



# Market Access Training

By Kathryn Rebilas

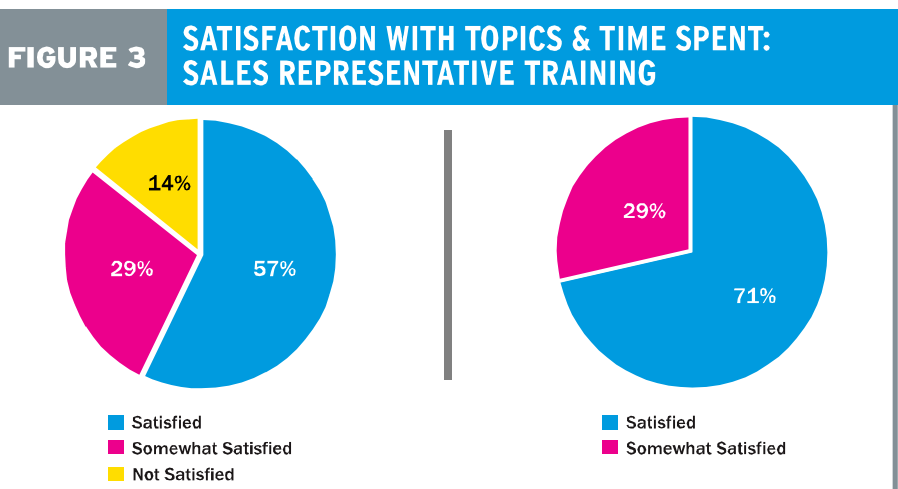
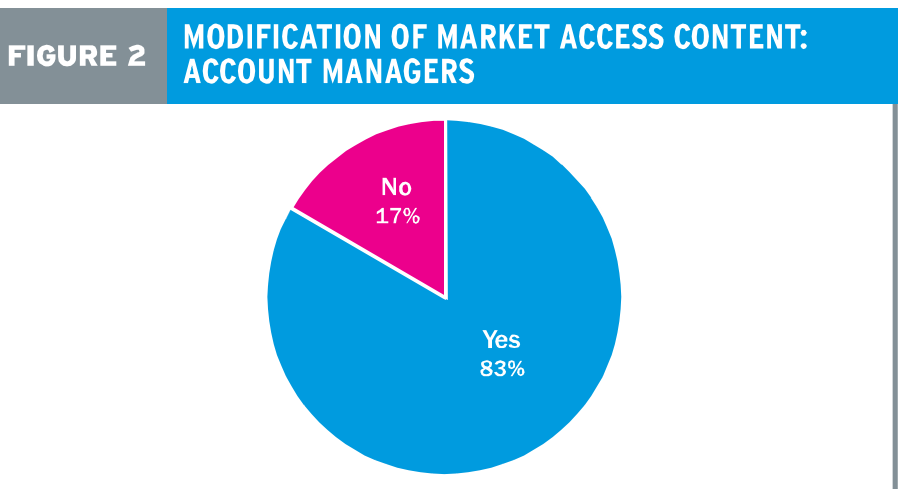
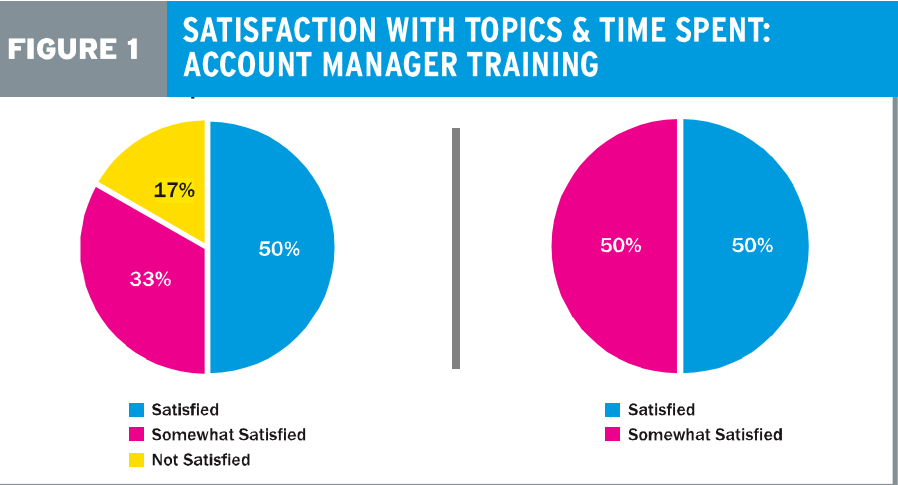
**M**arket access training is essential, and not just for those working directly with payers, institutions or government officials. While account managers remain on the front lines, all members of pharmaceutical sales organizations face payer-related questions and challenges in response to the increasingly complex healthcare landscape. As organizations work to address these challenges, executive leaders are looking to learning and development departments to equip the sales organization with the information and skills needed to navigate the landscape.

