



EBOOK

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO HIRING ***SALES SUPERSTARS***

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Introduction

If you're responsible for bringing new hires onto your sales team, you won't be surprised to learn that recruiting and hiring strong sales talent is the [#1 challenge identified by sales and enablement leaders today](#).

You already know it's exceedingly difficult to attract top sales talent, identify which candidates are the right fit, and then convince the best candidate to accept your offer.

You're also aware that a mistake made in this process is of high consequence. Bad hires. Underperformers. Poor fit. High turnover. All of these have a negative impact on the entire team, as well as sales results.

Getting it right, on the other hand—hiring and retaining the right candidates, combined with [effective onboarding](#) and training—can boost the lifetime value of sellers by 10% and create a team of sales superstars.¹

¹ McKinsey & Company, "Future of B2B Sales: The Big Reframe," November 14, 2022, <https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/growth-marketing-and-sales/our-insights/future-of-b2b-sales-the-big-reframe>.



Challenges Managers Face in Hiring the Best Sales Candidates

Several sales-specific factors make it difficult for organizations to hire the best candidates for their sales teams, including:

- **Finding the right fit:** It can be hard to find sellers who have the [necessary sales competencies](#)—skills, knowledge, behaviors, attributes, and experience—to excel in the role, along with the right mix of traits that align with the company's culture and values.
- **Competing for top talent:** Competition for top sales talent is fierce, which means companies may have difficulty attracting and retaining the best sellers. This is especially true for companies that are new to the market or aren't well known.
- **Losing talent:** Sellers often have high turnover rates, which can be costly for the organization. They require a significant investment in terms of time and resources for training and onboarding. When they leave, you may lose out on the investment already made in the seller, as well as any potential revenue they could have generated.
- **Adapting to new approaches and technologies:** [Sales is evolving](#), and sellers need to be able to adapt to new approaches, technologies, and tools to be successful. It's often a struggle to find sellers who can adapt and acquire the necessary technical skills to keep up with these changes.
- **Meeting quotas:** Sellers are typically held to strict quotas or sales targets, and sales managers need to ensure their sellers are meeting these goals to generate revenue. It's a challenge for sellers to achieve sales targets without the necessary skills or resources to sell effectively.

This isn't to say the situation is dire. There's plenty sales leaders can do that will allow organizations to overcome these challenges. By following a proven process, you can create hiring success stories as well as boost retention.

RAIN Group's Cost of New Seller Turnover Calculator is included in this toolkit. You may access it [here](#).

How to Set the Stage for Interviewing and Hiring Success

One of the most difficult things to do when hiring for any role is telling the difference between candidates who are the real deal—truly talented and skilled—and those who know the right things to say but don't necessarily have the skills or knowledge to back up their words.

It's especially difficult when hiring sellers because they're often polished and experienced at selling themselves.

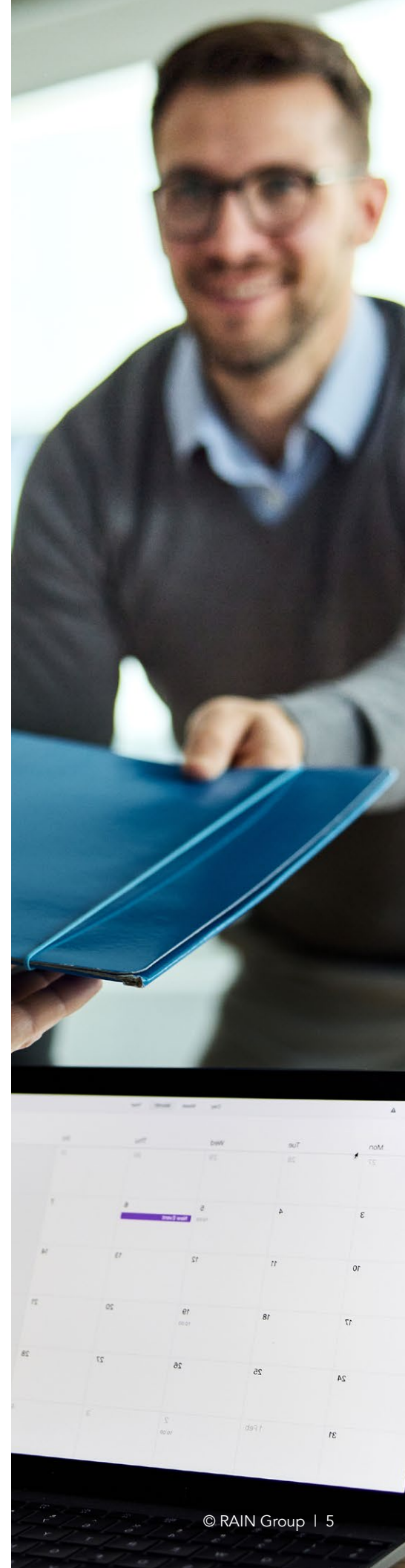
It turns out that being successful in hiring for sales roles isn't all that different from successful selling in that incremental improvements can have a big impact on results. For instance, a small increase in your win rate on proposed sales can result in substantial increases in annual revenue.

