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SalesMax

What is it?

SalesMax is a comprehensive, pre-employment evaluation for sales professionals developed by organizational psychologists. It provides a comprehensive assessment of a candidate's sales personality, sales knowledge, and personal motivations.

Who is it for?

Candidates for professional sales positions that require a consultative sales approach.

When to use it?

As a part of the selection process for external candidates or for internal promotions.

SalesMax

Sample Survey Questions

- ✓ Sales Knowledge
- ✓ Sales Personality
- ✓ Sales Motivations

Sales Knowledge

Sales Situations (36 items)



3. You are making your presentation to your prospect. Rank these factors on their potential to make or advance the sale:

	1st (best)	2nd	3rd	4th (worst)
Make sure you take enough time to explain your entire product line, asking your prospect which product, or products, he feels will fit his needs best.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ask questions that will help you and your prospect determine where you can be most helpful.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ask questions and then decide in your mind which product is right and make a presentation on this product to your prospect.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Make sure that your questions keep your prospect involved and that they are related to his business.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Sales Knowledge

Sales Knowledge

Sales Situations (36 items)



16. Rank the reasons why it is important to use features, advantages and benefits when presenting your product/service to a prospect:

	1st (best)	2nd	3rd	4th (worst)
To save you time in making a full-blown sales presentation.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To get your prospect emotionally involved in the process of buying your product or service.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Because without the explanation, most prospects can not visualize the benefits and advantages.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Features, advantages and benefits often can be used in your presentation and as part of your demonstration to reinforce reasons why your prospect should buy.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Sales Situations (36 items)



27. Your time with your prospect is nearing the end and you find yourself with little opportunity to close the sale. Rank these possible actions:

	1st (best)	2nd	3rd	4th (worst)
Let your prospect know you felt your time together was positive and ask to set another appointment.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Remark to your prospect you found the meeting to be productive and ask your prospect what she thinks the next step should be.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Suggest to your prospect you would like to set another appointment to pursue areas that arose as a result of this meeting.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Thank her for her time and tell her you will call for her decision.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Sales Motivations

Most Like Me (28 items)



3. I would like to...

have a clear plan for my future.

be free to make all of my own decisions.

see my name in the newspaper.

be in charge of a very important project.

spend most of my time interacting with people.

develop my skills and knowledge to a very high level of competence.

1st most like me 2nd most like me 3rd most like me

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Sales Motivations

Most Like Me (28 items)



8. I would like to...

be seen talking with important people.

work in a flexible environment.

be a high-level manager.

pass on my expertise to younger people entering my field.

work around people I have known for a long time.

do something just to prove I can do it.

1st most like me 2nd most like me 3rd most like me

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Sales Personality

4. It does not matter what people think of you.

Agree Disagree
A D

Sales Personality

25. You handle criticism better than most people.

Agree Disagree
A D



Selection Report for: Suzanne Example
Tested: 4/15/2003 1:09:44 PM

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SalesMax provides three types of information to help you evaluate the candidate for a professional sales position.

- **Sales Personality** - Relatively stable characteristics that do not change easily over time. Eight of these predict sales performance, while three others will help you to manage the candidate. All are work-related and have direct applicability to sales positions
- **Sales Knowledge** - The candidate's understanding of effective behaviors and strategies at key stages of the sales cycle. The emphasis is on consultative and relationship-oriented sales.
- **Sales Motivations** - The relative strength of eight sources of personal motivation to help you to manage and motivate the candidate, if you hire her.

Using SalesMax Results:

- **Sales Personality**

We recommend you first consider the candidate's sales personality. Using the Standard Success Profile, look at the number of scores inside the success zones (shaded areas). At a minimum, try to hire candidates who have personality scores that fall somewhere inside most of these success zones. If possible, look for candidates who have scores in the higher end of these ranges. In general, higher potential candidates will have personality scores that will fall in all or almost all of the shaded ranges. Further, the best candidates will most often have scores that fall in the high ends of the shaded ranges.

The Sales Personality Success Index is a weighted scoring of the strength of these desirable personality characteristics. Possible scores vary from 0 to 48. From our research using earned sales compensation as a criterion, we recommend you avoid candidates with index scores below 19 and recommend you pursue candidates with scores of 24 or higher.

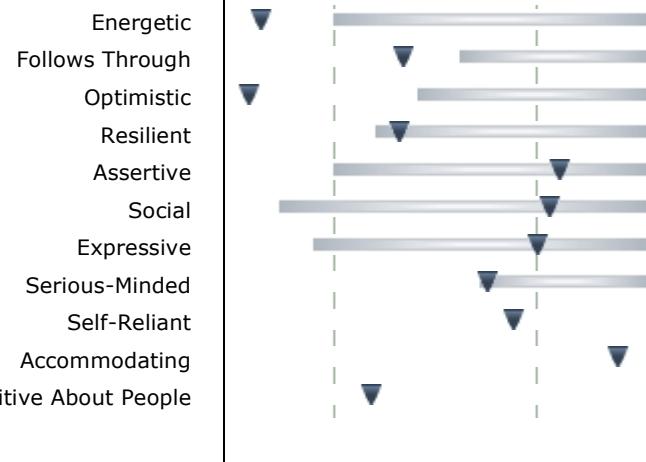
- **Sales Knowledge**

Next, we recommend you consider the candidate's knowledge of effective consultative sales strategies. Her scores in this section of SalesMax are an indication of how well she knows what to do in various selling situations. If she is an experienced salesperson, this may be very important information. However, if she has little or no experience and you expect to put her through a good sales training program, low scores in this area may not influence your decision to hire her but may help you to target areas for her training.

