



HOW TO WIN THE PERFECT SALES JOB

If you are looking to win the perfect sales job, the first thing to remember is that not all sales jobs are created equal. To be successful in sales, you'll need to find both a company and role that's a good fit for YOU and for the company. That's why this paper will be set out into two sections. First determining and finding the perfect sales job for you. Then second, how to secure the job.



PART ONE: WHAT'S THE PERFECT SALES JOB FOR ME ANYWAY?

If you haven't yet asked yourself this question, then you've got some brainstorming to do. Sales is a competitive field and if you find yourself in the wrong role, team or company, then you'll find it nigh on impossible to hit your quotas and experience success for either yourself or your business.

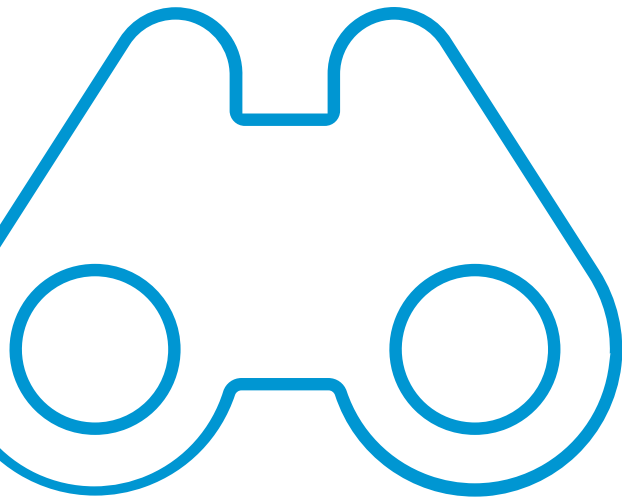
Take time to delve into what's truly important to you and your career - where do you want to be in five years time and what do you need from your next position to help you get there. If you're entirely new to the sales profession here are some variables to consider:

1. Type of **sales compensation** structure - what will suit you best? Do you want a compensation plan that's largely about commission - allowing you to make big bucks if you exceed targets? Or would you prefer a more balanced plan to give you security? How about plans that are linked to territory or team success or company profit? How much money you'll make is obviously an important factor and different plan structures appeal to different types of people. These are all things to consider when trying to ascertain whether the sales job will be perfect for you.
2. Opportunities for **career development** and training - what do you want and need? Career development is important at all levels of a sales career, but if you are new, you want to think carefully about the development opportunities on offer. Does the company offer internal/external training opportunities? What about access to mentorship? Do they believe in succession planning? Do you want to be able to grow in an organization or is this job just a stepping stone to something else?
3. Industry and product - what do I want to sell? If you don't believe in what you are selling, it will make your job that much harder and the opportunity to sell with integrity will be minimal. It's important to think carefully about the industry and product before you apply for a sales job.
4. Company culture - in what type of environment will you thrive? So many companies these days offer a wide range of benefits and employee incentives. Again, take time to consider what type of culture and benefits will encourage you to achieve your sales goals before you submit that resume.



PART TWO: HOW TO WIN THE PERFECT SALES JOB

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The number one piece of advice for how to win the perfect sales job is to think like a salesperson! Sell yourself! YOU are the product you're selling; as a sales professional (or soon-to-be one) it's up to you to prospect and find your target customers (employers), do your research, get the meeting (interview); make a perfect presentation and pitch and close the deal!

PROSPECTING

If you paid attention in part one, you should go into the prospecting phase with a clear and defined idea of what your target employer and role look like. Be proactive: don't just look at companies who are advertising positions, look for the companies who check all the boxes of your perfect sales job and get on their radar.

Make sure your **personal brand** is looking polished - update your social media profiles, especially LinkedIn. Many companies **actively recruit through LinkedIn**, so ensure your profile is optimized and filled with the keywords that sales managers are looking for (check out online sales job descriptions if you're not sure).

LinkedIn is also a great tool to research online and identify a company's sales managers so you can get in touch with them directly. Try to secure a phone or in person meeting: this is what you will be doing day in and day out as a salesperson, so you need to get comfortable reaching out to prospects and cold calling. Even if your dream company isn't hiring right now, if you succeed in making a lasting impression then you'll be on their list for when they are.

RESEARCH

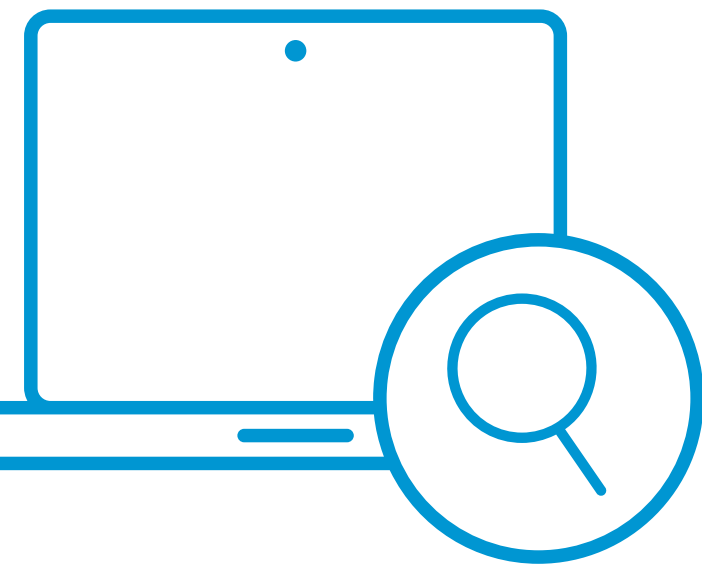
Research is a key part of the sales process and it's a key part of winning that perfect sales job too. Research the company online to identify what they specifically need in a sales rep. Knowing about the specific problems that the company is trying to solve by hiring you will help you stand out in both your resume/cover letter and the interview itself. Just as you would if you were trying to pitch a product to a prospect, consider how you can position yourself (rather than a product) as the perfect solution to the company's needs.