The same is true of sales hiring. Improving your success rate on new hires—even incrementally—translates into better results. The best sales managers know this and our research bears this out: Top-Performing Sales Managers are 42% more likely to excel at hiring sellers who become Top Performers compared to other sales managers.² It's why Talent Management is one of the [10 roles of Top-Performing Sales Managers](#).

Many sales managers have improved their hiring success rate by applying these five keys to interviewing and hiring success:

- 1. Strategy:** Know specifically what your ideal candidate looks like and how you're going to find, identify, and hire them.
- 2. Sourcing:** Find the right candidates and put them in your hiring pipeline.
- 3. Screening:** Quickly qualify candidates who might be a good match and quickly screen out candidates unlikely to succeed.
- 4. Scoring:** Figure out, as methodically as you can through the interviewing process, which candidates are likely to succeed.
- 5. Selling:** Inspire and excite potential new team members so they want to join your team. Make offers to sellers that get accepted.

² *The Top-Performing Sales Manager*, RAIN Group Center for Sales Research.



Strategy: Identifying the Ideal Candidate

The Impact of Your Hiring Strategy

To get a clear view of the impact of your hiring strategy, take a look at what happens without one:

Managers interview candidates. They ask questions about the candidate's selling approach, experience, and philosophy. If the answers are articulate and in line with what the manager wants to hear, the conversation continues. Then, if the manager likes the candidate personally, and the candidate's background is strong, the manager gives HR the green light to hire them.

Months later, managers may see:

- The seller gets overwhelmed in fast-moving customer conversations. They can't think on their feet and customers dismiss them.
- The seller's approach is too product-oriented and not value-oriented enough.
- Their buyer email correspondence is embarrassingly underwhelming.
- During opportunity reviews, the seller consistently doesn't do enough research or gather enough information to be able to help or impress the buyer.
- The seller can't build or deliver a sales presentation that makes sense, never mind being at all impressive.

The list goes on: the seller couldn't or wouldn't prospect, focuses on price and not value, doesn't listen, doesn't collaborate, can't tell a story, doesn't build relationships, etc.

Each one of these issues is something sales managers can deliberately work to figure out in the interview process.

Need to Know	How to Assess
Can the seller build and deliver a presentation?	Have them build and deliver a presentation on why you should hire them.
Is the seller's written correspondence articulate, thoughtful, and impressive?	Have them respond to screening questions in an email or write a proposal on why they should hire you.
Can the seller think fast on their feet?	Set up a scenario to test their clock speed.
Can the seller tell a good story?	Ask them in real-time to tell you one.

Define Your Strategy for the Interview Process

To determine what you want to find out in the interview process, ask yourself: what hiring challenges have we had with previous hires who didn't work out?

Strategy

Identify the hiring challenges you've had and what you will do differently moving forward.

Hiring Challenges I've Had	What I'll Do Differently to Solve
Hired candidates I/others liked didn't turn out to have the skills or perseverance needed to succeed	Develop list of questions that will result in more thorough answers and candidate insight (see last page)
Spending too much time with early candidates, falling behind schedule, not getting to enough good candidates	Much better screening: implement written screen, make screening interviews tightly organized and quick
Losing the best candidates in the middle of or later in the interview process to other opportunities they are pursuing	Implement the 'recruiting switch': be ready to fast-track process and paperwork for highest-quality candidates

The list could be short or long. The idea is to identify what went wrong in the past so you can solve for the issues in the future. Not all, but often many, of these issues are things you could have learned more about in the interview process.

Think about each member of your sales team. Ask yourself, "Would I enthusiastically rehire everyone on the team?"

If not, go person-by-person and ask yourself what gaps held them back from success and note them. Your answers will provide the foundation for what you should try to find out *during the interview process*, so you don't find yourself in the same situation with your next hire.

RAIN Group's Interviewing and Hiring Sales Superstars Plan is included in this toolkit. You may access it [here](#). Use [this example](#) to guide you as you complete it.

Identify Your Ideal Candidate

When do sales managers learn a new hire is not working out?

Usually, it becomes clear within a few months. At that point, it takes additional time to put underperforming sellers on a performance improvement plan, and, if that doesn't work (it often doesn't), exit them.

How long do you have with a sales candidate to figure out if you want to hire them or not? Usually no more than several hours.

