



PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT.

Verizon has more than a million reasons to believe that learning is good, but learning with practice is better.

BY PAUL LEONE & RHONDA PINKSTON

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INTRODUCTION

As a global telecommunications company that prides itself on innovation, Verizon is constantly creating new products and services to deliver on its promise of the digital world to its

customers; however, new products and services

require new training content and delivery. With

more than 1600+ retail outlets in the U.S., Verizon

needed to find a scalable model to deliver new

product information, train its employees, and

ensure that each and every employee

understood how to explain new product

information to its customers. As part of this

training initiative, Verizon implemented Rehearsal's

Practice Platform with a subset of its retail store

representatives. In these select locations, employees

would practice and record mock responses to customer-centric virtual

role-play scenarios, upload their videos, and then ask managers for

feedback. The Rehearsal Practice Platform was a fairly quick and

inexpensive "add-on" to the traditional training program.

*After performing a comprehensive analysis, Verizon concluded that introduction of a practice-based training model using the Rehearsal Practice Platform resulted in a return on investment of **749%**.*

A TIME TO PRACTICE

Verizon was determined to help its salespeople understand new products and new product features in a way that was simple and effective and at an accelerated pace. With more than 1600 retail outlets in the U.S., Verizon faced the added challenge of ensuring that product information was properly delivered to a diverse and multiple language speaking customer base with varying credit levels.

The Learning and Development Team sought out a solution to meet the following outcomes:

- a** provide a quick and accurate manner to get new information into the hands of its retail sales employees
- b** find ways to let employees practice how they communicate product information
- c** integrate some level of assessment to validate employee understanding of the information and the ability to use that information to sell to customers

The Verizon Learning and Development team turned to the Rehearsal Practice Platform.

Rehearsal's virtual, asynchronous, video-based and mobile-friendly platform allowed Verizon to reach employees in all locations and at the employee's convenience.

Each time an employee submitted a video response to a scenario, an assigned coach was alerted to the new response and provided the employee with tailored feedback. Rehearsal's alert system kept the learner, manager, and coach (if different than the manager) accountable to the training process.

COMMITTING TO CHANGE

Verizon's retail sales people receive online training and weekly team meeting communications.

Online training includes:

- key features and benefits of new products
- supporting tools
- system suggested follow-up practices

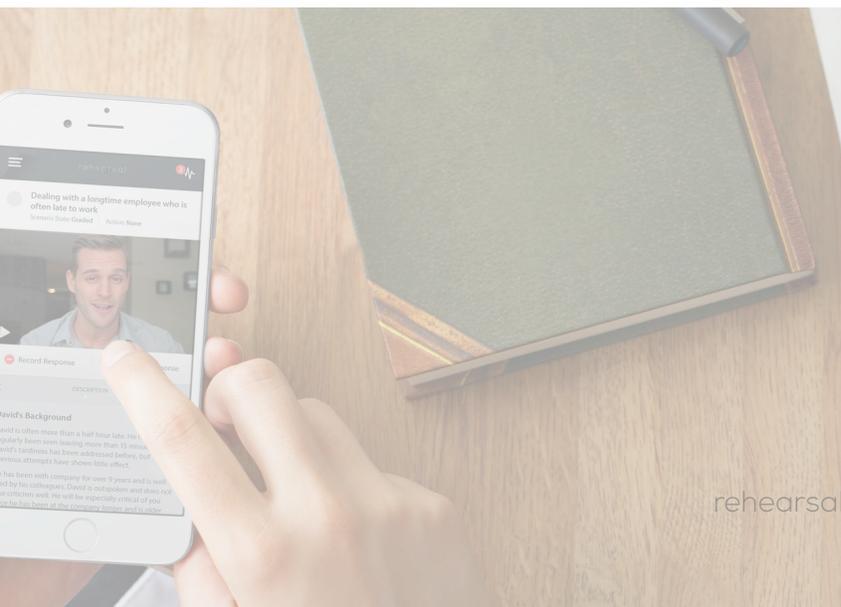
Weekly team communications include:

- highlight videos
- top weekly topics
- team skill practices

These training components are required for all Verizon team members.

Video-based practice was encouraged but optional. An employee who chose to "practice" was responsible for responding to customer-centric scenarios featuring common customer situations and questions. Employees recorded their responses with smartphones and webcams. There was no limit on the number of practice attempts. Once the employee was happy with his or her response, the final response was sent to a manager or coach for feedback. Coaches provided text and video based feedback to the employees with the option to record improved submissions until both the manager and employee were satisfied.

Since use of the Rehearsal Practice Platform was optional, Verizon had the unique opportunity to measure the performance of the Practice group against the control. Verizon's Learning Effectiveness team tracked and compared key performance indicators (KPIs) whereas Gross Adds ---a metric that tracks the acquisition of new customers --- served as the primary metric.



CLEARLY PROVING THAT PRACTICE MAKES A DIFFERENCE

The group of 515 employees who completed two or more video role plays with the Rehearsal Practice Platform showed a 71% increase in gross adds over groups that received training alone.



This increase added \$1.39M in revenue over a 3-month period.

Verizon continued the analysis of the Practice Platform by calculating the costs of the complete training effort, including development costs, attendance costs, participant

Overall, the training effort produced an ROI of 749%.

time to complete the training, materials, instructors, and coaches. Verizon found that when employees practice what they learn and share how they perform, the collective group benefits from constructive feedback and spurs a culture of collaboration which exponentially improves sales and business outcomes.

The company saw a drop in use of internal acronyms when working with customers. It also recognized improvements in tying new or recently enhanced products to customers' specific needs and lives.

Employees who completed the video role plays improved their ability to translate complex product details into accurate and more conversational explanations for customers.

Verizon also found that practice is quite addicting. Employees who engaged with the Rehearsal Practice Platform once tended to increase the number of times they actually practiced before submitting a final version. Recording and reviewing practice attempts prompted many employees to practice multiple times, and that repetition drives skill improvement beyond what can ever be gained in a classroom setting role play.

Verizon noticed that coaches and managers improved their abilities to identify and critique specific skills, and over time, were able to calibrate on what “good” looks like.

This unintended outcome helped to level-set the expectation of quality and offer employees a benchmark to hit and exceed.

When it comes to ROI, many feel a 100% return on investment is a success.

Verizon was looking for more.

With multiple objectives, an absolute need for scalability, and a promise to its customers to deliver a future to fit their innovative lifestyles, Verizon choose a platform that guaranteed reach, flexibility, ease of use, and results. Add to it a culture shift toward collaboration and feedback, and it’s hard not to say **“practice makes perfect.”**

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