



Fluid Technology Group

## Watson-Marlow Demonstrates Value Through SPIN<sup>®</sup>

# Watson-Marlow

Watson-Marlow Fluid Technology Group (WMFTG) is the world leader and premium provider in the niche peristaltic pumps and associated fluid path technologies for the food, pharmaceutical, chemical and environmental industries. Business is highly competitive and the last 5 years have seen marked pressure on price and product offerings.

“As the competitive landscape changes we need to develop new habits to meet new challenges.” Explains Rachel Pallett, Sales and Marketing Director, Europe and Middle East at Watson-Marlow. Rachel set out to find a supplier who fitted their organisation and could help them streamline their approach to sales by providing:

- A methodology that works in any country or culture. “We need something that fits with us. Most importantly, looking to the future, we need someone with global reach. A method we can scale up and adapt to all the countries where we operate. It’s essential to do this kind of learning, especially roleplays and practice sessions in local language”, Rachel explains.
- Learning and development that brings tangible behaviour change. “I believe in going beyond a classroom approach for training. The preparation, the participation and the follow up is really important if we are to make training stick”, says Rachel.
- A consultative approach to sales that adds value to both the client and Watson-Marlow. Rachel expands: “We invest heavily in product and application training to add value to the customer. We want a sales process which will enhance that value further.”

## SPIN® Pilot in Italy

Watson-Marlow decided to conduct a pilot project with Huthwaite International for their operation in Italy, with a view to a wider implementation. Despite the difficult local economy there has been some good years of growth within established markets. Watson-Marlow was looking to mirror this success across new product developed in-house and that obtained through mergers and acquisitions.

Watson-Marlow Country Manager, Italia, Massimo Ghedini provides background to the project: “We have a number of hurdles to clear before we can begin to make progress in a sale. There is pressure on client resources. The diversity of the stakeholders and territories involved can affect the dynamic of each sale. Some clients expect a consultative process while others want merely a transactional sale. And most of our clients want to start a conversation with price.

“Our brand is well known but this doesn’t guarantee us the sale. There can be a degree of scepticism, which we need to overcome to persuade the client that it is worth spending more to buy a pump from Watson-Marlow rather than something cheaper from the competition. We wanted our modus operandi to be adaptive and truly reflect the value we can bring to each individual client.”



Without any doubt SPIN® has enabled us to widen the dialogue by knowing what to do and what to seek proactively. SPIN® is key to gaining access to the client’s real thoughts and personal as well as technical issues. We ask our clients for direct feedback and we are hearing a very positive response. That’s why I can say that SPIN® is the best tool for our job.

Massimo Ghedini - Country Manager, Italia - Watson-Marlow





SPIN<sup>®</sup> has brought behavioural change for my sales team. I personally deem that this approach is further elevating our professional image within the industry and that clients are demonstrating trust in us to deliver. Direct sales have definitely increased since we adopted SPIN<sup>®</sup>.

Massimo Ghedini - Country Manager, Italia - Watson-Marlow



## Benefits of SPIN<sup>®</sup>

### Comfortable for clients

Questions can sometimes seem intrusive so how can a questioning framework such as SPIN<sup>®</sup> work culturally when the comfort of both seller and buyer are at stake? Massimo elaborates: "Without any doubt SPIN<sup>®</sup> has enabled us to widen the dialogue by knowing what to do and what to seek proactively. SPIN<sup>®</sup> is key to gaining access to the client's real thoughts, and personal as well as technical issues. We ask our clients for direct feedback and we are hearing a very positive response. That's why I can say that SPIN<sup>®</sup> is the best tool for our job."

Rachel agrees: "We invest heavily in new product development. We are very particular about creating a customer value proposition unique to each product and the training and assessment which supports this is world-class. SPIN<sup>®</sup> builds on those foundations by giving us the skills to present our proposition in the most persuasive terms especially with new products, new contacts and new business streams."

### Pushing boundaries is paying off

Breaking boundaries by approaching new prospects, especially with new products, can be a difficult task so it's essential that sellers have all the tools and skills to support not only the product but also the sales conversation itself. "We have gained confidence in contacting large potential clients directly through using SPIN<sup>®</sup>. The proactive questioning tools help us to see a clear picture of a prospect's operation, which enables us to present our products in a way that fits their individual needs, adds value to their purchase and outweighs the price of our competitors."

Massimo continues: "SPIN<sup>®</sup> has brought behavioural change for my sales team. I personally deem that this approach is further elevating our professional image within the industry and that clients are demonstrating trust in us to deliver. Direct sales have definitely increased since we adopted SPIN<sup>®</sup>."

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## Enabling Change

If we view change as the responsibility of everyone, what can be done at each stage in the process and at each level within the organisation to make it a reality? Rachel gives her view: “It’s important to set out a plan, a budget and agree deliverables. For a project like this to be successful, it needs support and attention from the top and a willingness to participate from everyone involved. Happily, we started this project with a sales force who have good skill levels and an appetite for continual improvement.”

