



THE 8 CRITICAL SKILLS OF HIGH PERFORMING SALESPEOPLE

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PXT Select can show you
the candidate with the
eight critical practices
that will make them
a **top performer** for
your organization.



Your organization lives on sales !

That makes salespeople key assets. **High performing salespeople don't meet their sales quota, they crush it.** Year after year top performers exceed goals by relentlessly prospecting for new clients and constantly nurturing relationships with existing customers. They create scalable and repeatable systems that allow them to be both efficient and effective. They connect, qualify, convert, and close – then repeat.

What are the benefits to your organization of hiring top performers?

Increased productivity and performance - not just by the top salesperson, but often by other employees.
Improved retention – top performers who share their expertise feel valued and build strengths in others.
Positive culture – everyone is happier to be part of a successful, respectful team.

And, of course, more revenue!

But salespeople who don't perform adequately can be a drag or even undermine your business. What does it cost if you don't hire a great salesperson? \$37 billion is spent annually to keep unproductive employees. **No organization can sustain the pain of poor performers, the damage they can do to an organization, and the missed opportunities that could have been successes.** What attributes do top salespeople have that set them apart from others? There are eight critical practices that can make or break the effectiveness of each of your sales representatives. Be sure to consider all these practices when:

- ✓ Writing job descriptions and requirements
- ✓ Writing interview questions and conducting the interview
- ✓ Creating onboarding experiences
- ✓ Determining training needs

In this tight labor market, you might not get someone who can prove competence in each area so determine which are the most critical for your organization at this time. And remember that every organization's needs are different. Think about your culture (driven, vs. laid back), your products (straightforward vs. complex), your sales model(s) (hunters vs. nurturers, inside vs. outside), and your current personnel situation (experienced vs. novice).



Prospecting

The ability to seek out new business is a basic requirement to excel in sales, but it's only a piece of prospecting. The willingness to go after a potential customer even in the face of anticipated rejection requires resilience, even stubbornness.

- ▲ High performing salespeople are relentless prospectors – always looking for growth opportunities both through prospects and within existing customers. They've built trust with customers so they aren't afraid to ask for referrals.
- ▼ Mediocre salespeople may procrastinate, chase low probability prospects, or spend too much time on high-effort, low-impact activities.



Initiating contact

Sales rarely progress without your salespeople making a successful initial direct contact.

- ▲ High performers know how to disrupt a prospect or customer's day by giving the prospect a compelling reason to sacrifice their valuable time. Top sales professionals use their confidence and acumen to quickly establish a connection with a new prospect.
- ▼ A mediocre salesperson who isn't confident may squander a prospective lead. Without a willingness to be persistent, or by not making a good case for taking a prospect's time – or by simply not taking that first step – your company may be missing a big opportunity.



Building and maintaining relationships

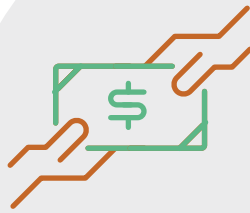
Sales are built on relationships. And relationships are built on trust. In a world where everyone is inundated with information, the difference in who wins the business comes down to how your customer or prospect feels about your salesperson and your business.

- ▲ High-performing salespeople put in time and effort to get to know the customer or prospect as a person. They invest in the relationship to become more than just a vendor; they work to become a customer's trusted advisor. The top salesperson recognizes that providing personal support, even on an insignificant sale, sets the tone for larger opportunities.
- ▼ Mediocre salespeople may be too focused on the sale to make the customer feel valued for who they are, or may not continue to hone the relationship when a short-term sale seems unlikely.

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Closing the sale



Recording the sale is the measurement by which all salespeople are scored. The ability to transition the prospect from discussion to transaction hinges on the delicate combination of understanding prospect pain points, formulating a solution, and demonstrating the value proposition.

- ▲ High performers keep activities progressing even when there are unknown aspects. They keep conversations active and the potential client engaged to discern potential need changes.
- ▼ A mediocre salesperson puts self-interest in front of actual customer need. They may not take the time to fully understand the customer's requirements leading to a failed sale or a sales solution that results in an unhappy customer.

Self-starter



Whether a salesperson is internally motivated by the challenge ahead or only focused on a positive outcome, being a great salesperson requires perseverance.

