



Sales Recruitment Best Practices How to Hire Top Producers

Executive Summary

Unfilled sales positions limit a company's ability to achieve revenue potential, allowing the competition to thrive. Weak sales reps also drag down the results of top performers, eroding any competitive gains.

Because of this, it's critical not only to fill open positions, but fill them with top producers.

A solid sales recruiting process can help target better candidates, hire smarter, and drive revenue objectives.

Everybody Wants to Rule the World – **And Hire Top Sellers**

In an increasingly competitive market, sales organizations are challenged to search out opportunities to increase revenues, while controlling the costs of doing business.

Companies may look to strategies like margin reductions as short-term solutions to expanding their bottom lines. Yet, such tactics often bring short-term gains that are difficult to maintain because competitors will match these efforts, devaluing the market as a whole.

A more sustainable approach is to explore where efficiency gains can be made to fuel short-term growth, while building for long-term success.

One way companies can increase efficiency throughout their sales organizations is by improving hiring and retention practices. Because sales teams are directly responsible for the company's revenue generation, their success is often limited by the quality of available talent.

What Unfilled Sales Positions Really Cost

Unfilled sales positions limit a company's ability to achieve their revenue potential. Not only does the company lose out on the sales during the vacancy, their customers also become vulnerable to competition, leading to exponential losses down the road.

Here is a prime example, using ACA Talent's cost of vacancy calculator at www.costofvacancy.com.

This company generally has 1,000 sales reps on staff, who are each responsible for \$300,000 in annual revenue. The company sees a 25% attrition rate, resulting in 250 vacant positions each year, and each position usually takes 6 weeks to fill.

Each vacancy ultimately costs the company \$34,615, with the total vacancy rate over the entire organization resulting in a revenue loss of over \$8.6 million.

This figure only accounts for direct sales lost as a result of vacancies. It doesn't account for the hard and soft costs involved in replacement, training, ramp-up, and relationships.

Without a fully staffed roster of high-performing reps, sales organizations are at a competitive disadvantage and may find it difficult to continuously meet revenue objectives.

But filling open positions is only part of the story.

Most sales teams are made up of the following:

- As: star performers
- Bs: high potential players
- Cs: average resources
- Ds: others on their way out

Even fully staffed organizations have to manage with underperformers. The "weakest link" analogy can wreak havoc on a company's sales forecast.

Every rep selling below plan drags down the results from top performers, eroding their gains, and opening the window for competitors to capture market share.

This is why it's not only important to fill open positions—it's critical to fill them with top producers.

What to Know Before You Start Recruiting

Before sales managers can begin to hire top talent, it's important to first evaluate the company's current hiring process and make improvements.

Without a solid process that supports both recruitment operations and business objectives, the best candidates may never appear on the company's radar.

Here are some questions that can help companies evaluate their recruitment process.

1. Are your job descriptions representing what your hiring managers are looking for?

- Were hiring managers involved in creating them?
- When were they created?
- If it was more than six months ago, do they still reflect your target candidate?

2. Are you challenging your existing recruiting team to find better candidates?

- If so, how do they find quality sellers?
- How do recruiters qualify candidates? Is this aligned with hiring manager expectations?
- How long is your interview process?

3. How quickly do managers make hiring decisions?

- Is there pressure to make immediate hires?
- Do your hiring managers have time restraints on how quickly they can make decisions?
- Is there a concern that snap decisions could lead to bad hires?

4. How do you measure the hiring process?

- What is your time-to-fill?
- How does your company manage turnover?
- What is your cost-per-hire?
- How many candidates do you interview before hiring?
- How soon before new hires generate revenue?

5. How do you evaluate and implement process improvements?

- What are the roadblocks that delay hiring?
- How do candidates and employees perceive the hiring process?
- Is technology helping or hurting your process, and how?
- How do you ensure candidate quality?

Building A Sales Recruiting Process

Once a company has evaluated its internal hiring processes, it's critical to distill these findings into an actionable recruitment plan.

Below are key areas to consider.

1. Improve overall fit by defining your sales roles and determining the profile of a successful sales person.

By identifying these characteristics, sales managers can build a strong working relationship with their recruiting teams and improve overall candidate quality, eliminating those that simply don't fit.

2. Increase your chances of finding better talent by broadening your candidate pools.

Consider mining your internal recruitment databases or social networks to find better qualified candidates. Take a look at your career center. Would you want to apply? If not, consider investing in an update.

3. Ensure a targeted hiring focus by dedicating a sales recruiting expert to work on your open positions.

A specialist understands the nuances that distinguish top sales talent from everyone else. In addition to finding better candidates, you will reduce the time hiring managers spend recruiting, freeing them up to train and sell more.

4. Streamline hiring by creating a recruiting process.

Not only does it organize the hiring flow for all stakeholders, it helps you see where candidates are getting "stuck" and helps you evaluate areas for improvement, like times-to-fill.

5. Drive continuous improvement by evaluating the hiring process long after the candidate has started.

Set up a 30-day post-hire survey to see how new employees are acclimating to the position. Aggregate the results and look for trends. Compare these reports with production to see how your recruiting program is improving talent selection.

Recruiting with ACA Talent

Developing, launching, and continuously improving a high volume recruitment process can be a laborious, time-consuming undertaking. ACA Talent has perfected this process over its relationship with some of the country's largest sales organizations.

We help clients achieve their revenue objectives by applying our internal expertise, best practices, and technology capabilities to our client's unique recruiting challenges.

About ACA Talent

ACA Talent connects sharp minds that sell the world one deal at a time.

To do this, ACA Talent develops targeted talent acquisition solutions, including Recruitment Process Outsourcing (Sales Recruitment Optimization), Professional Search, Project Management, and Recruitment Technology, that fuse our expertise in finding great talent with our proven process management methods.

Whether our clients need to grow and develop teams, or hire single players, we design a solution that aligns with their objectives to deliver results. By continuously searching for process efficiencies, we're able to find better candidates faster, so clients can be more productive, increase their revenues, and capture market share.

**Learn how to hire top sales producers faster.
Contact us at 888-750-5627.**