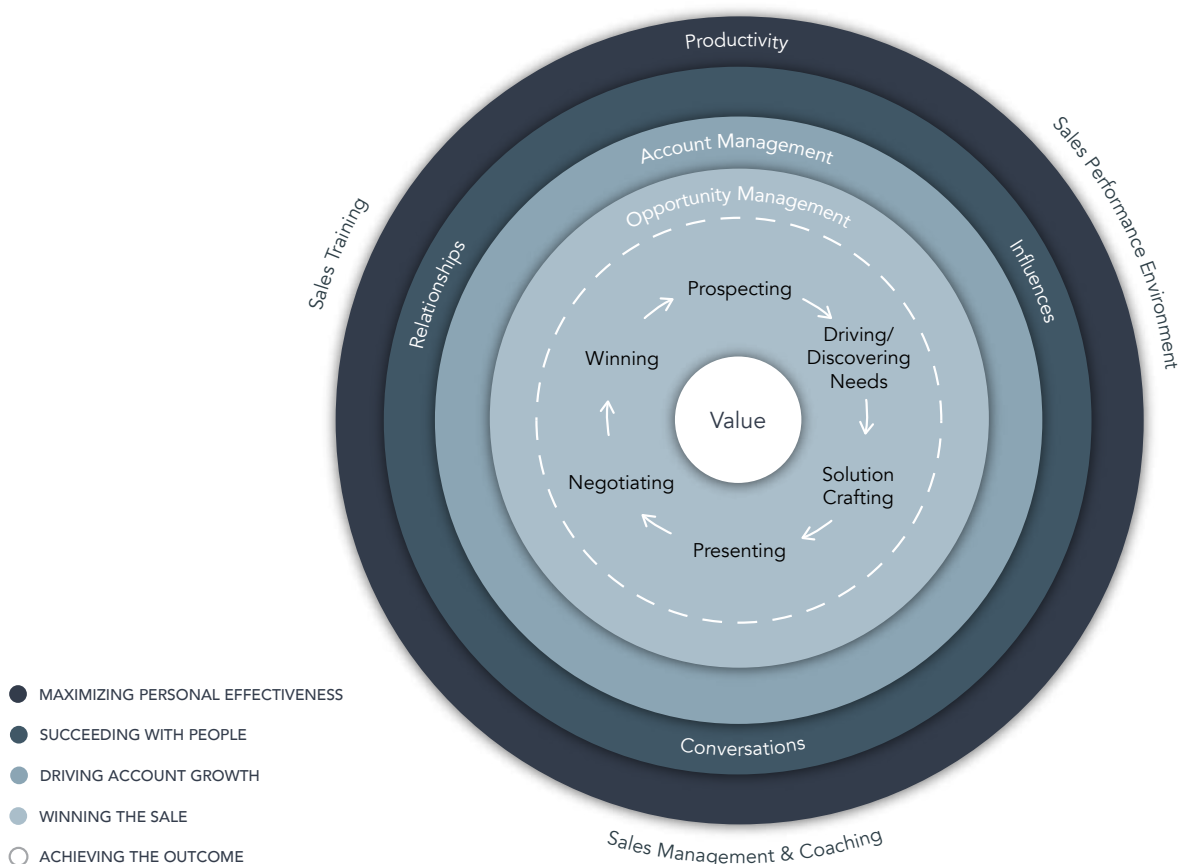
Given this, it's contingent upon the hiring manager to figure out sooner rather than later whether the new hire is going to be someone who, in several months and beyond, will succeed on your team.

In our work with sales managers, we often ask: "When you have candidates who ultimately don't work out, were the challenges holding them back areas you could have potentially discovered through the interview process?"

Frequently, the answer is "yes"—but either the sales manager didn't vet the candidate with enough rigor in that area, or, sometimes, they didn't do it at all.

Using a tool, planner, or checklist to capture these areas can help you ensure nothing falls through the cracks during the interview process. It's quite possible you already have a list of skills, attributes, behaviors, and knowledge sales candidates should possess, perhaps in the form of a [competency model](#).

