

Discussion Paper

BARRETT **So where are all the** **Elite Sales Performers?**

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Introduction

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So where are all the elite sales performers?

We receive many calls from sales managers asking us where they can find really good sales performers for their businesses. They often complain that most of the sales people in their industries had been around the block too many times with no new skills, ideas or talent where being brought into their respective industries.

Same old people, same old things, same old results.

Trouble is the Elite Performers you want are most likely working in other industries or markets and are not even thinking about working for you.

Relying on 'experience' as a major determining factor in your sales selection process can severely limit your potential to develop a competitive edge in your industry and finding elite sales performers.

I recall another client saying they didn't want to hire people from their industry because they just weren't competitive in the current market. They wanted to **refresh the gene pool** and bring in fit sales people who were not tarnished by the industry and its way of doing things. They knew that in this over commoditised marketplace that their sales people where their competitive edge. They were on the right track trouble is they didn't know how to start.

So here are some tips on finding elite sales performers:

- **Review your sales strategy** and ask, "What qualities (skills, knowledge, competencies, attitudes) do we need now to translate our sales strategy into sales action and results"?
- **Define** the **Threshold** competencies (i.e. sales and communication skills, self motivation, social skills, etc.) and more importantly define the **Differentiating** Competencies (those qualities that separate high achievers from everyone else) that you want and need.
- **Attract & Search for Candidates:** Just like sales, in today's market you need a combination of 'Push & Pull' contact strategies to find the right candidates for your business. Advertising alone is not likely to yield the candidates you seek. Targets those industries that have the talent pool you want (mixture of headhunting, networking, reading other industry journals, asking clients, suppliers about their experiences with good sales people from other industries, etc.)
- When you decide to recruit externally, the following methods are available to select from:
 - o Advertising: On-line job boards, Newspapers, Magazines, Industry Journals, Radio & TV, Your website
 - o Recruitment Agencies
 - o Viral Marketing email campaigns
 - o Information Seminars
 - o Search (direct contact or headhunting)



- o Industry journals and how is being featured
- o Networks (Clients, suppliers, etc.)
- o On-line network groups: MySpace, Link Me, LinkedIn
- If advertising write ads that attract and describe the style of person you want; DON'T describe the role
- **Use a structured sales recruitment process** that uses a multi assessment competency based approach (*The average percent increase in output from improved selection is approximately 2.5 times greater in sales jobs than in low-complexity non-sales jobs.*)
- Build a proper **sales induction training** process
- Make sure you have a **sales management support system** in place

Defining and finding Elite Sales Performers for your business should be happening on a regular basis and be a part of any sales manager's role even if you don't have a vacancy.

You are always recruiting good sales people

That client who wanted to refresh the gene pool did look outside and found elite sales performers.

Result: the elites sales performers achieved a sales closing ratio of 4:3 within 2 months. Their **learn to earn curve** was great and there was a definite ROI.

For further information on:

- o implementing effective sales selection practices and strategy,
- o defining your key sales competencies using the purpose built BARRETT Sales Competency Dictionary, and
- o purpose built sales recruitment kits

please contact us at BARRETT on 03 9532 7677.