

HIRE YOUR WAY TO SUCCESS

TAKING TIME AND CARE WHEN RECRUITING SALES PEOPLE IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS YOU CAN DO FOR GROWTH. HIRING THE WRONG PEOPLE NEGATIVELY IMPACTS YOUR ORGANISATION IN MANY WAYS — LOST OPPORTUNITIES, LOST CUSTOMERS AND WASTED MANAGEMENT TIME.

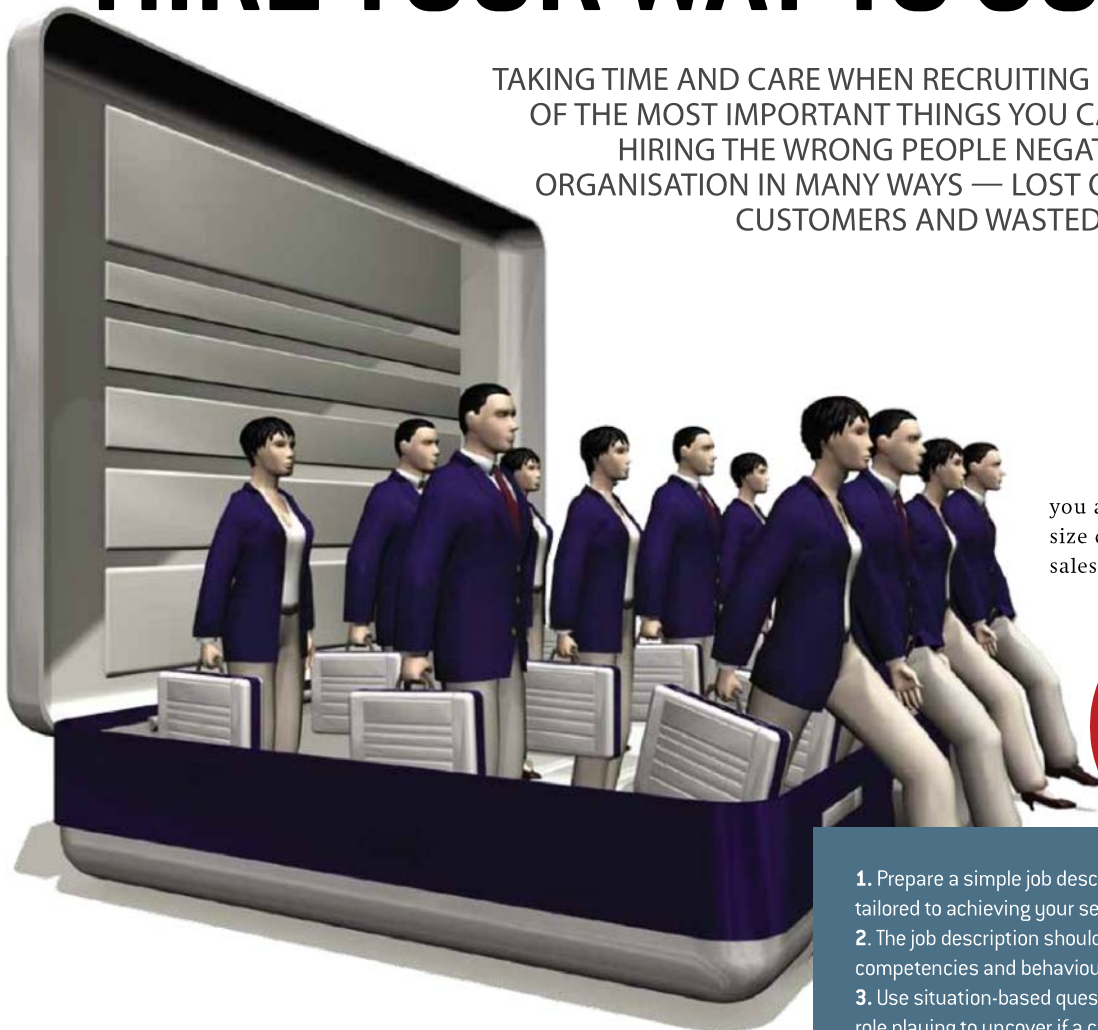
you are looking for is huge. One size doesn't fit all when selecting sales people.