In order to better understand what market access training looks like now and learn what changes companies are making for the future, TGaS Advisors surveyed training and development leaders in March 2015. Eight pharmaceutical companies responded.

## Account Managers

The majority of responding companies have a dedicated account manager training program facilitated by internal account management leadership, dedicated market access trainers and outside vendors.

Account manager curriculum content focuses primarily on internal market access processes, while knowledge of the market access industry is a secondary focus. Internal topics such as account management, account analytics, contracting and marketing materials are also critical to the day-to-day functioning of an account manager and are often more important than industry knowledge, since many new hires have previous experience in the market access realm. Business skills, selling skills and



administrative topics are also commonly covered, although not as heavily emphasized as internal processes or industry knowledge.

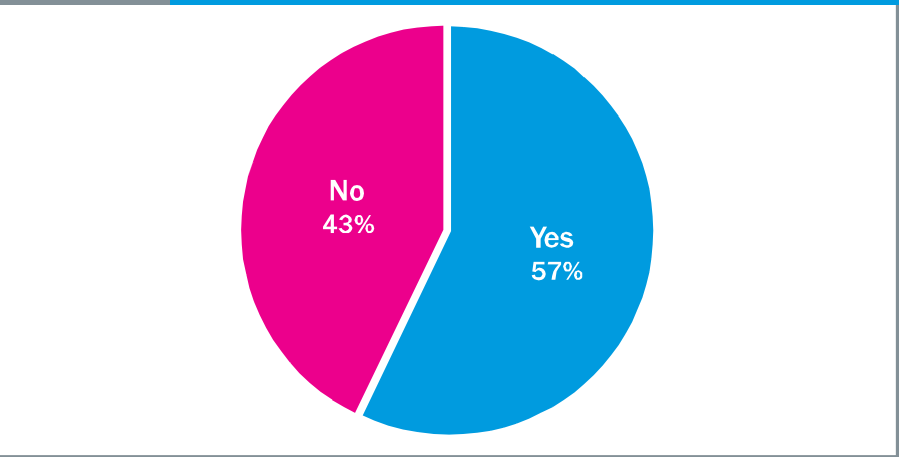
While most respondents state they are either satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the current state of their account manager training, most also have plans to modify the training in the near future (Figures 1 and 2). Those who state the need for improvement cite the following challenges: the need for more time to cover topics, the difficulty in finding qualified vendors and the constantly changing healthcare landscape, necessitating regular content updates. Plans to update the curriculum may include adding more advanced coursework and virtual training.

**Sales Representatives**

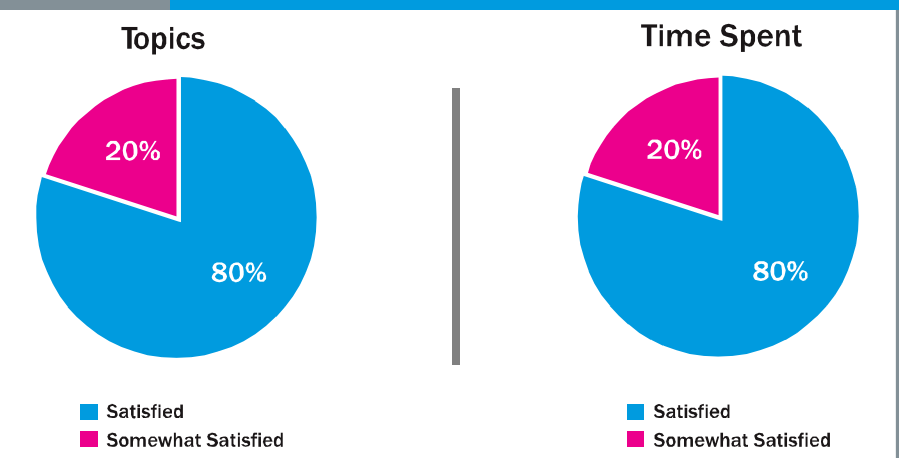
All but one responding company have incorporated content related to the current market access environment into training curriculums. Most respondents employ dedicated market access trainers and outside vendors to cover topics such as reimbursement, managed care messaging, formularies, pharmacy controls and co-pays, which align to the sales representative focus on product marketing. Most companies also offer new sales representatives selling practice for positive and negative formulary scenarios and handling managed care objections, equipping them for real-life scenarios they are likely to encounter as they build customer relationships.