- **Sales Motivations**

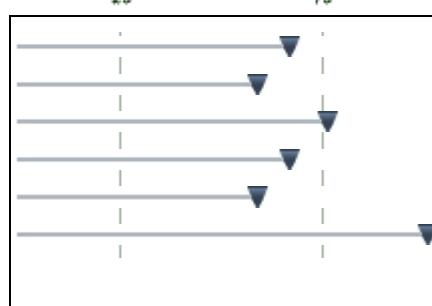
If you decide, based on her sales personality and knowledge results and your interview, that you want to hire the candidate, the results of this section may be helpful in deciding if her motivational needs are a good fit for the job and your supervisory style. Are the things most important to her available as rewards? Can you effectively manage her given her needs and the potential rewards you have under your control?

Sales Personality



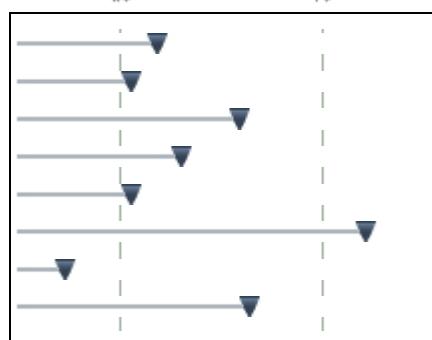
Look for a candidate who has a personality that will be effective in sales.

Sales Knowledge



Evaluate his or her knowledge of consultative selling strategies.

Sales Motivations



Consider the candidate's motivational needs and how they fit with your organization and your management style.

Potential Sales Success:

The candidate's Sales Personality Index score was 19 out of a possible score of 48. This score falls in the second range of possible scores (OK). Our research indicates that candidates with scores in this range have a moderate probability of becoming successful. (About 4 out of 10 salespeople with scores in this range earned sales compensation in the top half.)

Score	Range	Advice
---	00-18	Avoid
19	19-23	OK
---	24-26	Good
---	27-33	Better
---	34-48	Best

Personality Insights:

The following potential strengths (+) and potential weaknesses (-) may help you to understand how the candidate's personality may impact her sales performance.

- + She should have a confident sales presence.
- + She can be assertive and forceful when necessary. She should be able to deal with most difficult, challenging or powerful customers and should be capable of asking for the sale.
- + She should be a people person who will enjoy most of the social aspects of meeting new clients or prospects and working with them in a sales role.
- + She should be cooperative by nature and willing to accommodate others in order to get along and meet their needs.
- Her energy level is substantially below that of typical salespeople and may be a significant shortcoming. She may lack a sense of urgency about getting things done quickly.
- She may be somewhat less dependable about following through on her commitments than the best salespeople.
- She appears to have a negative, pessimistic outlook and may be prone to moodiness and excessive worry.

Sales Knowledge:

The candidate appears to have a good understanding of effective consultative sales techniques in the following areas:

- + Identifying sales prospects and pre-qualifying them.
- + Developing a clear understanding of the customer's specific needs.
- + Problem solving and overcoming objections.
- + Negotiating and closing the sale.

SalesMax identified no strong sales training needs (on all of the scales she scored at least 40 percent correct).

Sales Motivations:

The candidate appears to be most strongly motivated by:

- Increased opportunity to expand her network of contacts, help others, and generally socialize.

The following motivators do not appear to be important to the candidate:

- Security or job stability.

Interview and Reference Probe Suggestions

The next section of this report provides interview and reference probes for following up and obtaining more information regarding this candidate's potential problem characteristics. For each identified topic, SalesMax suggests several questions to assist you in interviewing the candidate. SalesMax also generates several questions to facilitate discussion of potential problem characteristics with her references.

Very Low Energy

The candidate appears to have a much lower energy level than the typical sales professional. This may mean that she has difficulty handling a demanding work schedule or that she must "work smart" and concentrate her efforts to be effective.

Interview Probes:

- During the interview, ask her to describe a typical workweek. Ask how she sets her priorities and how she allocates her time. Probe for indications of effectiveness despite a lower than average energy level or work pace.
- Ask her to describe a situation in her work life where she had to complete a significant amount of work in a short period of time. What were the circumstances that led up to the event? What did she do to accomplish her objectives? How did she feel afterwards?
- Ask general interview questions about work such as: "In what types of situations are you at your best?" and "In what types of situations would you like to be more effective?" Listen for answers that suggest she does not do well when she must put in long hours, complete tasks quickly, handle multiple demands under time pressure, etc.
- Pay attention to her body language during the interview. Does she appear sluggish or lethargic, exceedingly relaxed, slow moving, -- or more energetic?

Reference Probe Questions:

When talking with references ask the following types of questions.

- "How does she compare with other salespeople in her ability to complete tasks on time?"
- "How does she compare with others in her ability to maintain her effectiveness while working long hours?"
- "How does her overall productivity compare with that of her peers?"

Low Follow Through

The candidate scores somewhat low on the measure of follow through or dependability. People with low scores may not consistently follow through on their work responsibilities.

Interview Probes:

- During the interview, ask the candidate how she thinks a sales manager should handle an employee who misses deadlines or doesn't consistently follow through on her work. Listen for responses that indicate sympathy for the employee or unrealistic expectations from the manager.
- Ask the candidate to describe a time when she was unable to complete an assignment or couldn't follow through on what she promised she would do. Listen for responses that indicate that she didn't think too much of it, or is prone to making excuses. Ask if she would have handled the situation differently today.