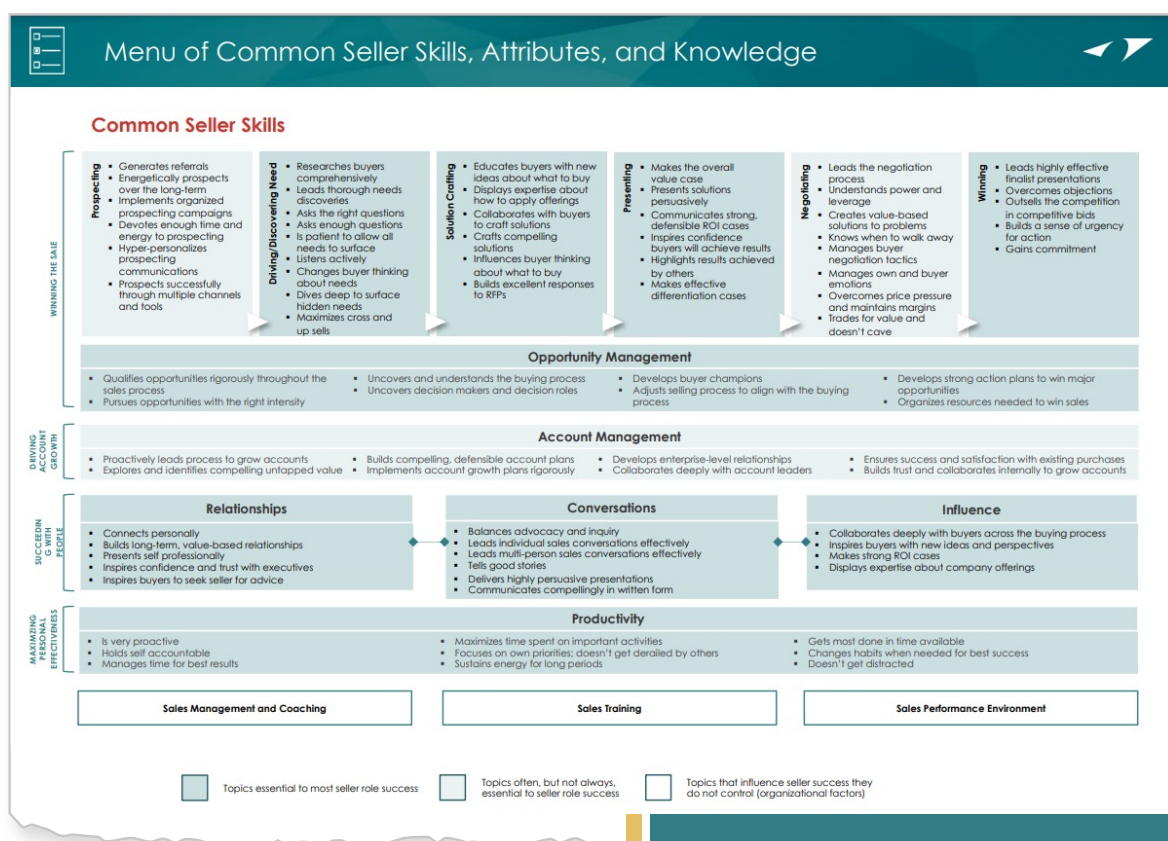
THE TOP-PERFORMING SELLER MODELSM



We use The Top-Performing Seller Model to identify seller competencies when working with our clients—you can use it, too, as a starting point to build your ideal candidate profile or use another competency model if your organization has one.

RAIN Group's Top-Performing Seller Model is included in this toolkit. You may access it [here](#).

You can dig deeper into The Top-Performing Seller Model using our Menu of Common Seller Skills, Attributes, and Knowledge. Using a tool like this as you complete a hiring profile for your sales candidates will ensure you don't inadvertently miss something important.



RAIN Group's Menu of Common Seller Skills, Attributes, and Knowledge is included in this toolkit. You may access it [here](#).

In any case, this is a critical part of the process: if you don't know what you're looking for, how will you know when you've found it?

Build an Ideal Candidate Profile

The first step in figuring out what a candidate needs to succeed on your team is to build what we call an Ideal Candidate Profile.

An Ideal Candidate Profile is, just as it sounds, a summary of the skills, knowledge, attributes, and background that, taken together, lead to success. And, conversely, if a candidate doesn't have a key component in place, it predictably detracts from the likelihood of success.

Building such profiles is its own specialty field in management—the field of competency modeling. HR professionals focused on talent success often spend months, and use rigorous processes, to build a competency model for an important role.

Frequently, however, sales managers need to be able to rapidly build a profile specific to the role they're hiring for their sales team. If you already have a competency model for the role you're hiring, use it. If you don't, the process we suggest will enable you to rapidly prepare one.

Regardless, remember: the person you're hiring is for your team, working with your buyers, and part of your area of the organization. Even if your organization already has a competency model, you may decide that the tools we recommend can still help you tremendously as a supplement for any competency model your organization may already have.

Ideal Candidate Profile

Think about the sellers you want on your team. With that in mind, create a profile for your ideal candidate. Refer to the Ideal Candidate Profile Template tool and the Menu of Common Seller Skills, Attributes, and Knowledge for ideas. If this role has a competency model, use it as a base.

Outputs <i>What sellers will need to do or produce as part of the job</i>	Skills <i>The skills sellers should have</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fill the pipeline with 5 new opportunities per month• Lead opportunity from creation to commitment• Complete thorough needs discoveries• Drive demand for value-added offerings• Match buyer needs and our solutions• Craft compelling and persuasive custom proposals• Negotiate and maintain premium pricing• Win 50% of all qualified prospects• Achieve target of \$1,200,000 in business this year• Achieve 70% year-over-year repeat business	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lead generation and prospecting• Sales opportunity management• Consultative sales conversations• Selling new ideas; drives change• Persuasive presentations• Negotiation• Executive relationship development• Account management
Knowledge <i>Knowledge sellers need to succeed in this role</i>	Attributes <i>The qualities or characteristics sellers should have</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Client industries and trends• How client businesses work• How buyers buy our offerings• Buyer-specific solution crafting• About us and our industry• Value proposition/key messaging• Capabilities• Competition• Sales process and strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drive to succeed• Conceptual thinking• Curiosity• Assertiveness and sense of urgency• Money orientation• Business acumen• Performance orientation• Perseverance and integrity• Emotional intelligence• Focus and executive functioning
Background <i>What background or experience sellers should have</i>	Sourcing <i>Where you will have the best chance of finding your ideal candidate</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7+ years of experience in this or a related industry• Relevant connections across the western region• Relationships with leaders in the industry and region• Account development and growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create social content for my team to share with their networks. (Highlight bonus for hired-candidate referrals)• Work my own social network• ABC Masters job board and industry events• Discuss general postings and specialty job boards with company recruiting specialist

The Ideal Candidate Profile covers six areas and will differ based on the specific sales role you're hiring:

- **Outputs:** What successful sellers in the role need to do or produce, such as filling the pipeline, matching needs with solutions, or achieving specific sales targets.
- **Skills:** The skills sellers need to do the job, such as prospecting, conducting thorough needs discoveries, making persuasive presentations, or managing accounts.
- **Knowledge:** What sellers need to know, such as client industries and trends, how client businesses work, your industry, or how buyers buy your offerings.
- **Attributes:** The qualities or characteristics sellers should possess, such as curiosity, drive to succeed, or emotional intelligence.
- **Background:** The work-related experience sellers should have.
- **Sourcing:** Where you have the best chance of finding the ideal candidate. More on this later.

