



Job Matching to Improve

Hiring Accuracy

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When sales and marketing executives get together, high turnover and poor productivity of salespeople are likely the two most widely discussed topics. Unfortunately, they rarely discuss challenges and poor hiring accuracy as a source of their performance troubles. The number of healthcare companies seeking ways to improve their hiring accuracy is rapidly growing.

In an article published by *Harvard Business Review*, Herbert and Jeanne Greenberg report on the myths associated with hiring. They studied more than 360,000 individuals from a variety (14) of industries in the US, Canada and Western Europe. Their results suggest selecting successful salespeople and

sales managers can be accomplished by matching talent to job requirements.

The basis on which hiring judgments are made explains why high turnover of sales personnel in most industries including healthcare persists. Even where turnover is relatively low, approximately 20% of the salespeople account for 80% of the sales. Basing hiring decisions on myths rather than reality is, according to Greenberg's research, the reason that 55% of the people holding sales positions have little or no ability to sell, while another 25% have sales ability but are attempting to sell the 'wrong' product or service. The remaining 20% of salespeople are doing precisely the job that is appropriate for them and for their companies. It turns out, these reps were the same 20% producing 80% of the sales!

The study looked at a variety of myths and popular assumptions that influence hiring decisions. The following factors were evaluated and include these study results:

- **Age** (over 40 and under 40)
‘When comparing the on-the-job performance of people over 40 with that of their under-40 counterparts, the study found no statistically significant difference.’
- **Sex** (men vs. women)
The results show, *‘beyond statistical question, no performance difference between men and women.’*
- **Race** (blacks vs. whites)
The study concluded that *‘blacks will perform on the job as well as their white associates.’*
- **Experience** (experienced vs. inexperienced)
The results of the study found that *‘there was little difference in the performance between experienced individuals and those with no experience.’*
- **Education** (college vs. high School)
Unlike the four other criteria presented, *‘the study showed there was some variation in the industry-to-industry variations according to levels of education. The college graduate and the multi-degree recipients slightly outperformed the less educated individuals in industries characterized by big-ticket, highly technical sales and by sales requiring lengthy follow up. The differences, seldom reached 5%.’*

Researchers found a better approach to predicting job performance can be accomplished through job matching. That is, to pursue a good match between the employee and the job.

For years, medical and dental employers have used a variety of tools to improve their hiring accuracy for years. These instruments provide insights about candidates difficult or unavailable from traditional

interview and selection methods. Until recently, resources were limited to evaluating the talents of people—not jobs. Today, through advancements in benchmarking combined with the power of technology, matching job requirements with people talent has never been easier or more affordable.

Critical requirements of the job are best defined through a defined benchmarking process. This involves top performers in the job or those with a clear understanding of the role. Each company has a unique combination of skills and talents required for success. Our experience benchmarking sales jobs for medical distributors and manufacturers exposed several common attributes of top performers:

Self Management	Detail Orientation
Teamwork	Conceptual Ability
Initiative and Drive	Empathy
Decision Making Ability	Self Starter

Employees and job candidates complete an on-line questionnaire to compare their talents to the company benchmark. The results can be used to make better hiring decisions, identify gaps in talent and job requirements (job matching) and expose training needs.

Through, years of research, experience and technological advancements, we’ve learned a lot about how to spot top sales talent, the value of which will prevent costly hiring mistakes, reduce turnover and yield improved productivity. In the end, success requires a combination of both science and gut to make the best hiring decisions.

About the Author

Anita Sirianni, *The Professional Sales Coach*, has over 20 years of sales success in healthcare. Today she is one of the industry’s most popular consultants and sales trainers, providing customized programs for leading corporations throughout the United States. For more FREE sales tools and information visit our web site at www.AnitaSirianni.com or contact Anita at Coach@AnitaSirianni.com or 800-471-2619.