Reference Probe Questions:

When talking with her references ask the following types of questions.

- "How does she compare with other salespeople in her ability to follow through on tasks in a timely manner?"
- "Would her customers and peers say that she honors her commitments or does she tend to let things slip?"

Low Optimism

The candidate scored low on the measure of optimism. Many people who score in this range can be moody or pessimistic (i.e., "the glass is half empty"). For some, this pessimism will affect their sales productivity and job performance. However, others with this profile can exercise reasonable control over their emotions so that the impact upon their job performance is limited.

Interview Probes:

- During the interview, attempt to assess her ability to deal with pressure, stress, or disappointments. Ask her to describe what sorts of things irritate or annoy her. Ask her to tell you how her boss, a peer or a customer would describe her temperament, what she is like under pressure, etc.
- Ask how stress on the job affects her work. If the candidate travels in her current job (or would travel in this job), ask her what she thinks are the positives and the drawbacks about a job where part of her time is spent on the road. Listen for clues to the impact of loneliness, stress, and fatigue.
- Ask her to describe a time when she worked particularly hard to make a sale and the deal fell through. How did she react? What impact did it have on her?
- Ask her to describe how she copes with stress and frustration. Generally, positive responses would be answers such as: run, take a long walk, talk it over with a friend, try to think about positive things. Red flags would be responses that suggest inappropriate coping behavior, such as "having a few drinks" or responses that suggest denial (e.g., "I am never, ever, sad or in a bad mood.").

Reference Probe Questions:

When talking with her references ask the following types of questions.

- "Compared to other salespeople you have known, how would you describe her attitude or mood? (e.g., was she consistent or did she tend to have up and down moods?)"
- "How well did she handle job related pressure and stress?"
- "Would you describe her as even tempered or moody? Why?"
- "Compared to her peers, did she show more or less sensitivity to stressful events in her environment (e.g., pressure, time deadlines)? How did this sensitivity affect her productivity and work relationships?"
- "To what extent did she display a 'can do' attitude versus being negative or easily discouraged?"

Management Suggestions

The remainder of this report suggests ways to effectively manage this person. In some cases the management suggestion identifies a potential problem area in her personality results and recommends an approach for optimizing her effectiveness on the job. In other cases, her motivations are discussed and suggestions for how to best motivate the candidate are highlighted.

Handling A Demanding Work Pace: Her slow work pace may not be adequate in a fast-paced, sales environment. She is likely to need specific work goals and to be held accountable to meet time deadlines in order to be effective. Initially, it may be helpful to set some interim deadlines (checkpoints) to ensure that she is making progress towards her goals. Further, time management courses or readings may also be helpful in coaching her to use her energies more effectively.

Improving Follow Through: She should be encouraged to assume more responsibility to follow through on her responsibilities. In managing her, make sure that she has a clear understanding of that to which she has committed and by when. ("John, you said that you will have the sales projections for Company X to me by next Tuesday.") For long-range activities, suggest that she set interim deadlines to make sure that she is progressing toward her goals. If she falls behind, hold her accountable and help her to find strategies to avoid this shortcoming in the future.

Developing a More Positive Outlook (Becoming More Optimistic): Her tendency towards a negative or pessimistic outlook could interfere with her sales effectiveness. She may require more time and attention than most sales people in order to keep her spirits up. If so, we recommend that she be recognized and rewarded for learning to keep her emotions in check and for avoiding displays of negativity.

Affiliation Motivation: The opportunity to expand her network of contacts, help others and generally work with people is important to her. It may be helpful to encourage her to become involved in company, community, or professional organizations which will help her meet this need as well as expand her network.

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Development Report for: Suzanne Example
Tested: 4/15/2003 1:09:44 PM

Contents:

- Introduction
- Reading Your Report
- Your Profile
- Interpreting Your Profile
- Suggestions Based On Your Personality
- Suggestions Based On Your Sales Knowledge
- Action Planning

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SUCCESS: It's a rare individual who does not want it! Whether you are just starting a sales career or are a seasoned veteran, you must take personal responsibility for achieving your success. The purpose of this report is to help you to know yourself better - your strengths and, perhaps, some of your weaknesses - and to encourage you to commit the effort to achieve your full potential.

Your overall effectiveness in sales may be influenced by many factors. These include your personality, knowledge of effective sales techniques, experience, motivations, background, contacts and, sometimes, even a little bit of luck. Some of these factors are beyond the scope of this report; however, SalesMax provides valuable information about your personality and, if you completed those sections of the SalesMax questionnaire, your sales knowledge and your motivations that can help you understand yourself better and target your development efforts.

Sales Personality

Personality tends to influence effectiveness in virtually every job, but there is no denying that personality is an important component for being successful in sales. There is no exact "right" or "best" personality for consultative or relationship-oriented sales. Research does show, however, that most successful sales professionals share certain personality traits. We are going to show how you compare to other sales professionals on traits like assertiveness, sociability, energy, etc.

Sales Knowledge

Some people instinctively know how to approach a sales situation. Most, however, need training and study to achieve their personal best. We are going to show how you scored in a variety of sales situations – identifying sales prospects and pre-qualifying them all the way through negotiating and closing the sale. If you have little or no experience in sales, your scores may be lower than if you have considerable sales experience. Regardless, this information should help you target areas in which to focus your training efforts.