If, in fact, you're doing this from scratch because you don't have a competency model—which is common—you may want to get feedback from your manager or peers to make sure you don't miss anything, and then run it by your HR or recruiting team, as they may have helpful feedback. As an added benefit, this profile may help them source the type of candidates you're looking for in the future.

Don't make it complicated. This doesn't need to be anything except a list to make sure you know what you're looking for in candidates so you can figure out how to screen and score candidates against each area critical to success on your team.

RAIN Group's Ideal Candidate Profile is part of the Interviewing and Hiring Sales Superstars Plan included in this toolkit. You may access it [here](#) and use the [example](#) or [Ideal Candidate Profile Guide](#) to help you fill it out.

Sourcing: Finding Your Ideal Candidate

Where you'll have the best chance of finding your ideal candidate will depend on your company, industry, and sourcing protocols. However, candidates are often sourced through a variety of channels, including:

- **Job postings** on the company website, as well as job boards like LinkedIn and Indeed
- **Employee referrals**, which may offer incentives to current employees who refer candidates who are ultimately hired
- **Recruitment agencies** that typically can tap into a pool of experienced candidates and can help source candidates quickly
- **Social media platforms** like LinkedIn
- **Networking events**, such as industry events or conferences, to network with potential candidates

Find out your organization's protocols and work with the HR or recruitment team to maximize chances of sourcing the best candidates for the role.



Screening and Scoring: Qualifying Candidates in the Interview Process

Next, you need to know how you'll score or rate candidates against the Ideal Candidate Profile you've created. For example, you can rate a candidate on the skills, attributes, knowledge, and so on using a 5-point scale from poor to excellent. See an example on page 2 of the [Interviewing and Hiring Sales Superstars Plan Example](#) in this toolkit.

In your interviewing and hiring plan, you'll also specify the methods, questions, and approaches that will be used to assess the candidate, including hiring screens, interview questions, case studies, role plays, and activities. See an example on page 3 of the [Interviewing and Hiring Sales Superstars Plan Example](#) in this toolkit.

At this point, you should also determine who else will be involved in the process and interviewing candidates so you can organize what each person will try to assess. Otherwise, every interview is likely to cover the same ground, but not necessarily the variety of ground you need to assess your candidates.

Being organized and coordinating the interview process internally will improve your hiring success rate.

7 Keys to Sales Interviewing Success

Interviewing, in some ways, is like a sales conversation. When you have a plan, know where you're headed, know what you need to discover, make the right interpersonal connection, and keenly qualify opportunities, you can pour your energy into the people who will yield the best results.

Also, as with sales conversations, if you're not organized and don't have a plan—if you wing it—you won't be nearly as successful as you'll be if you do have a plan.

Following are seven ways to make your interviews successful.

1. Make Screening Interviews Fast and Challenging

Your time is valuable. Before you commit to longer interviews, set screening interviews. These should be short—15 to 20 minutes—where you qualify candidates for further inclusion in your hiring process. Managers who have a good plan for this can usually figure out if a candidate has hiring potential within a few minutes.

These interviews should be set up to check specific areas candidates need to succeed in—ones you can quickly identify. For example:

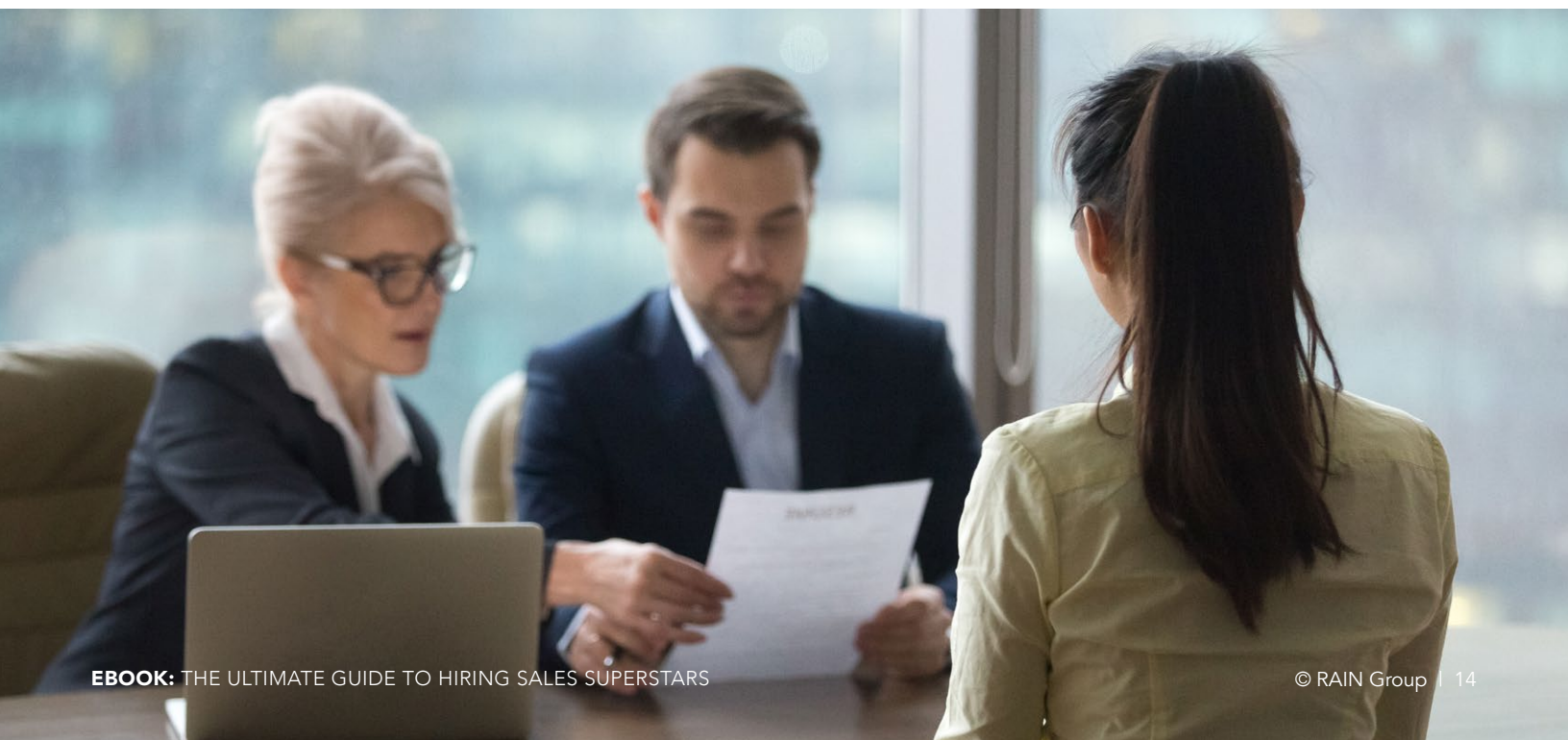
- Do they have presence?
- Do they build rapport with you?
- Are they articulate?
- Do they handle objections and pressure well?
- Do they have warmth or likability?
- Do they do appropriate research on you and your company?
- Do they think fast on their feet?

