

Challengers!

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What should you look for in a sales person?

This has been one of the biggest questions I'm asked and the second one is do I have the right sales person on my team now. So what's the answer? Well, I've always said that you need someone who understands business, someone who can think strategically, educate the client and someone who is unafraid to say "no" to the client. No Fear.

I recently read a survey that The Sales Executive Council did on over 6,000 sales reps in about 100 companies across the U.S. and what they found solidifies my opinion, yea!

The successful salesperson today is probably not who you would have hired ten to twenty years ago. Back then we were looking for people who could "build relationships". Haven't we always said, this is a relationship business. Well, hang on to your hat because these "relationship builders" come in dead last in this survey as performers. The sales person that wins every time is what they call The Challenger. Take a look at the information they found:

Sales Reps fall into one of these profiles
Survey conducted by **SALES EXECUTIVE COUNCIL®**

The Hard Worker	The Challenger	The Relationship Builder	The Lone Wolf	The Problem Solver
Always willing to go the extra mile	Always has a different view of the world	Builds strong advocates in customer organization	Follows own Instincts	Reliably responds to internal and external stakeholders
Doesn't give up easily	Understands the customer's business	Generous in giving time to help others	Self-assured	Ensures that all problems are solved
Self-motivated	Loves to debate	Gets along with everyone	Difficult to control	Detail-oriented
Interested in feedback and development	Pushes the customer			

Challengers are far more likely to be high performers than any other profile.

- **Challengers and Lone Wolves are more likely to be high performers than core performers.**
- **Lone Wolves can be successful if the environment matches their natural style, but regardless of success they pose a significant management challenge.**
- **Hard Workers and Problem Solvers are more likely to be core performers than high performers.**
- **The Relationship Builder is significantly more likely to be a core performer than a high performer.**

The Challenger Rep

- Offers a unique perspective
- Two-way communication skills
- Knows the customer value drivers
- Can identify economic drivers
- Is comfortable discussing money
- Can pressure the customer

Differences between the Challenger and the Relationship Builder

The Challenger	The Relationship Builder
Challengers win by pushing customers to think differently	Relationship Builders, on the other hand, focus on relieving tension by giving in to the customer's every demand
Challengers push customers outside their comfort zone	Relationship Builders are focused on being accepted into it
While the Challenger is focused on customer value	The Relationship Builder adopts a service mentality They focus on building strong personal relationships across the customer organization, being likable and generous with their time At the end of the day, a conversation with a Relationship Builder is probably professional, even enjoyable, but it isn't as effective because it doesn't ultimately help customers make progress against their goals

Challengers absolutely dominate in the complex, solution sale. Challengers represent 54% of high performers compared to only 4% represented by Relationship Builders.

So the answer to the question: Hire Challengers!