Sales Motivations

As it turns out, what motivates one person can be very different from what motivates another. You may be very aware of what motivates you and find that there are no surprises at all in this report. On the other hand, you may learn some new things about yourself.

Your next question should be: "Now that I know what motivates me, what should I do with this information?" You will want to share the insights you have gained with your manager and others in the organization who are in a position to help you get more of what you want from the job. Further in this report, we will give you some tips for how to do this.

So, if you want to be the best salesperson you can possibly be, read on . . .

Who Should See This Report?

This report has been written for your personal use. We hope it will help you to think about and plan for your future development. You may want to share all or parts of this report with others, especially if you trust their judgment and wisdom, and if they can assist you with development resources or advice. People to consider might include a family member, a current or past manager, a trusted mentor, a Human Resources representative or a career counselor.

Overview of Your Development Report

The first section of this report represents feedback on your SalesMax results. These results will be interpreted in terms of how your personality and abilities may help or hinder your performance in consultative sales. If you completed those sections of the SalesMax questionnaire, you will also receive feedback on six key areas of sales knowledge and the importance of various motivators to you.

Next, specific development suggestions are provided to help you develop in the areas highlighted by SalesMax.

Finally, the last section of the report provides you with a framework for setting goals and creating a development action plan.

In reviewing your report, keep the following in mind:

The sales personality results are based on your self-perceptions and may be influenced by a favorable or unfavorable self-image. Others may see you differently than you see yourself.

We have compared your scores on the sales knowledge and sales personality portions of the survey to a sales professional norm group. It may be useful to think "compared to most sales professionals" as you read each.

Be careful not to overemphasize specific statements. Instead consider the overall picture and how your assessment results fit with your current job and future aspirations.

Take the time to read and consider the SalesMax Report information:

- Take an open, non-defensive attitude when reviewing the material. Review each section carefully and, as you consider the feedback statements, try to think of specific examples that can confirm if the inferences made by SalesMax do or do not apply to you.
- If you are not sure that a statement in the report describes you, ask someone you feel will give you honest feedback for his or her opinion.
- After reviewing your results, use the Goal Setting section of this report to help you set goals for your development and to construct an action plan for achieving your goals.

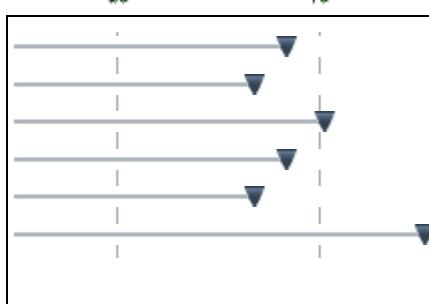
Over time, people change. If several years have passed since the date of this report, the results may no longer fit you. Remember, when you completed the SalesMax survey you were at a particular age, stage of development, level of experience, etc. With the passage of time, the characteristics measured by SalesMax may have changed.

Are you ready? Let's take a look at how you compare to other sales professionals . . .

Sales Personality

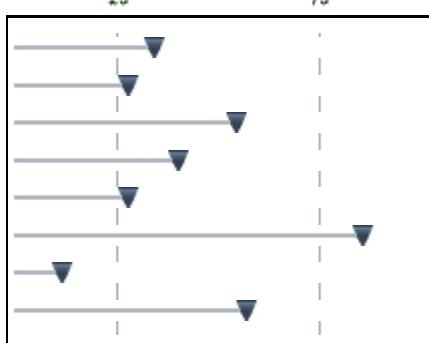
The profile is a quick summary which will allow you to see your results compared to our sales norms. The small darkened triangles indicate your percentile score compared to these norms.

Use these results and the suggestions that follow to develop areas needing improvement or to accentuate your strengths.

Sales Knowledge

These are your scores on Sales Knowledge.

Use low scores to target training or refresher work you may need.

Sales Motivations

These scores represent the relative importance of various motivators to you.

Think about what does and what does not motivate you. How can you get more of what you want from the job?

Personality Factors Linked to Sales Performance:

Your basic, underlying personality may help (+) you perform at a high level or may hinder (-) your effectiveness if you do not manage certain characteristics.

- Your energy level appears to be well below that of the typical successful salesperson. While it is possible to compensate for a slow or methodical work pace by working smarter or being more organized than most other salespeople, a low energy level can be a significant liability. To improve in this area, see the Increasing Your Work Pace suggestion provided later in this report.
- /+ You may be somewhat less dependable about following through on your commitments than the best salespeople. If this is true, consider the Improving Your Follow-Through suggestion provided later in this report.
- You appear to be very negative in your outlook. You may be inclined to worry or become upset more easily than most other sales professionals. To improve in this area, consider the suggestions provided under the heading of Being More Optimistic later in this report.
- +/- Not overly thin-skinned about the rejection that inevitably comes as part of sales, you should be able to bounce back from disappointments at an acceptable level. However, if you would like to improve in this area, see the Developing Greater Resilience suggestion provided later in this report.
- + You have a confident sales presence and feel comfortable exerting influence. Asking for the sale generally should come easily for you.
- + You are outgoing and social by nature. You are apt to be comfortable meeting new people and interacting with clients or customers.
- + You are an expressive person who should have little difficulty conveying your thoughts and ideas to customers and others. You should have a free and easy conversational style that can be spontaneous and enthusiastic.
- + When it comes to your work, you are serious minded, businesslike, and professional. You generally take the time to make careful decisions and take only measured risks.

Personality Factors Not Directly Linked to Sales Performance:

While the following personality factors have not yet been directly linked to sales performance they may have influence on your overall effectiveness at work.