Research is integral to preparing for an interview but don't just stick to the company's website. Make use of **glassdoor** and other online reviews to see what others are saying about the company. Stay up-to-date about the company and sales manager by setting up **google alerts**, checking recent news articles and their social media communications. Don't be put off by a few bad reviews, but get an idea of the company's culture and put yourself in their shoes - what are they looking for in sales rep beyond the job description? If you can find something unique that you can bring to the company that it seems they'll love but haven't even thought of yet, then that's a winning strategy.

GETTING THE INTERVIEW

Your resume and cover letter are basically your pitch to get an interview. There are lots of online tips about how to **craft a killer cover letter and resume**, but essentially, it boils down to what you do as a sales rep: It's all about personalisation. You are positioning your product (you) as the perfect solution for their problem, so tailor your resume and cover letter to them and their needs. Keep it pithy and also try to match their communication style as far as you can tell from their website and social media. (e.g. if they are very traditional; keep your writing and format traditional and formal. If they are quirky and humorous; add a sprinkle of this to your letter.)

Importantly, be tenacious and persistent. Don't simply submit your resume to the HR department by email or complete the online application form. Follow up! Be proactive and make yourself stand out from the crowd. Contact the sales manager directly, by phone if possible. Do some research first to find out what will appeal to them and their personality style. Make your pitch for an interview and use your objection handling skills to get them to commit to an interview over the phone. It will impress your future boss even if HR are a little put out.

A blue line-art illustration of a laptop computer with a magnifying glass icon overlaid on the bottom right corner, symbolizing research.

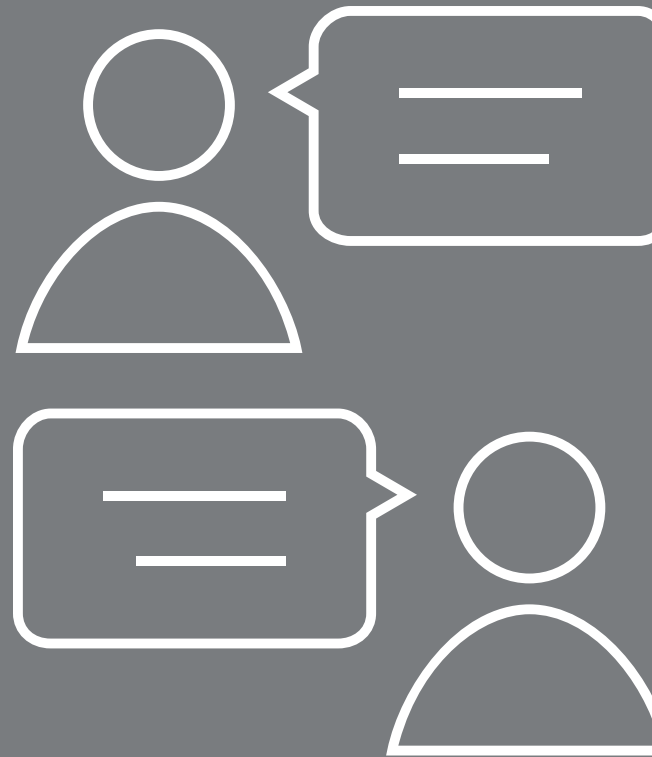
“Research is integral to preparing for an interview but don't just stick to the company's website.”

ACING THE INTERVIEW - MAKING THE PERFECT PITCH

Once you've secured the interview, then you need to treat this situation the same as if you were meeting a prospect for the first time. Now is the time to give them a live demonstration of your sales skills and potential. A good sales leader will not only be looking at your potential for the role at hand but also for your potential to develop and grow so make sure you demonstrate all the ways you can be an asset. Now is not the time to let your nerves get the better of you, you need to come across as confident and create an easy rapport.

If you've done your research properly, you should be prepared to answer all the **common interview questions**. You also need to be ready to think on your feet and answer the odd curve ball they throw in. Remember, each question is a chance to pitch yourself as the solution they need so always frame your response in this context. So if, for example, they ask you about your experience of using social media for sales, incorporate the answer you know they are looking for (yes you know lots about social selling!) in your response and have examples to back up what you are saying.

The most important part of the interview by far will be at the end when they ask if you have any questions. Now you have the floor and you need to make an impact. Show you've done your homework by making reference to a recent company initiative or new product in your questions. Ask them discovery questions which you can use later in your pitch (which will follow shortly) such as: "What are you looking for in an ideal sales rep?" or "What strategies have your most successful sales reps employed?" Avoid asking obvious questions where the answers can be easily found online.



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CLOSING THE DEAL

As a sales rep, you are going to have to be bold and go for the close, so show your interviewer that this comes naturally to you. Don't let the interview end without having made your case for why they should hire you. Use their responses to your questions and your prior research to make a succinct case for why you would be perfect for the position. E.g. Explain why you are a great fit for the company, how you meet all their criteria, how you can help them solve the problems they are experiencing etc. Ask them what they think about you as a candidate so you can address any objections. Use your empathy skills to decide the best course of action to take but if it seems appropriate, you can even end by asking whether they see any reasons why they shouldn't move forward with you immediately.

Just as not every lead turns into a sale, you may not get every sales job for which you apply. But be resilient and determined and employ the sales skills you inherently possess. If you follow these steps, then you'll be on the right track to winning the perfect sales job of your dreams.

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