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# o b j e c t i v e a s s e s s m e n t

## Case Study - Toyota Material Handling Australia

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### Objective assessment gives Toyota Material Handling a lift

Toyota Material Handling Australia (TMHA) supplies the widest range of forklifts and battery-electric warehouse products in Australia. The Toyota brand has been the Australian counter-balance forklift market leader since 1987, with over 40,000 Toyota forklifts sold. Their range of warehousing solutions also includes the renowned BT Lift Trucks and Raymond Forklift brands. Today the Australian operation represents approximately \$300 million in turnover with over 690 staff across the country.

Toyota acquired BT Industries in 2000 and announced in 2005 that it would be integrated with Toyota to form Toyota Material Handling Australia (TMHA). This was the first integration of this type in the world for Toyota and required that the sales teams of both Toyota and BT be merged successfully - no small challenge given the difference in products and cultures of the two companies.

*"It was key to get top management sorted before we worried about the sales team underneath – if this wasn't right then we were going to fail every time."*  
- Dave Fletcher, General Manager Operations, TMHA.

Dave Fletcher, General Manager Operations, is responsible for the national operations and explains the challenges in more detail and the role Objective Assessment has played in optimizing their sales force.

"BT Industries sold battery-electric warehouse equipment and Toyota's main area of business was engine powered trucks. It was a real clash of cultures initially. Some sales people began to leave as they were outside their comfort zones in terms of selling products they were unfamiliar with."

"Added to this, the sales methodology of the two companies was very different. BT was relatively new to the marketplace and had only been in Australia for a number of years, whereas Toyota's sales culture had been built over a steady 40 years of success. It is this Toyota culture which has taken the company to number one in the world resulting in Toyota being the counter-balance forklift market leader for 21 consecutive years. This is the culture we are working towards for the entire sales force."

### Training starts from the top

TMHA first started working with Objective Assessment in 2005 for a diagnostic on the New South Wales sales force during their integration with BT. The diagnostic provided crucial insights into the capability and growth potential of the sales force - in particular sales management.

Dave explains: "A big attraction of working with Objective Assessment was their approach to developing sales managers first.

The NSW Sales Manager at the time required further development to improve management skills without losing sales drive. In conjunction with Objective Assessment a development path was set that has been a

*"The sales recruitment process we put in place has opened our eyes to new opportunities and has been very successful for us. It has allowed us to identify the drivers and the traits we need for our sales team."*  
- Dave Fletcher, General Manager Operations, TMHA.

success. As a result, this Sales Manager has been promoted to a national role and is a great asset to the company."



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## The right people for the job

After this success, TMHA then asked Objective Assessment to assist with developing the stability of their sale teams. Attracting the right people to join the business was a key imperative of this. "The pressure is always on to make sure you have enough sales people to meet sales targets so there is the danger of falling into the trap of taking on sales people for the sake of it."

Objective Assessment worked with TMHA to implement a sales recruitment and assessment process, which included setting benchmarks and determining sales force criteria. The recruitment process starts, rather than ends, with the Express Screen pre-hire assessment and progression in the process is dependant on meeting the initial criteria from this assessment.

"It works and it's now proven. We discovered sales people from outside the industry that are often stronger sales people than those from within. Provided they have the necessary sales skills, we are able to train them and provide the product and industry knowledge they need. In fact, some of our best sales people have come from outside the industry and been recruited using this process."

"It's very difficult to say no to someone who has industry experience, but we trust in the process and it's been a complete success. We have been using this process in NSW since 2005 and now we plan to roll it out for review in all other states."

## A new recruitment process saves time and provides stability

Management time and control was another major benefit of adopting the new recruitment process. "You can't underestimate the enormous amount of time this process actually saves the organisation. We now only interview people who have the traits we are looking for instead of finding out in an interview that they don't have them, or even worse, employing unsuitable staff. Originally we might interview ten people. Now we might interview just two or three and we might take them all on."

## An objective point of view

Dave speaks very highly of the relationship TMHA has developed with Objective Assessment. He describes them as very professional and their relationship as interactive. Dave continues, "Objective Assessment are superb - everything you need from a provider. I'm generally a sceptic when it comes to training and development - I've experienced courses where they say it's tried and tested and this is how it should be done. Objective Assessment is totally the opposite. They listen and understand and provide ideas and suggestions. They look at your business objectively and sit down with you and work out what your needs are. can't speak highly enough of them."

## What Objective Assessment does for TMHA:

- Sale Force Diagnostics
- Mentoring, Coaching and Training
- Sales Talent Acquisition Routine

*"It's dynamite. The recruitment process we developed with Objective Assessment has assisted us in attracting the right people; this has provided greater stability in our sales team."*  
- Dave Fletcher, General Manager Operations, TMHA.



**Dave Fletcher**  
General Manager

*"Objective Assessment exceeded my expectations and it is without question the best development package I have been involved with."*  
- Dave Fletcher, General Manager Operations, TMHA.