

Building a Steller Sales Force

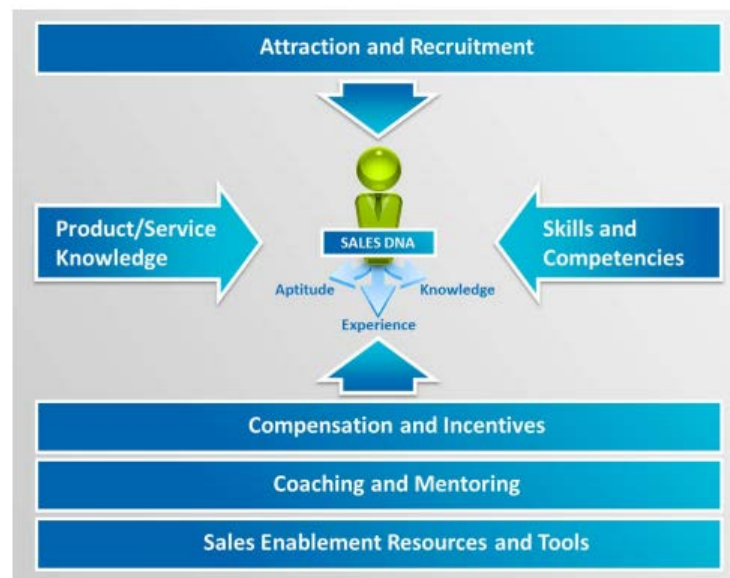
A Guide to Creating a Small Business Sales Team

In today's economy, we have increasingly turned towards technological automation. However, as stated by Silicon Valley entrepreneur Sunil Bagai, "our growing reliance on automation and the push to conquer digital frontiers has instilled in professionals of all roles an equally increasing desire for humanization — social interactions, personal engagement, cultural fit, the employee experience and, of course, meaningful relationships." This is especially true for hiring sales representatives.

No matter the size, an organization's success is dependent upon how effective its sales efforts are. The type of team you have in place selling your products or services play a large role in the growth or decline of your company.

According to CA Technologies, a "strong sales team can help articulate your organization's value proposition." Making a mistake in a "sales hire can lead to lost recruiting and training costs, severance costs, gaps in the sales funnel, lost opportunities and potentially time spent doing damage control in prospect accounts." CA Technologies advises using the follow sales recruitment and development model:

Sales Recruitment and Development Model



Data from Jobvite's annual survey indicates that when considering a new hire, 83% of recruiters consider communication style as most important. Other influencers include enthusiasm (78%), command of job requirements (76%) and conversation skills (73%), which are particularly important when hiring a salesperson.



Talent & Development offers the following recommendations for onboarding new sales hires to set them up for success:

- **Take a holistic view:** seek input from various roles spanning the company, such as HR, operations, and other stakeholders. Review and refine the training process, compensation, sales methodologies, and resources available to the sales team.
- **Define incremental goals:** set goals in the form of small, purposeful steps tied to a verifiable outcome that is easy to measure and track.
- **Cover what they need to know:** account for all of the required competencies and knowledge necessary for your sales team to adequately sell your product or service.
- **Optimize training and recruitment:** integrate classroom-style learning with self-paced learning. Ensure that employees are able to return to training materials when needed.
- **Make follow through easy:** every step should be embedded into the daily routine and aligned with sales methodologies.
- **Give coaches and managers a better view:** equip organizational leaders with the knowledge necessary to provide guidance that can help to accelerate and sustain learning.
- **Build internal support networks:** provide new hires with the collaboration tools and resources needed to receive assistance when they have questions.

As CA Technologies points out, the most successful sales representatives not only have a set of skills and competencies that will be a good fit for your company, but also possess the aptitude for sales. This inherent mindset and characteristics include:

- Persistence and drive
- Integrity and customer focus
- Consultative
- Self-awareness
- Accountability

Remember, to build a sales team with top talent requires a workplace with an attractive environment and culture. The behavior demonstrated by leaders shapes the culture of business. According to *Management Services*, the two most important behaviors effecting employee performance are when leaders invest time into their workforce and deliberately improve quality and responsiveness to the customer.

Need help identifying where industry specific, qualified sales representatives congregate? Contact us, we are experts in locating the information essential for success.

By Patty Wellinger & Jessica Flores
Research Specialists
Access/Information, Inc.