- ▲ The most successful salespeople take the initiative to personally identify and undertake the hard work to achieve results. They need to be willing to dive in head-first and understand that “failure” is just learning for next time. They may set personal goals in addition to the sales goals given them by their managers, and they go full steam ahead to achieve success. They naturally look for ways to increase their productivity.
- ▼ Less motivated salespeople require more time from their managers trying to negotiate goals and they tend to find non-sales and high-effort/low-probability activities that take up their time.

Top sales people know that failure is just learning for the next time.

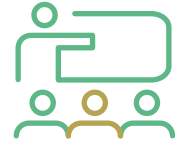
Resourcefulness



Defined as the ability to find quick and clever ways to overcome difficulties, resourcefulness is a core tenet of sales.

- ▲ In high performers, resourcefulness is the ability to be creative for your clients from nothing but an idea. They overcome client objections and even internal obstacles that could prevent success.
- ▼ Mediocre salespeople feel defeated when they encounter internal challenges, and may surrender when clients push back.

Coachability



Very few people are “born” to be top sales performers. Coachability entails a desire to improve, learn, and adapt.

- ▲ Top salespeople are open to the feedback of others and they incorporate new ideas into their sales techniques. They demonstrate a commitment to development and see even negative feedback as an opportunity to improve.
- ▼ Poorer salespeople bristle at even constructive criticism, rejecting advice and sticking with unsound sales behaviors that limit their ability to succeed.



Working with a Team



Some see sales as an individual endeavor, but typically salespeople are part of a larger machine and must be able to work cooperatively to achieve shared goals.

- ▲ A top-quality performer understands that a strong sales team can accomplish more. The best salesperson routinely demonstrates their commitment to the team by sharing their knowledge and mentoring new hires.
- ▼ A mediocre salesperson may show a “lone wolf” mentality refusing to share time and knowledge with others. It’s unlikely that your organization benefits from this lack of teamwork – both with respect to sales success and corporate culture.

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Now that we’ve looked at these eight critical sales practices, what can you do to ensure you’re hiring those who have those characteristics and are most likely to be high performers?

Or identifying current employees with the potential to become great sellers?

The ~~magic~~ formula ✓ proven

A proven formula includes using data from a validated selection assessment - one that is tailored to recruit and to help you easily see who the most successful candidate is likely to be. At Talent-Gear, we use PXT Select because it does just that. With over 20 years of data, it helps you look below the surface and at your candidate's cognitive ability, behavioral traits, and interests.

Each PXT Select Comprehensive Sales Report scores your candidates against sales success benchmarks and presents you with a personalized view of the candidate's eight critical sales practices. You can compare candidates against each other and determine whose score indicates the greatest chance of success. You'll even see individualized interview questions that will help you and other interviewers dig into candidate's strengths and weaknesses. Ultimately, PXT Select can show you the candidate with the eight critical practices that will make them a top performer for your organization.

Candidate interview questions

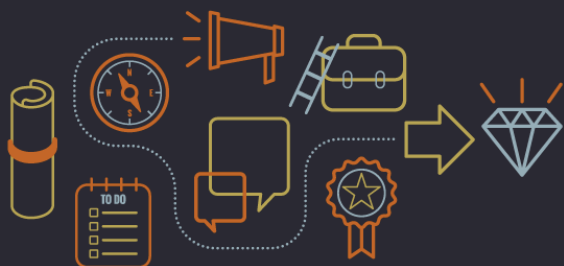


A tool like PXT Select can provide you with questions based on the candidate's assessment results. However, these questions may also be useful in an interview:



- Tell me about your targets (Prospecting)
- How do you keep up to date on your target market? (Prospecting)
- How do you research prospects before a call or meeting? What information do you look for? (Prospecting)
- What are your favorite questions to ask prospects? (Initiating contact)
- How do you prepare for an initial prospect call/meeting? (Initiating contact)
- How do you establish trust? (Building and maintaining relationships)
- What's your approach to handling customer objections? (Maintaining relationships; Closing the sale; Resourcefulness)
- Walk me through a sale you closed (Closing the sale)
- When do you stop pursuing a prospect? (Closing the sale)
- How do you organize your day? (Self-starting)
- What motivates you? (Self-starting; Coachability)
- How would you approach a short sales cycle differently than a long sales cycle? (Resourcefulness)
- What's the most meaningful failure you've had and what did you learn from it? (Coachability)
- What's the most difficult feedback you've received and how did it change you? (Coachability; Working with a team)
- What would your new team members learn from you? (Working with a team)

Learn more about how PXT Select assessment solutions can fit your organization. Connect with an industry expert at TalentGear.com to get started. Your company is the hiring engine, we provide the gears.



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