- + You appear to be self-reliant. In most situations, you take initiative and get things done without having to rely on others for encouragement, advice, or guidance.
- +/- You appear to be a very cooperative, accommodating person who will go to considerable effort to get along with other people and meet their needs. (While this is a strength in general, you may sometimes be too agreeable or you may compromise too quickly. See the Overly Accommodating developmental suggestion provided later in this report.)
- + You appear to have a balanced outlook regarding others and their intentions. That is to say, you are neither overly trusting and optimistic, nor negative and distrustful in your view of others.

Sales Knowledge:

You appear to have a good understanding of effective consultative sales techniques in the following areas:

- Identifying sales prospects and pre-qualifying them.
- Developing a clear understanding of the customer's specific needs.
- Problem solving and overcoming objections.
- Negotiating and closing the sale.

SalesMax identified no strong sales training needs (on all of the scales you scored at least 40 percent correct).

Sales Motivations:

You appear to be most strongly motivated by:

- Affiliation – you get great satisfaction from being liked and accepted by others. You tend to prefer work situations where there is significant opportunity to interact with other people in a positive and supportive manner. This is probably part of what attracted you to sales in the first place, but do guard against placing such importance on relationships that meeting sales objectives becomes secondary.

The following motivators do not appear to be important to you:

- Security and stability – security and a predictable paycheck do not appear to be the most important motivators for you. You may be more of a risk-taker who is willing to take a chance for the potential to achieve the things that are more important to you. Job security and stability often become more important to people at different points in their lives; you may find that they may become more important to you in the future.

This and the following section of your report provide developmental suggestions based on your Personality results and your Sales Knowledge results. These sections are followed by a final section that provides a guide for writing and using a Developmental Action Plan. We hope you will use these resources to become (or to continue to be) a top-level sales professional.

We have written personality-based developmental suggestions for you on the following topics:

- Increasing Your Work Pace
- Improving Your Follow-Through
- Being More Optimistic
- Developing Greater Resilience
- Guard Against Being Overly Accommodating

Increasing Your Work Pace

A review of your answers to the personality questionnaire suggests that your work style is likely to be much more slow-paced than that of the most successful salespeople. Certainly, there are many paths to productivity and effectiveness, not all of which include moving fast. The reality is, however, that, in sales, the more energy you apply, the better your chances for success. If you find yourself missing important deadlines that you could have met by stretching yourself a little, or not getting as much done as you should, or simply wishing you could be more energetic, consider the following suggestions:

Activities

Set ambitious, urgent time goals in your work. For example, if you currently call on ten customers a day, push yourself to call on eleven.

The sales cycle for some types of sales can be very lengthy. Set intermediate or check point deadlines to ensure that you continue making progress toward the sale.

Take a look at your schedule of physical exercise and make sure that you are doing some type of exercise on a consistent basis. (Be sure to check with your physician before beginning any exercise program.)

If you suffer from "afternoon fatigue," you may want to watch what you eat for lunch. Dieticians often recommend a small, high protein meal at lunchtime while avoiding alcohol and sugary desserts. Also, try to spend a short amount of time doing light aerobic exercise (for example, walking) during your lunch break. Exercising and practicing relaxation techniques on a regular basis may also increase your energy level.

Be aware that there are many time-wasting events that disrupt our productivity. Use the guidelines below to learn how to handle some common time wasters.

Lack of Objectives, Priorities and Deadlines:

- Make a list of your goals and objectives at the beginning of each day (a "to do" list).
- Do things you do not enjoy first. After completing some of the difficult tasks or some of the things you do not want to do, reward yourself by allowing yourself to do a part of the job you really enjoy.
- Attempt your highest priority items at your best time of the day. (Morning is usually best.)
- Set firm deadlines for having a job done.

Indecision or Procrastination:

- Make the decision to get started on something and make a commitment to complete it by "going public" and announcing it to others.
- Reward yourself for persistent effort with short breaks.
- Set short-term goals that lead to longer-term results.

Fatigue:

- When you find yourself wasting time through daydreaming or other non-productive behavior, take a short break. Get up, walk around, and then go back to work.
- When you are genuinely tired, call it a day. Plan on being productive after you have rested.

Books

Consider reading a book on Time Management:

- [First Things First Every Day: Because Where You're Headed Is More Important Than How Fast You're Going](#) by Stephen Covey, A. Roger Merrill, & Rebecca R. Merrill, Fireside, 1997.
- [The Time Trap](#) by Alex MacKenzie, AMACOM, 1997.
- [How to Get Control of Your Time and Your Life](#) by Alan Lakein, New American Library, 1996.

Read a book on Procrastination or Indecisiveness such as:

- The Now Habit: A Strategic Program for Overcoming Procrastination and Enjoying Guilt-Free Play by Neil Fiore, JP Tarcher, 1989.
- Self-Discipline In 10 Days, How To Go From Thinking To Doing by Theodore Bryant, HUB Publishing, 1999.
- Overcoming Procrastination; Or How to Think and Act Rationally in Spite of Life's Inevitable Hassles by Albert Ellis, & William Knaus, New American Library, 1983.
- The Procrastinator's Handbook: Mastering the Art of Doing It Now by Rita Emmett, Walker & Company, 2000.

There are many good books on Health and Fitness. Some of these include:

- The Aerobics Program for Total Well-Being by Kenneth Cooper, Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, 1985.
- 14 Days to Wellness: The Easy, Effective, and Fun Way to Optimum Health by Donald Ardell Ph.D., New World Library, 1999
- Tired of Being Tired: Overcoming Chronic Fatigue & Low Energy by Michael Schmidt, Frog Ltd, 1995.