## Acquiring knowledge

As they say, knowledge is power and at an organisational level it’s certainly an effective way to set up a project to succeed. Exploring the appetite for change within the organisation and conducting Training Needs Analysis of the target audience are just a couple of the elements that provide information that shape a workable solution for change. “Teleconferencing and one day workshops worked well in helping both Huthwaite and the Watson-Marlow to see a wider and deeper picture of the project ahead of us” Anders Hjort, Regional Development Director at Huthwaite explains.

## Measuring knowledge

At an individual level, measuring skills against the SPIN® behavioural framework makes the learning journey much more tangible for the sales engineers and manager. Assessments took place before, during and after training. The information is shared through our learning portal and can be accessed, where appropriate, by learners and management.



We are able to give Rachel, Massimo and his Sales Engineers “The Dashboard” to provide transparency on the progress and sustainability of the behaviour change, and results achieved over time. Teleconferences took place to inspire and support the follow-up activities by Massimo and sustain the buy-in and progress of the behaviour change journey at all levels. In our experience, when you measure behaviour change you get results – if you measure results only, you might not get the behaviour change you are looking for.

Anders Hjort, Regional Development Director, Huthwaite





As a fellow Italian, Marco Parenti was key to getting SPIN® accepted by the team. This was instrumental in achieving buy-in to the project and making it workable.

Rachel Pallett - Sales & Marketing Director, Europe & Middle East - Watson-Marlow



## Embedding knowledge

New habits can't be formed overnight or in isolation if they are to be good ones. As an experienced sales engineer previously, Rachel was aware of how selling techniques form when you are on the road and working disparately. "Over time we can develop habits, some good, some bad and They can be remarkably sticky. It's important to bring people together for an event, but that alone doesn't change behaviour."

Here's how Watson-Marlow are taking responsibility at all levels:

### Formal coaching

Behaviour change can be overwhelming when looking at the entire picture. Following the classroom training, Marco Parenti - Huthwaite Italia Country Manager accompanied SEs on live sales visits. This helped to focus in on key areas for development and isolate one point to work on at once. Rachel explains: "As a fellow Italian, Marco Parenti was key to getting SPIN® accepted by the team. This was instrumental in achieving buy-in to the project and making it workable."

### Manager reviews

Massimo is available to the sales team as and when they need him. There are one-to-one quarterly reviews between Massimo and each sales team member. SEs submit SPIN® T Forms\* following each sales call which provide key data for the reviews and self-reflection.

## Informal coaching – peer to peer

Where the opportunity arises, SEs are attending calls in tandem. One added advantage to the SEs themselves is that they can give timely feedback to each other and take learnings to their next calls. There is evidence that this approach is accelerating change and is a great way of nurturing new habits.

## Self-reflection

Development continues, Sales Engineers are applying the SPIN® methodology and refining their approach with clients. Massimo explains how this is working in practice: "Our Sales Engineers keep using the SPIN® approach as a metric to monitor their sales effectiveness during calls. Now they know how to calibrate and get better they are addressing mistakes and enhancing their efficacy, call after call."

## Sales tools

A convivial sales call and one showing promise isn't always the same thing but it's not always easy to separate the two. In conjunction with their new CRM system, SPIN® is being used to monitor, standardise and simplify the stages of the sale towards its completion. One area of particular benefit is in helping the seller document tangible interest from the client in progressing the sale. Massimo comments: "The SPIN® T-form is the key tool that all our team have used from day one. This is embedded in our sales process today and provides important data both on sales progress and behaviour change."

\* SPIN® T Forms help the seller to manage the sales conversation and capture key signals from the customer.

# Watson-Marlow

## Sustainable Behaviour Change and Sales Outcomes

First-hand evidence speaks for itself: Massimo concludes: “We are looking to preserve the level of success we have achieved through the continuous development process we have adopted with SPIN<sup>®</sup>. Over the last year, we have acquired new client sales against tough competition. Our sales force has attained new skills which has enhanced their professionalism and gained the trust and confidence of our clients. And our sales results are outstanding.

“SPIN<sup>®</sup> is a great means of developing sales professionals which triggers the improvement that is key for personal and organisational success.”

Rachel gives her view: “Watson-Marlow was looking to gain momentum. Through developing richer and deeper sales conversations at earlier points in the buying cycle, I’m delighted to report that we have closed the year end with very nice growth results in all our target areas and this increases the sustainability of us growing our sales in Italy year on year.”

### The future of sales

“The challenge is bringing internationally accepted common practices, that define us as a global company, and making them work locally. I think we have provided a solid foundation in Italy on which we can build further. It was a good experience for all concerned. Rachel concludes

“The story doesn’t end here. The success of the pilot in Italy has led us to look at options for a wider roll out within the group training programme. Flexibility in an initiative like this is going to be crucial when upscaling. The options of including online learning and using in-house trainers and coaches increase the viability for deployment globally.”



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Rachel Pallett - Sales & Marketing Director, Europe & Middle East  
- Watson-Marlow



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