



FACTS

ASSESSING TALENT®: SALES PROFESSIONAL

A TOOL FOR EVALUATING SALES POTENTIAL

Do you have the right salespeople to execute your sales strategy? How do you know?

If you are hiring new sales people, shifting your sales strategy, or placing salespeople across diverse sales roles, it is critical to have the right people with the right skills in the right jobs. Yet 67 percent of sales VPs feel that at least two out of five salespeople do not have the skills to do their jobs.

Assessing Talent®: Sales Professional is a series of simulations that measures key selling skills, such as demonstrating business value, building trusting relationships, and impactful communications. The assessment helps sales organizations make accurate hiring decisions and determine who is best suited for different sales roles. It can also be used to diagnose sales professionals' strengths and development needs and to establish development plans.

Individuals completing the assessment gain an understanding of what is expected of them in challenging sales situations and are better able to leverage their strengths and take positive steps to improve their performance.

THE BENEFITS

Assessing Talent®: Sales Professional improves the accuracy of hiring and placement decisions, and provides a diagnosis of the strengths and development needs of current sales professionals. The assessment also helps sales organizations by:

- > Providing the path to accelerate readiness for current or future sales roles.
- > Increasing participant understanding of expectations and job challenges in a new sales role.
- > Determining which sales professionals can handle the shift to a more complex sales strategy.

THE DETAILS




The role of a sales professional can vary greatly, depending upon your company's sales strategy. DDI has identified three typical selling strategies (described in the table on page 2). Organizations commonly employ some combination of these three strategies.

DDI works with you to configure the exercises in the program to match your organization's specific sales strategies, typically resulting in a half-day to a full-day assessment.

How It Works

The Sales Professional assessment includes highly realistic simulations that measure key areas of sales success and success in implementing your company's sales strategy.

SELLING STRATEGIES AND CUSTOMER APPROACHES

		
Product/Service Focused	Solution Process Focused	Business Strategy Focused
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Focuses on an explicit need. > Represents a well-defined product or service. > Requires deep product and competitive knowledge. > Relates to customers in a tactical way. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Requires understanding of more complex, interrelated issues and problems. > Provides a solution that often includes several products/services. > Relates to customers in a problem-solving, collaborative way. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Focuses on business issues, long-term strategies, and changing business models that help the client's business operate more effectively. > Requires strategic thinking and business savvy. > Relates to executive-level customers as a credible business advisor.

Throughout the assessment, participants represent a worldwide corporation (Global Solutions) that offers multiple products and services across several business units. Prior to the assessment each participant is provided with background information to review in preparation for the simulation. This includes information about Global Solutions—the company, its sales policies, its products, and its competitors—as well as the key accounts in their portfolio.

Core Exercises

The core exercises concentrate on the sales professionals' ability to interact with customers and advance sales opportunities. These exercises include:

Exploratory Sales Call—An existing yet inactive client has sent a Request for Proposal (RFP) to correct a highly problematic situation. Participants have an opportunity to speak with a client (a roleplayer) prior to responding to the RFP. Participants can explore the current business problems with the client.

Capabilities Overview—Participants analyze the information at their disposal (e.g., financial, competitive, business climate, personnel) combined with knowledge gained in the Exploratory Sales Call to determine how they will respond to the client. They develop an approach that can meet the customer's needs, and then propose their ideas to an executive stakeholder (a roleplayer).

Sales Challenges—Participants determine how to respond (via e-mail or voice mail) to opportunities to advance or close sales and address customer needs.

Supplemental Exercises

The supplemental exercises provide a deeper understanding of selling skills. These include:

Service Recovery—A customer has encountered a serious problem in using a product. Participants review information about the situation, and then meet with an upset customer (a roleplayer) to resolve the problem to the customer's satisfaction.

Portfolio Management—Participants review their portfolio, progress on assigned accounts, and relevant correspondence. Tasks include analyzing how their portfolio was previously managed, prioritizing the accounts most in need of attention, making decisions about upcoming events, and scheduling the next week's calls. They then meet with their manager (a roleplayer) to explain their portfolio plans.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Assessing Talent®: Sales Professional is appropriate for those being considered for a sales professional role or developing the skills of those in sales positions.

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

The simulations can be delivered virtually via a web interface and phone role plays, or at a DDI or client location. DDI assessors manage the assessment process, conduct the role plays, evaluate the exercises, and prepare assessment reports.

Two options are available for the final report: Standard report or detailed report. The standard report is appropriate for selection/promotion decisions. It contains competency and key action ratings, and a summary of the participant's overall performance, highlighting strengths and development needs.

The detailed report is useful in situations where individuals and/or their managers are using the assessment results to create individual development plans for the participant. It contains the standard report features and provides summaries of the participant's performance in each competency.

A development guide with developmental activities to help build sales skills is included with both versions of the report.

DDI offers a variety of feedback options. Our assessors can deliver feedback individually or in group sessions. We can also train your organization to conduct these feedback sessions. In addition, we also offer assistance in post-assessment development planning and training.

RELATED SOLUTIONS

For sales organizations with large-volume hiring needs, DDI recommends using our tests and screens to accurately and efficiently identify only those candidates who are most qualified and motivated to succeed as sales professionals.

Assessing Talent®: Sales Professional can also be used in conjunction with *Targeted Selection®*, DDI's behavior-based interviewing solution. *Targeted Selection®* provides hiring managers with the skills and the structure for conducting quality interviews—ensuring that you have all the information you need to make sound decisions during the hiring and promotion process.

TO LEARN MORE

Contact your DDI representative or call 1-800-933-4463.

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