

## How to Hire a Successful Salesperson?

It's a metrics-driven world. A company's success or failure lies on the shoulders of its salespeople and their ability to bring in, upsell, and retain customers. Does that mean a successful salesperson is measured by numbers alone? If so, a 'good' salespeople can only become 'great' salespeople if they exceed their quota, right?

Wrong. A successful salesperson is not built on numbers alone and it's time for Hiring Managers to recognize this. Research shows, 25-40% of Sales Professionals leave within the first 18 months. It's easy blame this on the new hires, claiming they're not good sales people or they don't truly understand their market. In truth, the fault lies on the shoulders of the organization for inaccurately defining success.

What does a successful Salesperson really look like?

### **A Need to Conquer**

According to a [study conducted by Harvard Business Review](#), a successful salesperson possesses a need to conquer. This is "a particular kind of ego drive that makes them want and need to make the sale in a personal or ego way, not merely for the money to be gained." For these salespeople, failure is not an option. In fact, it serves as a motivator when things get tough- a motivator to work harder, adapt, communicate with the prospect more, listen more effectively, etc.

### **People Skills & Empathy**

Just because someone is a 'born salesman' doesn't mean he or she is a good salesperson. Top-notch sales professionals relate to their prospects. *Empathy*, is a key component here. To be empathetic, a salesperson must be a better listener than talker. He or she senses the reactions of the customer and is able to adjust to these reactions.

Recognizing where the client is in the decision-making process and meeting them at that place is a prime example of showing empathy in sales. Overselling to a nervous or undecided prospect gets you nothing but a probable cancellation down the line. First and foremost, ask questions -- diving deeper into the company's structure, path, growth plans, sales team structure and how leads are generated. Their answers give a clear picture of where they are in the buying cycle and drive the direction of your pitch. Take detailed notes to insure you are hearing and what they are saying (or think they are saying) and are on the same page.

Watch what Sara Jensen, VP Business Development of Innovative Employee Solutions, has to say about what a successful salesperson looks like.

<https://youtu.be/SnxvoDvyOzU>

## **Hunter Mentality with Farmer Patience**

A successful salesperson doesn't wait for prospects to come to them. They are willing to do the work to source new customers and wade through leads identifying the "easy sell" vs a "tough sell". Relying on connections and referrals is not enough. These successful Sales professionals hunt for new clients and know how to foster long-term customer relationships with their customer.

## **Product & Service Knowledge**

It is a given that a successful salesperson must know their product/service inside and out. More than that, though, they must be able to provide tangible proof that they are worth the client's time and money. Showcasing your unique value proposition with customer feedback, analytics, and success stories goes a long way. Customers may say you are the most expensive choice. Demonstrate you have the best service and they will get the personal hands-on attention they want, they will tell you this while signing on the dotted line. Listen to their needs and present achievable solutions which prove they are getting what they pay for.

## **Measurable and Repeatable Sales Process**

Top sales professionals use a process that has been proven to successfully close the deal. They are acutely aware of each prospect's position in the buying cycle and have a plan to bring them to the next step, eventually guiding them to the "buy." Using metrics, they analyze their sales process to find weaknesses and quickly make the necessary changes to solve the problem.

## **Politely Persistent**

Strong sales professionals know how to stay on their prospects' radars. When clients go radio silent, it's best to approach them with a reminder of the timeline *they gave you* when you began working together. Show them you are conscious of their growth goals and timelines to gently bring the plan back to the top of their To Do list. Sales Super Stars know when to politely push-back. There is a difference between picky and unrealistic. Tell prospects you have 'feet on the ground' and the advice you give is based on real-time market intel. It should be trusted and followed.

## **Follow-Up Strategy**

No sale is complete until the follow up strategy is set in motion. Thanks to advancements in sales automation, developing the strategy is much simpler than it has been in the past. Long term nurture, up-selling, and referral campaigns are automatically built into your automated sales funnel. Hiring managers are looking for candidates with the *discipline* to follow the funnel to completion.

## **Grit**

Sales professionals are expected to have a strong work ethic and a go-getter attitude. A trait often overlooked but even more essential to getting the job you want is grit. Grit is “passion and perseverance for very long-term goals,” according to [Angela Lee Duckworth](#), and means the difference between success and failure for anyone from 5 to 55. W