

**CLIENT: IBM****PROJECT: CONSULTATIVE SELLING & SKILLS BUILDING****Background:**

NewLeaf was part of an alliance engaged by IBM to design and deliver a worldwide skills-building curriculum intended to facilitate salesforce transition to trusted advisor status with customers. In order to become a trusted advisor, the salesforce, now called Client Reps, needed to develop business, technical and professional skills that would help them to align information technology solutions with the customer's unique business needs.

**Challenge:**

The objectives included upgrading individual skills to encompass consultative processes, methodologies and tools and to change perspective from a limited, internal focus to an external, executive level world view. The curriculum needed to help participants understand how to interact with customer management, research key business priorities, re-engineer business processes and provide personal value.

**Solution:**

NewLeaf provided sales coaching over a three to five month period using a consultative relationship model to help Client Reps select a customer, an opportunity and the right sales tools to accelerate the sales cycle and strengthen the customer relationship. NewLeaf prepared a Client Rep development plan focused on professional development objectives, milestones, tools usage and consultative skills building. The plan was reviewed and updated monthly. NewLeaf consultants were also available via voice mail, E-mail, fax and video-conferencing to work through questions, problems and issues in real-time

**Results:**

The curriculum was part of an aggressive plan to help IBM professionals develop:

- In-depth knowledge of the customer's vision, objectives, strategies, organization plans and management systems
- Superior understanding of business, industry and economic trends and in-depth knowledge of the client's competition
- High-level leadership, communication and problem-solving skills
- Ability to align IBM products and services with customer requirements
- In-depth knowledge of planning methodologies, alliance practices and risk management techniques