

By Carl Davidson

About the Author

Carl Davidson is the president of Sales & Management Solutions, a consulting firm specializing in sales and management video training and live seminars. He is the author of several books including *Secrets of Accountability Management*. His articles are read by more than 60,000 sales professionals monthly. Send comments to davidson@salesco.net. For a free demonstration video, list of products and topics and to order the video *Million Dollar Management Secrets*, call 800-941-0068.

Hedging Your Hiring Bets

Who you hire is an important decision. The right candidate will bring sales and profits to your company. The wrong one can mean serious losses and lawsuits. On average, you invest \$20,000 in potential profit, training and payroll in each new candidate. Here are some tips from great sales managers as to how to make the right choice of who to hire.

In his video, *Million Dollar Management Secrets*, Tom Cooksey, vice president of the world's largest Kinetico dealership, says you should consider hiring candidates with the following credentials.

- **Home owner.** If candidates are homeowners, their relentless mortgage gives them the incentive to go out and sell every month. People who live with friends or relatives can get by with a lower level of success. Renters also tend to be more transient.
- **Stable marriage.** People in stable marriages offer several advantages to you as an employer. A divorce can be

very distracting. If people have stayed with their spouses for a long time it indicates stability that may apply to their job as well.

- **Involved in the community.** While it is true that the person who just moved to town can make a good salesperson, your best bet is someone who has a lot of ties in the community. A person who is active in a church, local service clubs and who has family members in the area will make his transition to success easier and more likely.

These are factors many sales managers feel are your best bet that a candidate will be a successful employee. One manager I know hires people in their 50s and 60s because they tend to work evenings and rarely are in a rush to get home.

See Them in the Flesh

Before you make your selection, perform a full demo at the candidate's home with family in attendance. What you see is what you will get. If the house is a mess, you will

get a candidate who may be less than neat. If the family seems unstable, you may be taking on personal problems. If the candidate cannot get the family to attend, you may be facing a person in a bad relationship or one who cannot control others.

Look at the family's reaction to the demo. Is it enthusiasm, scorn or sarcasm? Ask the spouse if he/she believes the candidate will be successful selling your equipment or if he/she knows that his/her spouse might be out evenings and Saturdays.

Arrange a Ride Along

Many managers take the candidate out to do a little prospecting, door knocking and a demo or two. They study the candidate's reactions and questions to see if they think the recruit has what it takes to succeed.

Run a Credit and Police Report

In addition to reference checks, do a credit check and police check on every

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candidate before you make a final decision. People cannot sell if they have personal problems, and a credit check will tell you if they have problems with debt. Also, before you send someone into a customer's home, you should know if they have a criminal record. Customers rely on you to screen employees.

Is this a lot of work? Yes it is, but when you realize that each bad hire costs you \$20,000, it's worth spending the time to find out all you can and hedge your bets. When you realize that you turn over your customers, staff, business and future to people you bring on board, you realize what a big responsibility it is to do what you can to hire the very best. **WQP**

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