

EP. 13 - What Recruiters & Hiring Managers Are Looking For

Overview

In this video, we explore the qualities and skills that recruiters and hiring managers commonly seek in sales candidates, both junior and senior. The hiring process is often driven by highly specific requirements set by the hiring manager, and as a candidate, it's important to understand that the recruiter's hands may be tied by these strict criteria. This video provides insights into the most requested skills and attributes for both junior and senior sales roles and offers practical tips for standing out as a candidate.

1. Precision in Hiring Criteria:

Hiring managers often have very **exact requirements** for candidates, and recruiters must strictly adhere to these demands. If a candidate doesn't match the criteria, no matter how impressive their qualifications, recruiters can't present them to the company. For example, a company may need someone with 5 years of experience in transportation sales, specific industry knowledge (like LTL), and a strong network in a specific region (e.g., Toronto). If you don't meet these exact qualifications, the recruiter's hands are tied.

2. Common Skills Sought in Junior Sales Candidates:

For junior sales roles, hiring managers focus on foundational skills that demonstrate the candidate's potential for growth. Key attributes include:

- **Coachability:** The ability to absorb feedback, learn new sales methodologies, and adapt quickly is crucial for junior candidates.
- **Strong Work Ethic:** Junior candidates should show initiative in prospecting, hitting targets, and demonstrating a proactive approach to sales.

- **Communication Skills:** Clear verbal and written communication, along with strong listening skills, are essential for successful sales.
- **Resilience:** Sales can be a tough field, and hiring managers seek candidates who can handle rejection and bounce back quickly.
- **Self-Motivation:** Junior candidates need to show a drive to succeed and meet targets without constant supervision.
- **Tech Savvy:** Quickly adapting to new technology (e.g., CRM systems like Salesforce) is a key advantage for junior sales reps.

3. Common Skills Sought in Senior Sales Candidates (People Leaders):

For senior roles, the focus shifts to leadership, strategy, and industry expertise. Key attributes include:

- **Leadership Experience:** A proven track record of managing and developing sales teams is a must.
- **Strategy Experience:** Senior candidates need to think strategically and align sales plans with the company's goals.
- **Industry Knowledge:** Extensive experience in the specific industry is crucial, as senior leaders must understand market trends and make informed decisions.
- **Mentorship and Coaching Skills:** Senior leaders should be able to mentor their teams and help them reach their full potential.
- **Analytical Skills:** The ability to analyze sales data and make data-driven decisions is essential for senior roles.
- **Build and Scale Experience:** Experience building and scaling a sales team is highly valued.
- **Change Management:** Senior leaders should demonstrate adaptability and strong change management skills in dynamic business environments.
- **Results-Oriented:** Senior candidates need a history of achieving or exceeding sales targets.

4. Skills Valued Across Both Junior and Senior Roles:

- **Cultural Fit:** Compatibility with the company's culture and values is critical. Both junior and senior candidates must fit in with the existing team and corporate environment.

5. Easy Ways to Prove Your Value:

- **Administrative and Organizational Skills:** Strong administrative skills can set you apart from other candidates. Hiring managers appreciate candidates who are organized, methodical, and proactive with tasks such as CRM updates, follow-up emails, and managing sales data.

Example: A sales rep working on a major account kept meticulous records in the CRM, proactively communicated updates, and ensured all details were available for leadership. This attention to detail allowed leadership to stay informed and make strategic decisions without constantly asking for updates.

- **Time Management and Efficiency:** Effective time management ensures that tasks are completed on schedule, follow-ups are timely, and opportunities are not missed.
- **Communication and Attention to Detail:** Clear, prompt communication and attention to detail help reduce errors and ensure high-quality work. These are essential traits in fast-paced work environments.

6. Admin Skills as a Differentiator:

Administrative skills are often overlooked but are highly valued in sales. The ability to manage CRM systems, organize tasks, and keep records up to date shows that you are reliable and detail-oriented. A candidate who excels in these areas will stand out, as they help streamline operations and keep the team on track.

Conclusion:

Recruiters and hiring managers often look for very specific qualifications, and candidates need to closely match those requirements to be considered. For junior sales candidates, traits like coachability, communication, and resilience are key. For senior sales leaders, leadership, strategy, and industry expertise are the most important attributes. Additionally, strong administrative skills can help candidates stand out in both junior and senior roles by demonstrating reliability and organization.