If you have someone else conduct screening interviews, such as a recruiter, be sure you're on the same page and they know what you're looking for so they'll only send the strong candidates your way.

Remember that screening interviews should be fast and challenging, which mimics what many sales meetings with buyers are like. Buyers can be quick to judge sellers as competent or not, but sales interviews are often too friendly and easy. The best practice is to match the screening interview to the feeling of a slightly more challenging-than-normal initial sales conversation so you can get a sense of how the candidate will interact in conditions that match the role.

Capture the candidate's scores on the areas you've identified in the Ideal Candidate Profile.

The beauty of a screening interview is saving you time. If a candidate doesn't do well, you can end the call quickly. If a candidate immediately passes your screen, you can ask them if they have time to continue with a more complete interview, or schedule one to happen soon.



2. Use a Written Screen

This little-used interview technique is frequently overlooked but is quite useful. Emails, presentations, and proposals are often critical to the sales role but *aren't vetted in the sales hiring process*.

The written screen solves that, and, at the same time, gives you insight into the candidate, how they think, and whether they're willing to spend the time and effort to impress you much as they would one of your buyers.

A template we've helped sales managers use that works well goes something like this:

"Please answer the question below. You can take as much time as you like and answer how you like. Our hope is that you will answer with enough depth to give us a sense of how you communicate in writing."

You might ask:

- Tell me about something you are very proud of. What is it? Why are you proud?
- What's the best advice you've ever received, sales related or not? Why?
- What do you do for fun and hobbies?
- What is your funniest or most interesting sales or business story?
- What do you think about the <insert trend here> trend in our industry?

Those who use a written screen before a live one often find that some candidates don't answer at all, and others don't answer well, and these people can be screened out quickly. If the written screen is impressive and engaging, you can move forward to schedule a core interview that speeds the process along.

3. Pick Fewer Areas and Dig Deep

Too many interviewers try to boil the ocean, with a dozen questions prepared for an hour-long interview. Odds are good that if your candidate is reasonably communicative—and they should be if they're interviewing for sales roles—you'll only have time for 5 or 6 questions.

It's important to dig deep. If someone tells you about a difficult sale and how they used their skills to get a big win, it's likely their first description of the situation will be polished. But what happens if you follow up on the details, asking, "What did the competitors do?" "How did the buyers react to that?" "What were the main ways you personalized the proposal for them?" and so on. Potentially, this is where their responses break down and they struggle to respond. However, if the responses are strong, you'll get a better sense of the candidate's depth, how well they know the subject, and how well they can communicate it.

As for the areas you choose to dig deep into, scan your Ideal Candidate Profile and pick areas that are critical for the role.

4. Orchestrate the Interview Strategy with Your Team

Frequently, a sales candidate will have multiple interviewers. Those interviewers either ask the same questions or they simply come up with their own questions that don't get the answers you need. If you pick several areas to dig deep into, ask other interviewers on your team to dig deep into the others. Share questions with the other interviewers if you want specific questions answered.

A best practice here is to keep a single candidate rating sheet as a shared document so the other interviewers can rate the candidates along with you.

5. Use Role Plays

If you only ask candidates standard questions, they'll talk about how they've performed or how they might perform. This is good to get a sense of their thinking, but by using role plays, you can see how candidates conduct themselves in actual situations similar to those they'll encounter on the job.