Tapes

- Working Smarter: How to Get More Done in Less Time by Michael Leboeuf, Simon & Schuster (Audio Cassette), 1995.

Seminars

- Time and Territory Management for Salespeople, American Management Association
[<http://www.amanet.org/seminars/cmd2/5289.htm>]

Improving Your Follow-Through

Your responses to the assessment suggest that, while your intentions may be good, you may not always complete the tasks that you start or consistently deliver what you promised. It may be that you commit to doing too much or fail to focus on key priorities. At times, this may hinder your performance or the performance of others who are depending on you. If this is true for you, consider the following suggestions.

Activities

Organization skills can help you manage your productivity. Take 10 minutes at the end of each workday (or first thing in the morning) to make a list of what you will be doing the next day. Prioritize your activities and focus on the high priority tasks first.

Make sure that you keep track of deadlines. Use a calendar, your computer or a personal digital assistant (PDA) to remind yourself of important deadlines. Set interim deadlines to ensure that you are progressing on tasks that may lead to sales in the future.

Make every attempt to finish what you start. If you find that you have committed to more than you can complete on time, focus on the most important tasks and set or ask for revised deadlines for the others. Be sure to consider how your task completion schedule will affect other people and give higher priority to those tasks that will unblock their work. Always inform those people affected if you expect to miss a deadline, and try to inform them as early as you can.

Try to avoid over committing yourself. Do not agree to do something you cannot deliver on time. Be honest with yourself and with others. Everyone is busy, and most people understand that there is only so much you can do.

When you complete a sale, make sure all the paperwork is completed, and you have made all the arrangements necessary on your end for a smooth delivery of a product or service. Set a reminder on your calendar to ensure you close the loop with others.

Books

Consider reading one or more of the following books:

- [1001 Ways to Take Initiative at Work](#) by Bob Nelson & Matt Wawiorka, Workman Publishing Company Inc., 1999.
- [Beware the Naked Man Who Offers You His Shirt: Do What You Love, Love What You Do and Deliver More Than You Promise](#) by Harvey Mackay, Ballantine Books (Trd Pap), 1996.
- [Getting a Project Done on Time: Managing People, Time, and Results](#) Paul B. Williams, AMACOM, 1996.

Tapes

- [5 Steps To Successful Selling \[ABRIDGED\]](#) Zig Ziglar, Nightingale-Conant Corp; Abridged edition (May 2002).

Seminars

- [Time Management](#) provided by American Management Association. [<http://www.amanet.org/seminars/cmd2/2233.htm>]

Being More Optimistic

Your responses to the personality questionnaire suggest that you are pessimistic in your outlook. You may tend to worry and have periods when your work morale is low. If this is true, the following suggestions may be useful to you in developing a more positive outlook.

Activities

Develop a personal strategy for constructively handling your feelings. No one strategy works for everyone. Below are a few methods that many people have used to successfully manage their feelings. One or a combination of these control strategies may work for you. Decide which are most comfortable for you and try one or more for at least one week on a consistent basis. It will take some practice before you see results. Do not give up.

Letter Writing:

If you feel upset (or angry) with someone, try writing the person a letter you never send. Many people find that they can better understand their own feelings by trying to communicate in this more formal and thoughtful manner. Also, it will allow you to vent your feelings without producing a counterproductive outcome. DO NOT send the letter. Tear it up instead.

Avoid Negative Self-Talk:

If you find self-defeating phrases (e.g. "This is terrible, " "I always mess things", etc.) come quickly to you when you are upset, try Thought Stopping. Think loudly "Stop! Stop!" Immediately replace the destructive train of thought with more appropriate, problem solving thoughts like:

- "Why is this so upsetting?"
- "What can I control, and what is beyond my control?"
- "What are my options?"
- "What steps will I take?"

By doing this you are well on your way to rational thinking even during periods of turmoil.

Do positive, fun things:

Many times, becoming active and involved in things that you enjoy can counteract negative feelings. Such things can include reading a favorite book or author, going to a movie, calling a friend, or engaging in some type of physical exercise. Also, it often helps to take time out to indulge yourself in a hobby or special activity such as taking a walk, playing golf or a vigorous workout.

Books

Reading a book in the area of personal adaptation or stress management may be useful. There are many available in most bookstores, usually in a Self-Help or Psychology section. Some which we can recommend include:

- [The 10 Emotions of Power: How to Make Your Emotions Work for You](#) by Lawrence Salliotte, Proctor Publishing, 1998.
- [How to Make Yourself Happy and Remarkably Less Disturbable](#) by Albert Ellis, Impact Publishers Incorporated, 1999.
- [I'm Ok - You're Ok](#) by Thomas Harris, Galahad Press, 1999.
- [How to Stop Worrying and Start Living](#) by Dale Carnegie, Pocket Books, 1985.
- [Learned Optimism](#) by Martin Seligman, Pocket Books, 1998.
- [Stress for Success](#) by James Loehr & Mark McCormack, Times Books, 1998.
- [The Power of Positive Thinking](#) by Norman Peale, Ballantine Books, 1996.

Tapes

- Staying on Top When Your World Turns Upside Down by Kathryn Cramer, Simon & Schuster Trade, 1994.
- The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People (Audio CD) by Stephen Covey, Covey Leadership Center, 2001.
- Pulling Your Own Strings: Dynamic Techniques for Dealing With Other People and Living Your Life As You Choose (Audio Cassette) by Wayne Dyer, Harper Audio, 1991.
- The Power of Positive Thinking (Audio Cassette) by Norman Peale, Simon & Schuster, 1993.

