

What is the DNA of “A” sales performers in YOUR organization?

How to hire more “A’s” and get your “B” and “C” players to perform more like “A’s”

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As I interact with CEO’s, sales executives and senior management teams, two of the highest priorities they say they have for the sales organization is (1) finding a way to get their lower performers to perform more like the “A’s” and (2) adjusting the hiring process so they improve their chances of hiring “A” players.

I have been in the software industry for 23 years and my experience is that if you are truly going to optimize your sales performance, you must figure out why your “A’s” are your “A’s” and how do you get everyone else to perform more like them. Why is this so hard? Why is it that as many as 70% of the people we hire do not perform to our expectations? Why is it that too often someone who has been an “A” elsewhere, is not an “A” in your organization? The answers to these questions lie in realizing that to truly understand and modify human performance you must leverage new capabilities. Capabilities that come from applied behavioral sciences.

An “A” in one company does not make an “A” in another company. Think about that. How many times have we interviewed someone that has made their numbers consistently at another company and we get excited thinking we found a sales powerhouse? Only to experience a few quarters later that this individual isn’t meeting your expectations. Here are the reasons...

There is something about the DNA of **YOUR** company that determines what it takes to be an “A” in **YOUR** company. Just because someone was an “A” elsewhere does not mean he or she will be an “A” with you. Think of some of the great sales people in your company. What is it about them that make them an “A”? It probably isn’t their personality....I’m sure their personalities vary. It isn’t their selling style....I’m sure some of them are high level visionaries that stay at the surface level of your product, service or solution and others are detail maniacs that measure and track every event.

What makes them all “A” Level Performers is that they share very specific dominant behavioral traits, attributes and elements...regardless of their personality and selling style. It is in the dynamic interaction of these dominant behavioral traits and attributes within an individual that determines if he or she can be an “A” in **YOUR** organization. Understanding these behavioral traits and attributes allows you to understand the DNA of sales champions in **YOUR** organization.

Have you ever had the situation where someone in your company wanted to go into sales and to everyone’s amazement became an “A” performer? Why was that? Why didn’t you or others see this potential in him or her sooner? Again, the answer lies in understanding how well someone aligns to the level of dominate behavioral traits, attributes and elements required for success in your company.

Now there is a way to measure this in every sales professional so you will clearly understand why someone is an “A” and why someone is not. Now there is a way that you can actually **PREDICT** how a sales professional will perform in your organization. Now there is a way for you to more effectively coach and council your “non-A’s” to help them perform more like “A’s”.

Running a sales organization is one of the most difficult jobs in the Enterprise. Pressures come from all sides...your CEO, the executive team, the board, prospects and clients and of course the salespeople themselves. They all want a piece of you and expect you to over deliver. If you’re going to succeed, you are going to have to have a sales team of winners.

Hiring and retaining high performing sales professionals is no longer a guessing game. By applying predictive technology built on applied behavioral science you can spend more time winning sales and less time being frustrated with under performance.

Using Predictive Technology to Improve Sales Performance

Through the cumulative experience of the founders of Spring Lake Technologies and the profiling work we have done with over 20,000 individuals, we have developed a technology that can anticipate and predict human behavior. Our mission is to leverage this capability to improve sales performance.

Through our work, we have identified very specific behavioral traits and attributes that are critical to success in selling. With our predictive technology engine we model these behavioral traits and attributes to your company’s “A” performers and then process these models to integrate thousands of behavioral elements to determine the “A” profile for **YOUR** company. Once we have a detailed understanding of the behavioral

characteristics of an “A” sales performer in **YOUR** company we provide timely and selling-specific guidance so that you can mentor and hire new professionals onto your team most effectively. Now you can hire only those that have the best chance of being an “A” and you can lead your “non-A’s” to perform more like an “A” more often.

Why General Hiring Testing Does Not Work

Based on our experience and that of the many companies we have worked with, we conclude that the many hiring tests on the market today just don’t work. Why is that?

Primarily because they focus on determining the personality of the individual being tested. While they are usually pretty good at determining personality, this has little bearing on determining if someone will be successful selling in your organization. Here is the fact.... It is not in someone’s personality that determines if they will succeed in your organization, it is how well they can adjust their **behavior** from situation to situation and circumstance to circumstance. These tests just don’t measure this dynamic behavior.

They use a generic and static database in order to determine someone’s personality as well as static dimensions of personality. While this can be a valid approach to uncover someone’s personality, it will not help you understand how this individual will perform in **YOUR** company or how you should coach and council to help them to perform at “A” levels.

Another reason why many of these tools are not effective is that they are loaded with “rater bias”. By profiling an individual with one rater (usually that of the person being potentially hired) the results are solely predicated on the view of the individual being evaluated. This makes the accuracy of the results questionable and sub-optimal in a business context.

Concluding Thoughts

The profession of selling is challenging. Only a small percentage of sales professionals perform at consistently high levels. Running a high performing sales organization is even more challenging. Now there exists next generation technology for sales professionals to greatly improve their performance and help sales leaders achieve greater results. This is sales technology that goes well beyond the boundaries of CRM and SFA.

By using predictive technology and applied behavioral science you can finally assess your sales team and truly understand performance characteristics about your sales organization that until now have been invisible. You can understand specifically why an “A” is an “A” in your organization and how you can hire more of them. You can finally predict performance on an individual and organizational level. Through predictive technology you can finally optimize your sales organization’s performance.

Up to now, most of us were “winging” it. We used gut feel balanced with logic to make hiring, firing and coaching decisions. We can now stop making our job harder. The secret is applying accurate science and predictive technology to the process.

For more information on applying behavioral science and predictive technologies to your sales organization, you can email Steve D’Angelo at sdangelo@springlaketech.com. I welcome your thoughts and comments and look forward to developing this dialog further.