

Selection - Sales and Marketing Profile



ProfileSoft

Getting the most from your human capital

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Key Behaviours

This individual's answers to the ProfileSoft questionnaire are significantly off the norms. He belongs to the 1% of the population having the most extreme answers. Consequently, we must take into account a greater uncertainty in the interpretation of his results.



Entrepreneurship (Approach to undertaking projects, activities)

This individual is efficient in a structured work situation. She is calm and relaxed. She reacts satisfactorily to sporadic stress. She requires a detailed work plan, a structure, specific activities and objectives. She is resigned, pleasant and cautious.



Motivation (Criteria, motivator factors)

She is considerably motivated by factors other than money or standing. She seeks a lifestyle that is unhurried, solid and secure. She is moderately ambitious. She needs work objectives that are valuable for her and for the company. She occasionally commits herself to achieving high performance levels. Effective motivational factors help her maintain a level of activity essential to attaining this performance.



Leadership (Tendency to act alone or in a team)

She is competent in a group environment. She prefers a minimum amount of freedom on a well-structured team. She accepts a certain amount of supervision. At times, she also appreciates leading the group. She requires a group of people with similar affinities.



Interaction style (Approach to maintaining contacts with others)

She is keen, jovial and friendly. She values social interaction. She achieves her objectives through her individual contacts. She is ill at ease, however, in meeting people for the first time or in carrying out new activities.



Technical orientation (Interest in theory or practice)

She is rational, factual and precise. She is stimulated by technical tasks and assignments that require intellectual and conceptual problem-solving. She is talented in specialized tasks that require her to be meticulous.

Performance Conditions

Short term

An environment where there is daily pressure. She likes a job with established objectives and detailed work plans. She likes to use her skills to adapt to and follow an already established procedure.

A work situation where she can contribute to the development of the people working with her. She prefers a job that has social value. Ultimately, she needs an environment geared towards helping others, which also provides sufficient security and offers opportunities to invest her talents and energy.

A job with opportunities to be a member of a team and contribute to her co-workers' efforts. An environment where she will occasionally be team leader.

She seeks work involving interactions with other people. She prefers a job requiring contact with people and a limited number of exchanges with strangers. An environment offering regular interactions with people.

She requires working conditions with technical training requirements. She seeks opportunities to be creative and to put ideas into action. She prefers a job that demands precision.

Long term

This person is more oriented towards a support or a service position than towards developing business. For her to be productive and satisfied in a supervisory role, her job must be very well structured and involve tasks that are established and defined.

Her motivational pattern prompts her to develop the skills of people who work with her. She must have the opportunity to invest a lot of effort and to help others. Long-term objectives are preferable.

She is stimulated by a job that regularly combines independence and team spirit. She is sufficiently flexible to supervise independent people as well as those who like to take part in teamwork.

Work involving a lot of contact with new people stimulates her. She uses persuasion rather than her technical knowledge to manage people on an individual basis.

Interview Questions

Suggested questions to improve knowledge of updated potential :

■ Entrepreneurship

- Check through her references to find out how she reacts under pressure.
- Who provided her with the details of her plans and objectives?
- What type of support did she need to achieve her results?
- How many times did she achieve her results using more time or more support than originally planned?
- What was her actual contribution in the achievement of her results?

■ Motivation

- Check her references to determine her actual contribution towards attaining results.
- What did she do? When and how?
- Question her in detail on her actual efforts accomplished to attain results.

■ Leadership

- Ask her to provide you with examples of situations where she worked independently.
- What kind of relations does she have with her immediate superiors?
- How does she perceive her role as a team member?
- Has she ever had problems with work colleagues?

■ Interaction style

- How does she get along with work colleagues?
- Has she ever experienced a conflict of personality?
- How important are her relations with other people?

■ Technical orientation

- Check and see whether her learning and work experiences are transferable to your industry.
- Does she consider technical learning experiences to be positive and essential to her occupational development?

