

Next Sales Hire?

Consider key factors before adding to the sales team and know your core competencies as a sales manager.



STORY BY DAN STALP | PHOTO BY KENNY JOHNSON

Q: *I recently launched my new company and have added 39 clients in three months! Who should my next hire be: Another sale professional or support staff?* Alicia Herald, Co-Founder, myEDmatch

A: What a great “dilemma” to have so soon. Readers may assume they know my answer to this question since this is a “Sales Coach” advice column. That’s not the answer I will offer, based on your history with your new company.

While your success in three months is fantastic, it’s not necessarily “credible” nor can we necessarily leverage and transfer what you have done so far. First, consider the Sandler Rule: “Inspect what you expect.” Before your data can be transferrable, you’ll need to know the following:

- ▶ New attempts to reach a prospect
- ▶ Conversations with a prospect
- ▶ 1st appointments held
- ▶ 2nd appointments held
- ▶ Referrals asked for
- ▶ Referrals received
- ▶ Sales made
- ▶ Average sale amount

Supported by statistics on your activity, along with your conversion ratios from behavior to behavior, you are ready to leverage and transfer what you have learned to another sales person.

Let’s pretend you need to make four new attempts per business day to reach your sales

number. While that may be the right number for you as the owner, I suggest you triple the number of attempts for your new sales person.

Typically, people lower that number for the new sales person because they are a “professional sales person,” where the owner doesn’t view his or her role that way. Big mistake! It’s three times your behavior until their numbers indicate otherwise.

Unless you are willing and able to give up 30% of your current revenues to hire a sales person, you are not ready to hire one. Time spent training and managing this sales person often comes from your personal production.

I would add a support staff person. They are easier to find and less costly to the organization if they don’t work out. Then, add that next sales person.

Q: *I have been a sales producer for the past year and anticipate gaining additional sales management responsibilities in the next few months. What competencies will I need for that new role?* Eli Rami, The Roasterie

A: Eli, it’s unusual to find someone that is an excellent sales producer and equally good as a sales manager. Typically, they excel at one and “can” do the other one. The following competencies are needed as a sales manager, but not measured as a sales producer. (Source: The Devine Inventory Report.)

Accountability: Holds employees accountable for completion of assigned work.

Coaching effectiveness: Instructs others

Have a question for Dan?

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so they learn and develop skills needed to achieve objectives.

Delegating: Thinks and plans to assign work to subordinates proactively rather than reactively.

Hiring: Follows standardized process to search for talent that aligns with company’s needs.

Interviewing: Organizes structured interview process to qualify candidates’ fit with the role.

Recruiting: Continuously seeks top talent to add to their sales team.

Strategic Thinking: Develops long-range and broad objectives and plans that meet contingencies.

Stress Tolerance: Reacts to duress in a balanced manner needed to sustain performance levels.

Supervising: Consistently monitors and also ensures employees deliver on obligations.

Which of your competencies are strengths, satisfactory or need development? Some folks can be objective. Others have “blind spots.” Blind spots can be good things, but they can make it hard to leverage or transfer those skills.

Lastly, when you are in a role that leverages your strengths, you will “get energy” from your work. In fact, it won’t seem like work. A role that leverages your weaknesses will “drain you of energy” and it feels like misery. **KCB**