

Recruiting the Best - 5 Qualities of Successful Sales Professionals

It is your job to recruit the best salespeople for your company. What qualities should you look for? Read on for some insight into finding and developing stellar sales professionals

By Paul J. Meyer

No two salespeople are exactly alike. Each one is unique in his or her actions, needs and behavior. However, successful salespeople share at least five characteristics or qualities that are important in achieving success in the profession of selling.

#1 Quality — Self-Confidence

All truly successful sales people have one quality in common: a no limitations belief in themselves. A no limitations belief expresses itself in a calm, honest, self-confidence. Self-confidence is gained only through practical know-how. In turn, know-how comes from knowledge and experience; experience is gained only from confronting obstacles and situations that most people avoid.

Self-confident people know exactly where they stand now.

They understand their present strengths and weaknesses and feel secure about where they are going, and they are motivated by results. Self-confidence fully realized is power. Failure to develop self-confidence is a one-way street to mediocrity.

#2 Quality — Self-Reliance

Salespeople more or less control their schedules, which is one reason why the development of self-reliance is a must. They must be self-starters. As a sales manager, allow your salespeople to develop self-reliance by giving them the freedom to act alone. Doing for people what they should do for themselves produces dependency. However, directing people while they learn to do for themselves produces self-reliance. The most common indicator of the lack of self-reliance is the reluctance to make a decision. Remember, even a relatively bad decision is sometimes better than no decision at all.

#3 Quality — Perseverance

The winners are those who develop perseverance, the firm determination to continue on no matter what or how many setbacks occur. As a sales manager, your first step is to discover the underlying reason for a salesperson's lack of perseverance. Often it can be traced to a low achievement drive or the absence of goals. Salespeople with a low drive harbor a negative self-image. However, focusing on achievement allows them to build their own career ladder.

#4 Quality — Positive Self-Image

When people accept themselves as they really are, they have taken the most important step. They realistically see where they stand now and hold an inspirational view of where they

want to be in the future. Self-acceptance helps narrow the gap between the two. As a sales manager, it is your responsibility to lead your producers to develop a more positive self-image and to assist them in achieving a fine balance between empathy and ego drive. Create a climate where their developed talents find the greatest opportunity for successful expression and your people will become motivated by results, not methods.

#5 Quality — Empathy and Ego Drive

These two qualities are interdependent in salespeople, but a careful blend of empathy and ego drive must be delicately balanced. Too much or too little of either quality results in problems. Empathy is the developed ability to see, to feel, and to appreciate a situation or circumstance from the viewpoint of another person. Empathy is the ability to understand others, and it results in effective communication.

Salespeople with ego drive not only want to make the sale, but they need to make the sale for the enjoyment and experience of making the sale. To top sales people, every prospect represents a challenge that must be conquered to satisfy their ego and prove that it can be done. They must prove to themselves they can do it.

Salespeople who are highly successful possess a relatively high measure of these qualities. Look for these traits as you recruit new salespeople. When looking for a top producer, keep searching until you find someone with most of these qualities. These are the hallmarks that signal potential successful sales ability. Aptitude and IQ tests do not measure many of the qualities necessary for success in selling. Neither do tests measure how much they will be motivated to apply the talents they do have.

As a sales manager, you have the opportunity to be a builder of strong people. Personality traits in your people may be highly resistant to change. The positive climate you create in your sales organization is your greatest ally. When your salespeople are successful, so are you.

When you know what to look for, you can select better salespeople in the first place and avoid expensive high turnover. Believe in the true potential of people, and be willing to help them move forward from the point where they stand today. As a sales manager, consider yourself a personal consultant and confidant for your salespeople.

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Paul J. Meyer may be a *New York Times* best-selling author, but it is his success as an entrepreneur that has made him a millionaire many times over. To learn more about the qualities you need to look for in building a successful sales team, order Paul's very practical CD, *Qualities of Successful Sales Professionals* today, available at www.pauljmeyer.com or Amazon.com.