Training needs - Sales

Her selling skills are insufficient. The client must have the impression that his needs have been understood, and will be satisfied. To reach this objective, when facing a client, she must:

- obtain information about the client's preferences and concerns;
- give information on her products/services and their advantages; and
- ensure mutual understanding.

	Training and development	
	Required	Not required
Obtain information		
▶ Promote interaction		X
▶ Listen and speak	X	
▶ Interpret		X
▶ Lead the discussion	X	
▶ Question	X	
Provide information		
▶ Consult	X	
▶ Adapt approach	X	
▶ Attract attention	X	
Verify understanding		
▶ Make oneself understood	X	
▶ Clarify / confirm		X
▶ Manage disagreement	X	

Training needs - Sales

■ Obtain information

She has problems obtaining information from the client. She should remember that the client does not usually reveal his needs directly. Often, the client doesn't know what his needs are. A good part of the job consists in identifying and exploring the needs of the client until they are clear to him. Once this is done, she can show the client how these needs can be satisfied by a particular product or service.

Identifying and developing needs is but one way to obtain information from the client. Information concerning his operations, his organization, his methods and his decision-making process also provide important indications about the client's needs, preferences and attitudes. Such information can indicate which product benefits will be important to him. It can determine which application(s) should be emphasized. It can indicate where the customer may want reassurance before making a decision.

- ▶ Her selling technique is interactive. With her two-way communication, she “exchanges” information with the client; this approach helps convince clients, who get involved and take part in seeking solutions and in decision-making.
- ▶ She talks too much. She should question the client and listen a lot more. Talking too much prevents exchanging information. She could lose sales because she does not make enough of an effort to discover the client's priorities and needs.

It is generally safer to lead with a question than a non-stop 'pitch'. If not, the product features she chooses to emphasize, may turn out to be drawbacks!

- ▶ She listens carefully and interprets things well. Clients supply many clues about their attitudes, their preferences and their needs. A doubtful expression on the part of the client often signals that a particular advantage is important. She must be alert to these signals and provide the client with necessary reinforcements.

Training needs - Sales

■ Obtain information (cont'd)

- ▶ She tends to control the conversation. She could be in control while letting the client talk. It is possible to change the direction of the conversation at any time, for example, by asking a question that directs the client's attention to a topic of his choice. Or, by summarizing what the client has just said, and then directing him onto a new subject of his choice.

If she lacks confidence in her skills at directing the conversation in this manner, she must rely on different control methods. She can try to limit the client's answers to a simple yes or no, usually by asking questions such as:

- 'Do you agree?'
- 'Don't you agree?'

Usually, however, the client resists such methods. He wants to feel that he is taking part in the conversation equally, even if he is not totally controlling it.

- ▶ She lacks the skills to obtain information from the client. Even disinterested or indifferent clients will talk if they are asked the right questions in the right way. It is often important to give a reason behind a question, especially if there is even the slightest chance that the purpose of the question could be misinterpreted.

It is important to start a conversation by asking questions that open up areas of discussion rather than limiting them to what the client has to say. If open questions don't work, one can always ask more specific ones.

Training needs - Sales

■ Provide information

She has not mastered the techniques for providing information. While some people provide too much information, others provide too little in the mistaken belief that whatever they say will be held against them.

In the eyes of the client, providing information establishes credibility. It creates a positive climate in which thoughts and ideas can be exchanged. Supplying information is an art, as the client must be given assistance in establishing relationships between ideas presented and it must be made sure that they are clear.

- ▶ She is not consultative. She risks regarding the sales process as though the client were an adversary. It would be to her advantage to establish a climate of trust with the client. She must bridge the gap between her knowledge and the experience she has acquired in doing business with other clients in similar situations. She must earn the client's trust.
- ▶ She does not adapt what she has to say according to the other party. She must be at ease not only in discussing the technical specifications of her products with product operations or product design specialists, but also in justifying costs with executives.

