military instructor during the day time, commencing in the early hours of the morning. The rest of the time was spent on developing English competencies of these rural youth who had joined with little English knowledge.

Religious activities and self studies were also part of the daily routine which ended up at 10.30 p.m. As voiced by one of the participants, "The outbound training at Wariyapola gave us a unique and adventurous experience," There we learnt to dream, to achieve the impossible and challenging".

After the initial month of training the candidates were exposed to soft skills, selling skills, product and process knowledge and company related knowledge training programmes.

"The applicants from all over the island were selected from a 3-round screening," said Rohana Wijesooriya the HR Manager who was the key driver of the project. In the initial round of screening the candidates had to face an interview, undergo aptitude test, General Knowledge test and English tests. Second round was a physical fitness test.

The final round included a medical examination and reference checking.

"We came here with very little knowledge, but today we have gathered many competencies and realized the importance of continuous learning" said a candidate. He was further grateful to the company for giving them an opportunity to enter a growth oriented profession, Sales, with which they were not much familiar.

These types of programmes not only help a company meet its people requirements, but also fulfill social responsibility, which provide opportunities for rural youth to join the private sector companies and grow. All the 20 trainees who had joined the programme initially, completing the programme successfully is another a notable achievement.

"This is a unique program which many companies are thinking of implementing, but only Link Natural could get it off the ground," said the Link Natural National Sales Manager, Dinesh Angamma addressing the parents and company participants at the passing out ceremony of the Sales Competency Development programme of Link Natural Products.

