



Coaching Library

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How to Hire Salespeople That Will be Great (Instead of Great Salespeople That Fail)

By Dave Kurlan

Wouldn't it be great if you could consistently hire salespeople that would be great? While most companies aren't able to do this, some learn to do it well. What's their secret?

There are many factors that contribute to consistent selection success and we'll get to those in a moment. But first, have you defined what great performance would look like? Do you really know what your new salesperson must possess with regard to experiences, expertise, competencies, and Sales DNA to succeed? Do you know where they should come from? Would you know it if you saw it? Can you find it from a resume or a phone call? Would you know it in an interview? Have you thought you recognized it before only to be wrong? Is sales selection a science or an art form – or both, or neither? Is it pure luck? How much does sales management impact the outcome? Is your business more difficult, the same or less difficult to succeed in than other businesses? Why is that? What makes it difficult? What makes it easy? Does success with one company, industry, vertical or product translate to success with you? Does big company experience help or hinder? Are there any secrets?

That's probably more questions than the average salesperson is asked during an interview as managers, more concerned with selling the candidate on joining their company and taking the job, fail to thoroughly interview. Then again, how many sales managers have been thoroughly trained to conduct a thorough interview of a sales candidate?

There are 10 primary components to nailing sales selection every time:

1. Sales Recruiting Process – if you don't already have a sales specific, all-inclusive, integrated recruiting process, your lack of consistency is completely understandable. A best practices process assures consistency, with every candidate and with every selection, and it becomes duplicable, transferrable and finally legacy.
2. The Role Configuration – this specification identifies exactly which variables make the position so challenging and assure that our best candidates from each round meet the requirements.
3. Sales Specific, accurate, predictive, customizable candidate assessment.
4. Applicant Tracking – where all of the candidates' applications, resumes and assessment results are stored.
5. Job Site – some sites work better than others and there are tricks to making them work well for you.

6. The Killer Ad – the entire sales recruiting process is only as good as the quantity and quality of your candidates. The Killer Ad, if not written perfectly, becomes the weak link.
7. Automation – nobody wants to spend all of their time managing all of this so some simple automation helps all of these steps happen automatically.
8. Phone Interview – 5 minutes, with only recommended candidates, to hear how they sound on the phone and more.
9. The Deconstructed Resume – rather than verification, the role of the resume during an interview is to provide a road map for you to determine whether or not the candidate owns the claims lives the substance.
10. Interviewing Skills – if you can't interview effectively, you can't be expected to select the right salespeople.

I'll talk more about each of these 10 steps and how to get them right when I speak at EcSell Institute's Fall Sales Coaching Summit in Dallas. See you there!