Role-playing, simulated presentations and experience acquired in meeting potential clients are efficient methods of increasing her confidence. Simulating sales situations with other people in her organization who hold different positions and have different personalities would be useful.

- ▶ She does not determine in advance what she is going to say to the client. This is an indication that she does not understand one of the basic principles of selling: to obtain information, she must first give information, and she must do so at the beginning of the meeting.

The most important introductory information concerns that with which the client can identify, for example, information relating to needs or problems that the client has experienced. Usually, they are common to the client's industry or field. Information of this kind is more likely to capture and hold the client's attention than gimmicks or slogans.

Training needs - Sales

■ Verify understanding

She has difficulty checking that there is a good understanding. It is just as easy to misunderstand as it is to be misunderstood in a selling situation. It is her responsibility to communicate effectively and she must make sure that her remarks are on target. She must uncover doubts the client may have and bring out all possible objections. In addition, she must make sure that she well understands what the client is telling her. She clarifies and confirms what she has understood:

- 'So what you are saying to me is ...'
 - 'If I understand you correctly ...'
-
- ▶ She has no framework for judging her success in convincing a client. She must be able to identify specific facts, i.e., certain words that the client has told her and her way of answering them, to support the probability that the client will or won't buy. She risks identifying a client's purchasing potential as high when in fact it is very limited, or vice versa. It would be to her advantage to obtain an example of a sales technique that shows how needs, attitudes, doubts and objections are related to one another, at different stages of the sales process. Then she could compare her actual performance with the model, to determine what she does well and what she should improve.
 - ▶ She is comfortable closing a sale and asking for the order. She sees it as an opportunity to review what she has agreed upon with the client. It is a helpful and reassuring reminder that makes it possible to check the reasons why the client has made the purchase.
 - ▶ She perceives objections and doubts as obstacles to the sale rather than as situations that can be analyzed and resolved. Views of objections as obstacles are often intuitive and unfounded. She must guard against interpreting a question by the client as an objection.

Having a list of typical objections and answers to each of these is important. Learning techniques to handle objections is even better. One technique is to clarify the objection before answering it, to ensure that it really is an objection. No product is perfect and no one expects it to be.

Training needs - Strategy/Marketing

She doesn't use enough strategy and could plan her sales calls better. To sell intelligently, it's not enough to know how to approach the client. Very good knowledge of the product and the market is a must as well as the ability to plan activities and steps in the sales procedure; the client's potential must also be evaluated. These are the basic elements and foundation of a productive and successful sales call.

	Training and development	
	Required	Not required
Organization & clientele		
▶ Know the market	X	
▶ Know the clientele	X	
▶ Know the services		X
Time management		
▶ Establish priorities		X
▶ Understand procedures	X	
▶ Plan activities		X
Intervention strategy		
▶ Analyze the situation		X
▶ Know the different steps	X	
▶ Create opportunities	X	

Training needs - Strategy/Marketing

■ Know the organization and clientele

She doesn't know her product and her market well enough. Such knowledge forms the basis of all sales and, all too often, it is incomplete or doesn't go far enough.

- ▶ Her knowledge of the market and the competition in particular is incomplete. If she doesn't familiarize herself with the competition, the client will do so himself. This leads to confusion and is demoralizing. When faced with competition, she must be able to add value to her products and sell effectively against the image that the competitors' products project.
- ▶ Her knowledge of the various types of clients is too limited for her to be able to recognize their needs and see exactly how the features and advantages of the product can meet them. It would be to her advantage to encourage current clients to give their point of view about what is important.
- ▶ She finds all her products easy to sell. By not "pushing" one product any more than others, she is able to balance her selling.

Training needs - Strategy/Marketing

■ Time management

She manages her time well. One of the surest ways to improve sales is to allocate her selling time properly. Selling is a complex task involving a number of different activities, such as:

- territory planning;
- prospecting;
- travelling;
- face-to-face sales calls;
- after-sales service; and
- writing offers, proposals, etc.