Seminars

- How to Manage Workplace Negativity provided by American Management Association.
[<http://www.amanet.org/seminars/cmd2/2545.htm>]
- Managing Emotions in the Workplace: Strategies for Success provided by American Management Association.
[<http://www.amanet.org/seminars/cmd2/2540.htm>]
- Moving Ahead: Breaking Behavior Patterns at Work provided by American Management Association.
[<http://www.amanet.org/seminars/cmd2/2255.htm>]

Developing Greater Resilience

The assessment results suggest that you may take rejection and negative feedback somewhat more personally than top performing salespeople. If this is true, consider the following suggestions to help you become more thick-skinned.

Activities

Difficulties and stress are part of every job. Sales jobs tend to have more rejection than some other types of work; try to accept the rejection without losing your motivation.

Develop a sense of humor about the realities of a sales job. This will help you cope better when you lose that big sale.

When faced with a difficult or failed sales call, treat it as a learning opportunity. Ask yourself what you can learn and imagine doing better the next time.

Expect good outcomes, and then have the persistence and determination to keep working at something until you are successful.

Books

Reading a book in the area of resilience or criticism tolerance may be useful. There are many available in most bookstores, usually in a Self-Help or Psychology section. Some that we can recommend include:

- [Resilience: The Power to Bounce Back When the Going Gets Tough](#) by Frederich Flach, M.D., Hatherleigh Press, 1997
- [The Survivor Personality: Why Some People Are Stronger, Smarter, and More Skillful at Handling Life's Difficulties...and How You Can Be, Too](#) by Al Siebert, Ph.D., Perigee Books/Berkley Publishing Group, 1996
- [The Power of Positive Criticism](#), by Hendrie Davis Weisinger, AMACOM, 2000.

Tapes

- [The Power of Positive Thinking \(Audio Cassette\)](#) by Norman Peale, Simon & Schuster, 1993.
- [Pulling Your Own Strings: Dynamic Techniques for Dealing With Other People and Living Your Life As You Choose \(Audio Cassette\)](#) by Wayne Dyer, Harper Audio, 1991.

Seminars

- [Managing Emotions in the Workplace: Strategies for Success](#) provided by American Management Association.
[<http://www.amanet.org/seminars/cmd2/2540.htm>]
- [Moving Ahead: Breaking Behavior Patterns at Work](#) provided by American Management Association.
[<http://www.amanet.org/seminars/cmd2/2255.htm>]

Guard Against Being Overly Accommodating

You describe yourself as a very accommodating and agreeable person. People probably respond well to your cooperative style and your interest in maintaining amiable relationships. This is a strength in many circumstances but may be a weakness in others. For example, if you are overly concerned about what others think of you and with pleasing people, you may be unwilling to negotiate for the most favorable terms, a fair price, etc. If you want to moderate this tendency, consider the following suggestions.

Activities

Accept the fact that you will not be able to keep everyone happy all of the time. Have a clear idea of your company's values and mission: be willing to act consistently with those values, even when others may disagree.

Be alert for situations where you are avoiding difficult discussions or compromising too quickly.

Consider attending a formal negotiations course such as those offered by the American Management Association.

Books

Consider reading a book on conflict resolution:

- [Coping With Difficult People](#) by Robert Bramson, Dell Books, 1988.
- [The Power of Positive Confrontation: The Skills You Need to Know to Handle Conflicts at Work, Home, and in Life](#) by Barbara Pachter & Susan Magee, Marlowe & Co, 1999.
- [Bargaining for Advantage: Negotiation Strategies for Reasonable People](#) by G. Shell, Penguin USA, 2000.

Read a book on win-win negotiations:

- [Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In](#) by Roger Fisher, William Ury, & Bruce Patton, Penguin USA, 1991.
- [Getting Past No: Negotiating Your Way From Confrontation to Cooperation](#) by William Ury, Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing, 1993.

Tapes

- [Getting to Yes: How to Negotiate Agreement Without Giving In \(Audio Cassette\)](#) by Roger Fisher & William Ury, Simon & Schuster Trade, 1986.

Seminars

- [Strategic Sales Negotiations](#), provided by American Management Association [<http://www.amanet.org/seminars/cmd2/5535.htm>]

Regardless if you are a newcomer to the sales profession or if you are an experienced pro who has extensive sales training, you should never stop improving your sales technique. Make a habit of regularly refreshing your knowledge throughout your sales career. The best sources for improving your knowledge and technique are usually those that have been tailored to your industry and your organization. Look first to company-sponsored training programs offered by your internal training department or external providers. In many cases, your SalesMax distributor can provide excellent training and other resources to assist you. If these resources are not available, consider the following general resources provided on this page, or, if you scored low on one or more of the measured Sales Knowledge dimensions, consider the targeted resources we have provided on the following pages.

General Resources For Improving Your Sales Knowledge

Books:

- [How to Become a Rainmaker: The Rules for Getting and Keeping Customers and Clients](#) by Jeffrey J. Fox, Jefferey J. Fox, Hyperion; (May 2000)
- [The New Strategic Selling: The Unique Sales System Proven Successful by the World's Best Companies](#) by Stephen E. Heiman, Diane Sanchez, Tad Tuleja, Robert B. Miller, Warner Books, 1998.
- [The Sales Advantage: How to Get It, Keep It, and Sell More Than Ever](#), by Oliver Crom and Michael Crom, Free Press, 2002.
- [How Winners Sell: 21 Proven Strategies to Outsell Your Competition and Win the Big Sale](#), by David Stein, Bard Press, 2002.
- [Discover Your Sales Strengths: How the World's Greatest Salespeople Develop Winning Careers](#), by Benson Smith and Tony Rutigliano, Warner Books, 2003.