Here are three example interview role plays:

- Ask the candidate to run a needs discovery as if they already work at your company. Ask them to study relevant parts of your website and then lead a discovery call. You can think of a buyer you've sold to in the past and you play that role, then see if the candidate discovers your needs and interests you in moving forward.
- Play the role of a buyer and tell the candidate you're unhappy with something. Let them know what you're unhappy with and see how they lead a challenging conversation to successful resolution.
- Near the end of the interview process, ask the seller to build and deliver a presentation to you and your colleagues as to why you should hire them. Then score it against how you'd want a seller on your team to deliver. For example:
 - Do they send a clear calendar invite?
 - Do they confirm before the meeting?
 - Do they try to understand, and then share back, what your needs are for a successful candidate? Are they consultative?
 - Do they run the meeting well? Open with an agenda? Ask if there are any questions or comments before they get started? Tell good stories?
 - Do they check in and ask questions, or do they talk straight through?
 - If you throw an objection at them, how do they handle it? And if you add tension, do they handle it calmly and gracefully?
 - Do they check in to see where their candidacy stands? Ask what's needed to further the job offer?



6. Apply the Recruiting Switch

At some point in the interview process, you may begin to believe you want a candidate to join your team. They might not know it, but at this point you become the seller of working at your company and with you. The important thing to remember here is not to do it too quickly; make sure you don't fall in love with a candidate too early and stop vetting them. But do make the switch and start getting them excited about joining the team.

7. Lead a Relationship Interview

If the role is critical, you might want to spend time with the candidate over a meal or at a social event, or virtually, to see how they interact in a different setting than the interview process—and to give yourself one last chance to uncover any red flags that might give you pause about their candidacy. This also gives the candidate a chance to get to know you. Choosing one company or another often comes down to who the seller wants to work with, and spending time with the candidate will help your cause.



Selling: Making the Offer and Hiring

Finally, once you have a candidate you want to hire, you need to make what we call the “recruiting switch” ([see #6](#)). This is where you move from being a gatekeeper and screening people out to being a seller, where you’re trying to inspire a strong candidate to join your organization.

Too often, managers move to “selling” a candidate on the company and the job too quickly, skipping the screening and scoring phase—and they end up hiring people who don’t work out. Or, managers play the role of tough interviewer throughout the process, never shifting gears. Then, when they want to hire candidates, those candidates don’t accept because they didn’t feel a personal connection. You’re probably not going to hear this directly from a candidate, but it happens all the time.

Making an offer to a candidate is like winning a sale: you can do all the right things leading up to it, but your actions near the end can make or break the deal.

Before you reach the point of making an offer, be sure you’re aware of your company’s standard procedures so you don’t get tripped up at the last moment.

Following are our top 11 recommendations for the offer stage of the process.

1. Be sure. Don’t settle.

First, before you make an offer to a candidate, confirm you’re happy with your choice. If there’s anything at all causing you hesitation about the candidate, step back and continue vetting.

Most sales managers, especially when they’re new to hiring or under pressure to fill positions, have justified hiring a candidate they were less than enthusiastic about. Be forewarned that such candidates often end up as failed hires or underperformers. If you find yourself in this situation, pause. You may find after further vetting that your confidence in the candidate grows or it may become clear the candidate shouldn’t join the team. Another hour or two at this point in the process can save you months of headaches and costs.

2. Offer with a sense of urgency.

When you’re all set to make an offer, have the paperwork ready to go, and make the offer with a sense of urgency and excitement. Strong candidates may have multiple offers to choose from or be hours away from getting them. Line up the offering so that when you’re ready, you don’t have to wait for approvals, paperwork, or signatures. Even a few days of lag time can lose you a great candidate.

3. Walk the candidate through the offer personally.

Too many sales managers simply email an offer without having a discussion scheduled. You can email the offer, but it's best to do so with a live discussion set up within a day. Like a proposal for a sale, an email on its own might lead to miscommunication or misconceptions. On the other hand, walking the candidate through the offer allows you the opportunity to sell the offer, answer and ask questions, and overcome any objections or concerns they might have.

4. Share why you believe they're the right candidate.

Sell them on themselves. Stroke their ego a bit, and make sure they know you listened to them during the interview process. At this point, you're selling. When selling the offer, the company, and joining your team, be appropriately enthusiastic. Passion and energy are contagious. As in sales, don't overdo it, but make sure you deliver the offer with your sights set on winning the candidate. If you believe this is a great opportunity for them, sell it as such.

5. Be prepared to negotiate.

Candidates, especially sales candidates, will try to open the door to negotiation. This is often a good sign, as you want sellers to sell you on their value, and then try to get premium pricing for that value, the same way you'd want when they represent your company.

If you're able to negotiate, consider giving yourself room on the offer terms so you have that flexibility. If you can't negotiate or are at the upper limit of what you can offer, let the candidate know. Be careful, though, because if they want or expect more, they may continue to push, and like a sale, you may lose a top candidate to another offer or to them simply not accepting.



6. Consider the offer part of the interview process.

Especially during a negotiation, it's not uncommon for a candidate's demeanor and interaction to deteriorate at this point. If you don't like how they interact with you, you might want to reconsider offering them the position.