Six of seven companies are either satisfied or somewhat satisfied with sales representative market access training; however most plan to update curriculums in the near future (Figures 3 and 4). Companies cite the need to update content regularly based on industry changes. Others plan to create e-learning, home study and virtual training modules to integrate into their curriculums.

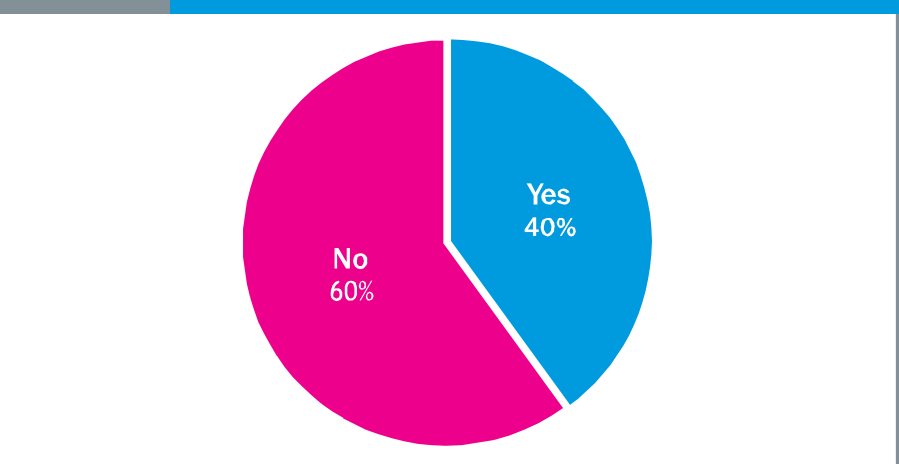
**FIGURE 4** MODIFICATION OF MARKET ACCESS CONTENT: SALES REPRESENTATIVE



**FIGURE 5** SATISFACTION WITH TOPICS & TIME SPENT: DISTRICT MANAGER TRAINING



**FIGURE 6** MODIFICATION OF MARKET ACCESS CONTENT: DISTRICT MANAGER



### District Managers

Five of the eight responding companies have market access topics as part of the district manager curriculum. While fewer companies provide formal market access training for district managers than for account managers or sales representatives, it should be noted that district managers are typically experienced in pharmaceutical sales, and it may be assumed they have baseline knowledge of the market access realm. Building on this base, the primary focus can be on updating knowledge of the current market.

The majority of responding companies use a combination of dedicated market access trainers and vendors to teach topics related to knowledge of the industry. Subjects such as pull-through process, ACOs and healthcare trends equip district managers to better focus on strategy and coaching.

All five respondents are either satisfied or somewhat satisfied with their district manager market access training. The majority of organizations do not have plans to update their current curriculum (Figures 5 and 6). Because district managers are assumed to have baseline knowledge of market access topics, updates to their curriculum may not be high priority for training teams.

### Where We Are and Where We Are Going

A landscape view of life sciences market access training shows that many companies have built comprehensive curriculums tailored specifically to address the needs of account managers, sales representatives and district managers. Most organizations plan to continually refine their curriculums, adding more advanced topics and building virtual programs for phased and continuous training.

As organizations refine their curriculums, they should note the importance of keeping them flexible in order to accommodate regular updates in response to the rapidly changing landscape. The case could also be made for market access training to be available for other commercial roles in the organization, such as marketing. In addition, the increased demand for market access training indicates an increased need for experienced vendors to partner in training and delivery of the required knowledge and skills. ■

**About this Study:** Working in partnership with LTEN, TGaS Advisors, a benchmarking and advisory services firm, conducts studies of training and development in life sciences companies. For more information on the 2015 Market Access Study, contact Kathryn Rebilas, [kathryn.rebilas@tgas.com](mailto:kathryn.rebilas@tgas.com).



LEADING EDGE  
TRAINING SOLUTIONS LLC

MEET, INNOVATE, TRAIN

Virtual Solutions for Training & Development needs

Contact us at  
[info@leadingedgetrng.com](mailto:info@leadingedgetrng.com)

[WWW.LEADINGEDGETRNG.COM](http://WWW.LEADINGEDGETRNG.COM)