

The Sales & Customer Service hiring **decision** cheat sheet

Every role here is scored against four written behavioral anchors, not one line from poor to excellent — so you can tell a calibrated strength from the same strength with no brakes on it.

High Good — strength with judgement

High Poor — same strength, no brakes

Low Good — functional, familiar conditions

Low Poor — absent, with consequences

Sales — the ladder, level by level

Headline competencies and required proficiency (PL1–PL4) at each seniority level, from the PMaps role ontology.

L1 Account Executive	Customer orientation PL2 Consultative behavior PL2 Effective communication PL2 Negotiation and persuasion PL1 Objection handling PL1 Achievement orientation PL1
L2 Account Manager	Customer orientation PL3 Consultative behavior PL3 Negotiation and persuasion PL2 Objection handling PL2 People management PL2 Coaching and mentoring PL2
L3 Regional Sales Manager	Negotiation and persuasion PL3 Objection handling PL3 Decision making PL3 People management PL3 Business acumen PL3 Coaching and mentoring PL2
L4 VP of Sales	Negotiation and persuasion PL4 Objection handling PL4 Strategic thinking PL4 Business acumen PL4 Coaching and mentoring PL4 Decision making PL4

Reading the profile — what to do next

HIGH GOOD on swing skill Hire — the strength is calibrated, and it holds under pressure.

HIGH POOR on swing skill Escalation risk — interviews brilliantly, derails once intensity rises.

LOW GOOD, no High either way Safe but capped — fine for structured, lower-stakes queues only.

LOW POOR on a required skill Development risk — the competency is absent from week one.

L1 interview playbook · Account Executive

Your highest-volume Sales hire. Two questions that separate calibrated persuasion from persuasion with no brakes.

“Walk me through a time a prospect said no and you kept the deal alive.”

PROBES · OBJECTION HANDLING

GOOD ANSWER SOUNDS LIKE

Names the real objection, addresses it with new information or a smaller ask, and respects a genuine no once it's clear.

POOR ANSWER SOUNDS LIKE

Reframes every no as the prospect undervaluing it; keeps circling back until they give in from fatigue.

“Tell me about a deal where you gave something up to close it.”

PROBES · NEGOTIATION AND PERSUASION

GOOD ANSWER SOUNDS LIKE

Names a real trade — discount for a longer term, scope for a faster start — tied to what the customer valued.

POOR ANSWER SOUNDS LIKE

Can't name a real trade; describes closing by sheer persistence, or discounted for nothing in return.

Decision rule — hire if both answers show a real stopping point. Pass if persistence is the only lever they can name.

Customer Service – the ladder, level by level

Headline competencies and required proficiency (PL1–PL4) at each seniority level, from the PMaps role ontology.

L1
Customer Service Executive Customer orientation **PL1** Conflict management **PL1** Empathy **PL1** Problem solving **PL1**
Objection handling **PL1** Stress management **PL1**

L2
Customer Service Manager Customer orientation **PL2** Conflict management **PL2** People management **PL2**
Coaching and mentoring **PL2** Problem solving **PL2** Objection handling **PL2**

L3
VP of Customer Service Customer orientation **PL3** Conflict management **PL3** People management **PL3**
Professional diplomacy **PL3** Decision making **PL3** Strategic thinking **PL2**

L4
Chief Customer Officer Customer orientation **PL4** Conflict management **PL4** People management **PL4**
Professional diplomacy **PL4** Decision making **PL4** Strategic thinking **PL3**

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L1 interview playbook · Customer Service Executive

Your highest-volume CS hire. Two questions that separate care with a boundary from care with none.

"Tell me about an angry customer you couldn't fully satisfy."

PROBES · CUSTOMER ORIENTATION

GOOD ANSWER SOUNDS LIKE

Validates the frustration, states clearly what could and couldn't be done, and closes the interaction even without a yes.

POOR ANSWER SOUNDS LIKE

Over-promises to end the tension in the moment, or agrees the company was wrong before confirming the facts.

"Describe a time company policy stopped you giving a customer what they wanted."

PROBES · CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

GOOD ANSWER SOUNDS LIKE

Explains the policy plainly, offers the next-best option, and escalates when it's genuinely outside their authority.

POOR ANSWER SOUNDS LIKE

Either enforces the policy rigidly with no alternative, or quietly bends it to avoid the conflict.

Decision rule — hire if the candidate can hold a boundary and stay warm in the same breath. Pass if one always wins at the expense of the other.

BUILT AND VALIDATED — NOT A BUILD PROJECT

This ladder already exists for 255 roles

Sales and Customer Service are two of the functions PMaps has already scored this way — 73 competencies, 15 factors, four seniority levels, live today across Marketing, HR, Finance, Tech and Leadership too. Lower cost-per-hire, faster time-to-hire, predictable performance.

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