Also, if sellers are willing to leave their current employers in a lurch, such as with no or limited notice, ask yourself if that's how you would want them to treat you, or your buyers, in the future. Look for red flags during the offer period just as you would during the interview process.

When you present the offer, you may want or be required to have a representative from HR present, or have HR deliver the offer without you, but realize there is some risk to this. If you believe your presence will help you win the candidate, try to be there. If you'd prefer to or are required to leave it to someone else, do so, but realize they might not sell it as well as you can.

7. Get feedback.

After you make the offer, get the candidate's impressions. Ask what questions and concerns they have. Uncover and handle objections, just like selling. If you don't, it may scuttle the hire.

8. Discuss the compensation range early.

When do you begin discussing compensation? Every situation and company is different, so you have to use judgement. Generally, we suggest you or your HR representative qualify candidates before you invest too much time in them—much as you would when selling. You may want to consult with your HR team on preferences or compliance regarding discussing compensation to make certain you follow company standards and guidelines.

9. Give an acceptance timeframe.

When you make the offer, give a specific timeframe for acceptance. A day or two is common. For major roles, it's okay to give a bit more time. But remember, as time passes, other candidates in your pipeline aren't getting attention and you might lose them. And each day that passes opens the door to your preferred candidate getting competing offers.



10. Ask if the candidate expects a counteroffer at their current company.

If the candidate does get one, they may be tempted to stay. Now's your chance to talk to them about that possibility and help them get over this temptation.

If you have a highly desired candidate and you believe you might be competing for them, now's the time to make a [big play](#) to win them—just like winning a major sale. Consider having company senior leaders call them. This shows respect, your willingness to invest in them, and can help put you over the top. You can also send the offer letter via overnight mail along with some company-branded goodies. A little extra effort goes a long way.

11. Stay in touch.

After a candidate accepts an offer, keep in touch with them during the period between acceptance and their start date. They don't officially have the job—and you don't have the hire in place—until they show up for their first day. Doing this can help you head off any last-minute challenges, objections, or obstacles to them joining.



Summary: 5 Steps to Build a Team of Sales Superstars

Hiring top sales talent is undoubtedly a challenging task, but it's also a critical one for sales managers to get right. A wrong decision can lead to negative consequences, affecting the team's morale and overall sales performance.

Following the five-step process we've outlined can help you build your own team of sales superstars:

1. **Strategy:** Know specifically what your ideal candidate looks like and how you're going to find, identify, and hire them.
2. **Sourcing:** Find the right candidates and put them in your hiring pipeline.
3. **Screening:** Quickly qualify candidates who might be a good match and quickly screen out candidates unlikely to succeed.
4. **Scoring:** Figure out, as methodically as you can through the interviewing process, which candidates are likely to succeed.
5. **Selling:** Inspire and excite potential new team members so they want to join your team. Make offers to sellers that get accepted.



RAIN Group Total Access

Subscription-based Sales Training for Your Entire Team

From management to veteran sellers to new hires, everyone on your team has a unique role with specific skills that contribute to their success.

One-size-fits-all sales training is neither viable nor effective, which begs the question: how do you get the right content to the right teams at the right time?

RAIN Group Total Access is subscription-based sales training that gives you access to our entire suite of training modules, videos, tools and assets, Train the Trainer and Train the Coach, learning journeys, and implementation support across sales skill, productivity, management, and coaching areas.

Train cohorts concurrently, assign different curricula per role, and launch on-site and virtual instructor-led, self-study, and hybrid training on your schedule for a low per-person subscription.

- **Complete access** to world-class, award-winning sales training
- **77 modules** covering the sales cycle and sales management, organized across 11 programs
- **4 delivery modalities**, including instructor-led (ILT), virtual ILT (VILT), hybrid, and self-study
- **Manager coaching discussion guides** and application assignments for each module
- **Core sales planners** for conversations, opportunity management, account management, prospecting, and more
- **Just-in-time learning** with videos, job-aids, and tools that are quickly accessible when sellers need them
- **Training implementation** best practices, checklists, and tools for success
- **Train-the-Trainer and Coach Certification** processes
- **Facilitator walkthroughs** of all modules and programs

[Click here to request a complimentary consultation.](#) →



RAIN Group Delivers World-Class Sales Training

- Modular, multi-modal, and purpose-built for the **modern learner**.
- Unique approach to driving **behavior change** through training that we call Execution Assurance.
- Focused on driving the **business results** important to you.
- A **transformational experience** that ensures the development, adoption, and implementation of new skills.
- Action-oriented **coaching** prepares sellers for real situations and provides direct feedback.

RAIN Group Unleashes Sales Potential

We help organizations:

- Develop and improve sales strategy, process, messaging, and talent
- Enhance sales capability with award-winning sales training
- Design and execute strategic account management initiatives
- Increase effectiveness of sales management and coaching

Best IP: We study buying and selling relentlessly through the RAIN Group Center for Sales Research. Our research and field work allows us to create industry-leading intellectual property to help our clients achieve the greatest success.

Best Education System: We use the best education approaches, methods, and technologies to make training work, stick, and transfer to the job.

Best Results: We make it our mission to drive value and achieve the highest client satisfaction through excellence in quality and producing transformational results for our clients.

