

Candidate Sales Presentation Guidelines (role play)

As a sales manager, you can conduct a role playing exercise with final candidates, whereby the candidate takes on the role of a company sales representative and you, the interviewer, take on the role of the prospective buyer. If your company sells intangibles, ask the “sales rep” to sell you an intangible item. If your company sells products, then ask them to sell you a tangible item. Give the candidate 5 – 10 minutes to prepare. The item to be sold is of minimal importance. You are looking for the process used by the candidate while on a sales call. Make notes throughout the “sales call” and grade them on the following criteria:

Communication Skills

- **Listening Skills.** Is the candidate a marginal, evaluative or active listener? Does candidate take point-form notes to demonstrate active listening?
- **Questioning Technique.** Does the candidate use a technique to determine needs and get the buyer’s participation in the decision-making process? Does the candidate ask open, clarifying, expanding and closed questions?
- **Feature/Benefits Feedback.** Does he/she constantly solicit feedback from the customer and relate it back to customer benefits?
- **Needs Determination.** How well has he/she discovered the customer’s need and has the candidate related the company’s competitive advantage to the customer?
- **Observation Skill.** Has he/she been able to observe and take advantages of any opportunities offered by the “buyer” to close the sale?

Presentation Skills

- **Structure.** Did the presentation follow a logical sequence? Were summaries used effectively? Did the presentation include an introduction, options, analysis, summary and conclusion?
- **Feature/Benefits.** Was a relationship established between features and customer needs to prove or underline the benefits of the company’s product or service?
- **Customer Involvement.** Did the candidate get the customer involved in the buying decision? In the presentation?

- **Creativity.** How much creativity did the candidate invest in his/her presentation? Did the candidate use props or the product as part of the presentation?

Confirmation and Commitment

- **Transition.** Has the “sales representative” moved steadily towards doing business and completing the sale?
- **Summary.** Have the needs, features and benefits been summarized by the candidate in a way that favours the seller’s competitive advantage?

