



SALES EXECUTION

10 TIPS FOR RAPID ROI ON NEWLY HIRED SALES PROFESSIONALS



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As a small business owner or CEO, you have the challenge of trying to hire great salespeople. You want a team that can provide the best ROI for your small business as quickly as possible. This is not an easy task. In fact, this is a task that many business owners struggle with, which reflects in their ROI. However, by learning about and thus avoiding the hiring mistakes often made during this process, you will be able to hire good sales people that provide an ROI.

#1 Develop and Stick to an Objective Hiring Process

Most small business owners do not have a hiring process, thus they make critical mis-steps during the hiring process they pay for down the road. The effectiveness of a company's recruiting process determines the effectiveness and consistency of the sales organization.

Sales processes must include (but not limited to):

- A Formal Recruiting Process
- Candidate Pipeline (Bench Strength)
- Sales Specific Pre-Employment Assessment
- Use of Automation in the Sales Recruitment Process
- Time Specific Start Up Plan (30,60 days, 90 days, etc)



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#2 Define the Role of the Salesperson

Most small business owners do not understand the role of the salesperson (who they should call on, the length of the sales cycle, etc). They have not clearly defined the role of the salesperson in terms of daily, weekly and monthly expectations, and most do not have good systems for accountability, coaching, and motivation in place.

Rather than just holding salespeople accountable for their revenue targets, it is also the business owner's responsibility to make sure they are doing what is necessary on a daily basis to achieve their business objectives. If they cannot measure the activity, it does not exist.



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#3 Define What/Who You Are Looking For

Most small business owners have not defined what they are looking for in a salesperson, mainly because they have not defined the role of the salesperson in the first place (as mentioned in #2).

Instead of advertising the responsibilities of the sales position in which you are hiring, you should describe the traits of the person you are looking to fill this coveted position. These are traits that the right candidate will recognize they have, and therefore will hopefully apply for the job.

For example, ask questions in your job posting such as:

- Are you consistently above your sales objectives month after month?
- Has it become the norm that your family knows you take off for a few days a year to attend this thing called 'The Chairman's Club'?



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#4 Interview the Right People

Not knowing what you are looking for in a salesperson leads to poorly written job descriptions, and poor job descriptions lead to the wrong people knocking at your door...it's as simple as that. Steps 1-3 will help you find the right people to interview.

#5 If Assessing, Assess All

All too often, small business owners only give assessments to their favorite candidates during the hiring process. They might interview and narrow their search down to their top 3, and it's not until this point that they decide to assess. However, when you only assess some people you expose yourself to risk because there is a bias. If you are going to assess you should assess everyone. (we highly recommend the Dave Kurlan Sales Force Profile Assessment from the Objective Management Group)



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#6 Prepare Adequately For the Interview

Often times small business owners don't properly dissect or review resumes, or they don't know how to interpret the resumes they receive. A business's ROI is reflected in the salespeople they hire. Therefore, it's worth taking the extra time before an interview to learn a bit about the candidate and what they could bring to the table. This way, if you don't understand something or something doesn't make sense, you are aware ahead of time and can ask for clarification during the interview. Taking time to structure the right questions before an interview is a big step toward finding the candidate best fit for the job.



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#7 Improve Sales Training

Post-hiring, most small business owners do not provide the proper training to help their salespeople perform to the best of their ability. They don't provide appropriate tools for the job, or they don't provide tools at all.

To maximize results, it's important to provide at least the following:

- A Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system
- Professionally designed marketing materials



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#8 Have a Plan for Managing the Salesperson

Most small business owners have little to no training in sales management. Entrepreneurs are experts at creating and seizing opportunities that lie before them. However, successful ongoing sales management requires a special skill set that likely needs to be acquired through proper training from a sales force development professional. To get consistent results from your sales team it's important to have appropriate managing tools in place.

This includes (not limited to):

- Accountability
- Coaching
- Motivation



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#9 Don't Confuse Sales with Marketing

Small business owners often muddle the line between sales and marketing. It's a marketer's job to generate leads and nurture them over time. Whereas, the role of the salesperson is to then look at this list and close the leads that are sales-worthy.

If a sales person is using their time to do what the marketing person should have done for them, they have that much less time to do their job...SELL!



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#10 Set Realistic Sales Goals

If a small business owner sets their sales goals beyond what is feasibly possible, it is clear that their sales team will never reach these goals. Set goals based on fact, not hopes and wishes. Challenge your sales team and set your goals high, but not so high that they are out of reach.

It has been said you can't teach an old dog new tricks. But it's also true you can't teach someone to love the process of selling. It's either in their blood, or it's not. You are the one that needs to make this determination, and if you miss the mark too often, your ROI could suffer greatly.

If you are not managing your sales team, you are sabotaging the rate at which you can see a return on your investment. Individual talent is not enough for your sales people to be effective.

Focus To Grow is a sales acceleration consulting firm dedicated to helping small businesses that sell B2B exceed their sales goals through the alignment of sales and marketing.

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WE'VE LED **MORE THAN 90%** OF OUR CLIENTS TO
RECORD SALES GROWTH BY IMPROVING THE
EFFECTIVENESS OF THEIR SALES APPROACH.



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