Tapes & Online Instruction:

- [The Selling Cycle](#). On-line, self-paced instruction offered by PrimeLearning.
- [5 Steps To Successful Selling \[ABRIDGED\]](#) Zig Ziglar, Nightingale-Conant Corp; Abridged edition (May 2002)
- [Sell Your Way to the Top](#) by Zig Ziglar, Nightingale-Conant Corp; (October 1994)
- [The One-Minute Sales Person](#) by Spencer, M.D. Johnson, Larry Wilson, Bantam Books-Audio; (July 1988)

Seminars:

Look first to targeted training from your training department or your SalesMax distributor. More general resources include the following:

- [American Management Association: Sales Seminars Listing](#). [<http://www.amanet.org/seminars/cmd2/sales.htm>]
- [American Management Association: Marketing Seminars Listing](#). [<http://www.amanet.org/seminars/cmd2/markting.htm>]
- [Professional Society for Sales and Marketing Training](#). [<http://www.smt.org/>]

Now let's put it all together . . .

If you are like most salespeople, SalesMax pointed out some areas of strength and also some areas of potential weakness. After you have thought about your SalesMax feedback and developmental suggestions (and, perhaps, after you have had a chance to discuss them with someone you respect), write a developmental plan.

Building On Strengths

Start first by recognizing your strengths and thinking about how you can build upon them to be effective in your job. Your SalesMax results can help you to highlight these areas.

1. Review your SalesMax feedback for potential strengths.
2. List those parts of your personality, knowledge and motivations that enable you to do your current job well and could help you to be successful in the future.
3. Next to each, list how this strength contributes to your job success and how you could use this asset more effectively in the future.

For example, Fred Salesperson is a very socially outgoing and assertive person. Here is what Fred decided to do to boost sales by building on strengths:

Plan for Building on Strengths <i>for Fred Salesperson</i>	
<i>Strength</i>	<i>Contribution to My Success</i>
1. I am socially outgoing	I enjoy my membership in the Rotary club and I have met some good prospects. - I will join the local Chamber of Commerce and network there.
2. I am assertive and enjoy influencing others	This helps me to promote ideas; others see me as a leader. - I will take more of a leadership role on the new product introduction team, and I will help the new salesperson close that big deal she has been asking for help on.
3.	

Now, use the form at the end of this report to plan how you will improve your sales by building on your strengths.

Recognizing Areas for Improvement

The second part of development involves improving your weaknesses. Remember that all of us have weaknesses as well as strengths; the key is to recognize them so that you can improve.

1. Review your feedback and developmental suggestions to identify areas for improvement.
2. List those 2-3 aspects of your personality, knowledge or motivations that most hinder your job performance.
3. Next to each, explain how this has limited your success.
4. For each, list the action steps you will take in the next six months to improve in this area.

For example, when it comes to rejection, Mary Salesperson is not very resilient. Here is what Mary decided to do to boost sales by recognizing areas for improvement:

Plan for Developing Areas Needing Improvement <i>for Fred Salesperson</i>		
<i>Area for Improvement</i>	<i>How it Limits My Success</i>	<i>Improvement Action Steps</i>
1. I am not resilient about rejection or criticism.	When I lose a big sale, my motivation suffers for days afterwards. I am defensive when my boss asks me what I have done or when she suggests alternative ways to do things.	1. This month, I will read a suggested book. 2. Next quarter, I will attend a seminar. 3. Over the next six months, I will use what I learn to better manage my sensitivity to criticism, maintain my motivation, and learn from constructive feedback.
2.		
3.		

Now, use the form following at the end of this report to plan how you will increase your sales by developing those areas needing improvement.

Implementation

The best advice we can give you in implementing your development plan is to start NOW. Today, after completing your plan, you are motivated; tomorrow, as your work and personal life intrude, you will be distracted. Take action TODAY.

- Schedule a meeting with your manager, coach or mentor to review your plan and refine it based on their good advice.
- Enroll in the necessary courses and training.
- Visit the library or local bookstore or use the on-line links provided in this report to obtain books, CD's or audiotapes.
- Sign up for a seminar or some other type of training.
- Make a list of other on-the-job activities you will begin this week.

Remember that you are ultimately responsible for making the change. As you continue your development process keep the following in mind:

- Do not give up. Commit to pursuing your goals and persist in your efforts.
- Review your action plan often to ensure that you are on the right path and working to achieve your goals within your time frame.
- Reward yourself when you meet your goals and desired outcomes.
- Continuous improvement is the key to self-development. Once you have achieved the goals in this action plan, reassess your situation, review your results, set new goals, and continue on your path of growth and self-improvement.

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My Plan for Building on Strengths

Suzanne Example
Surveyed: 4/15/2003 1:09:44 PM

<i>Strength</i>	<i>Contribution to My Success</i>
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

My Plan for Developing Areas Needing Improvement

Suzanne Example
Surveyed: 4/15/2003 1:09:44 PM

<i>Area for Improvement</i>	<i>How it Limits My Success</i>	<i>Improvement Action Steps</i>
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		