AN EFFECTIVE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

1. Prepare a simple job description for the position that is tailored to achieving your selling goals.
2. The job description should include the most important competencies and behaviours for the job.
3. Use situation-based questions, scenario setting and role playing to uncover if a candidate really has what is required for the role.
4. Always check references and ask referees to comment specifically about a candidate's fit against key behaviours and competencies.

Nothing is ever foolproof, but following this process definitely increases your chances of making the right decision.

Here are some situation-based interview questions that will uncover more about your job applicant:



I'm sure there is no need to tell you that recruitment for any role is important.

However, in hiring sales staff it is especially important as they are the face of the company. The old clichés don't help – having the gift of the gab or the ability to sell ice to an Eskimo is no indication of a successful sales person. There is so much more to sales and you cannot simply

categorise every sales position with similar behaviors and competencies. It all starts from establishing what you need from an individual to help achieve your company goals.

If you are on an aggressive market share push then you need a resilient new business door knocker as opposed to a strong consultative selling approach for developing existing clients. The variance of the type of person

QUESTION: Please describe the last time you had difficulty understanding what a customer was explaining to you on a sales visit and how this impacted your progress. Why was this? How did you overcome the situation? Did you change anything in your approach to ensure that these situations are limited in the future?

OBJECTIVE: You are looking for a real life example that may demonstrate listening difficulties and if the issue has been addressed. The perfect answer really is that they have had problems but they have found ways to improve them since. If they highlight any communication issues, it is important that you ask how they overcame them or request another example. Just ask the questions as it is, and then sit back and let them think, don't help them. If they don't answer the second part of the question that really means they switched off as soon as they heard the first request, which is negative and demonstrates weakness in their ability to listen effectively.

QUESTION: Please think of the last occasion when you were extremely happy with the way you uncovered information from a potential customer. Can you provide me with the questions you asked during this sales call to understand more about the customers business? After you were clear on this information, what line of questioning did you follow next? Please provide examples.

OBJECTIVE: This will tell you the quality of questioning this candidate follows. The first part should be related to understanding the customers business, and the second part should be looking for opportunities to identify their

Hiring decisions made using behaviour based interviewing are 2-5 times more accurate than those based on traditional interviews

needs and requirements, even if they are not known before the questions begin. Ask a double barreled question if you would like to check their listening skills again.

QUESTION: Please tell me about the last time you successfully gained the customer's business when presenting a proposal. What did you do well? How did you convince them to buy?

OBJECTIVE: I would explain this situation and ask the questions all in one go.



Peter Heredia, Managing Director of Max Sales Solutions

Then sit back and only respond if they ask you to repeat the question. There is enough information here for the candidate to give you a great live example. Also, at the end of the interview leave it very open and don't communicate what the next steps are. See if they probe and try and get a commitment from you. Also gauge again the listening skills as in this case you will be asking for three pieces of information in one go.

QUESTION: Please tell me about a customer that you once

SOME KEY SALES BEHAVIOURS

1. Accepts responsibility
2. Recovers from rejection
3. Persistent
4. Competitive
5. Energetic
6. Assertive
7. Driven to succeed
8. Creative
9. Reliable
10. Confident

QUESTION: didn't get on with too well, but that you now have a good working relationship with. How did you manage to turn this around? What areas do you realise now were key to building this relationship?

OBJECTIVE: Get them to think about the relationship first and describe the situation, then ask the questions. You are looking for key areas of reliability, fixing issues, and so on to gain a positive response to this question. ■

ABOUT:

Peter Heredia is the Managing Director of Max Sales Solutions. He has worked with sales teams around the globe for more than two decades and has worked in the Middle East for the last ten years. His passion is helping smaller businesses to significantly improve revenue performance by focussing on the productivity and efficiency of their sales teams.

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