The other necessary tasks, such as completing reports, even if they do not directly contribute toward sales, are an important part of the sales process nonetheless. In view of the many activities to be carried out, it is often difficult to efficiently allocate her time.

- ▶ She sets priorities among her clientele and invests her efforts and energy according to return on investment. She weighs revenue level against the effort required to achieve it.
- ▶ She hasn't mastered all the steps in the selling process. For example, if the client's potential hasn't been evaluated, she runs the risk of wasting her time. She should make a point of evaluating:
 - potential revenues for the client;
 - the client's needs;
 - the client's level of interest; and
 - the probability that the client will purchase.

It is better to complete all these steps in order to properly evaluate the client's potential before investing the time needed to meet with him face to face. Evaluating the potential client by phone is an efficient technique. She can do this by herself or entrust it to someone who is very well trained to do so.

- ▶ She can significantly improve the way she plans her activities. She is aware of the number of her daily activities and the need to use her time well.

Training needs - Strategy/Marketing

■ Intervention strategy

She doesn't use any strategy in approaching a specific client; however, it would be to her advantage to pre-determine what she hopes to accomplish and how she is going to do so. This is how to control a sale rather than let the client control it. Strategy helps measure progress. It indicates where she is in developing clientele and what the next step must be to bring the client nearer to closing the sale.

- ▶ She is aware that collaboration is a key point that should not be neglected when preparing an action plan. She analyzes the decision-making process and takes into account those individuals who influence the decision-making process.
- ▶ She overlooks certain steps required to bring the client round to closing a sale. If the client is left to himself to decide whether or not to buy, he sometimes has to struggle alone to "sell" the product/service to his superiors or to other members of his organization.

One may decide to blame the client for his indecision; however, it is better to examine how the essential steps can be integrated into the selling cycle, so as to maintain the level of interest from the time of the initial contact to the time the sale is closed.

- ▶ She doesn't know how to increase business from present clients. She tends to look for quick sales and take the cream off the top, overlooking the rest of the opportunities. This can affect her sales. To get into the habit of creating and developing new opportunities with present clients, she could:
 - ask for referrals;
 - introduce new applications; and
 - sell all her products.

Integration guide

Here are a few pointers that will make it easier for this person to assume new responsibilities :

Entrepreneurship

It is of the utmost importance for her to learn to cope with the stress imposed on her by her work structure. It is worthwhile to teach her how to develop her work plan, and to supervise her. Make sure that she masters the specific techniques that are essential for her performance.

Motivation

She will have a tendency to delay her integration. You will have to persuade her to work harder. During her integration, she will require an ongoing motivational plan.

Leadership

She needs to know that she is part of the integration plan. She is committed towards her supervisors and her organization. She definitely likes to be recognized and rewarded for that commitment. She readily accepts her integration period.

Interaction style

During her integration, she requires help from her co-workers and her supervisor. She appreciates interactions with others.

Technical orientation






She has a positive attitude towards integration programs. Learning new concepts represents an intellectual challenge that motivates her and makes her efficient.


Profile results

It is important to note that there are no good or bad results. The ProfileSoft system measures behaviours that are key to workplace performance; quantified results represent trends.

For additional details, consult our website www.profilessoft.ca, access your client account, click "Tools", then "Interpreting results" and enter results in appropriate boxes.

Results

- 30**  **Entrepreneurship** (Tendency to plan, organize and respect procedures)
- 34**  **Motivation** (Tendency to obtain results and desire to help others)
- 42**  **Leadership** (Tendency to work alone or in a team)
- 42**  **Interaction style** (Feelings of satisfaction in exchanging ideas with others)
- 64**  **Technical orientation** (Interest in theory or practice)

90  **Predictor** (The predictor is a statistical estimator that identifies the type of functions that best suit each individual)

People with these results are comfortable in line positions. Their performance possibilities are very good in a competitive environment. They may also perform in other work environments. However they will then need more time, effort and energy in order to reach equivalent level of performance and goals.

