



High Tech Sales: The 10 Top Hiring Mistakes to Avoid

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INTRODUCTION: HIGH TECH SALES: THE TOP 10 HIRING MISTAKES TO AVOID

In a cutthroat marketplace – the future of your business – and maybe your job – depends on your ability to hire and motivate top performers. Do you know what sets great salespeople apart from the rest? In the study, **“Develop Your Next Top Performer”**, authors **Geenber & Weinstein** expand on the 80/20 rule of who delivers revenue. “55% of those people earning their living in sales should be doing something else, 20-25% should be selling something else, and 20% account for about 80% of everything that’s sold.” Given these statistics, it is important in high tech sales to avoid the top 10 hiring mistakes.

MISTAKE #1: NOT UNDERSTANDING THE COST OF A BAD SALES HIRE

At the **University of Chicago, Graduate School of Business**, in the class, **“Fundamentals of Effective Sales Management,”** sales management attendees and I went through the exercise of calculating the cost of a sales hire. Sales manager students must analyze the cost of a salesperson for their particular product and compensation plan. They present the results of this exercise along with the hiring effectiveness history at their company. This eye-opening exercise serves to make the attending sales managers realize that hiring sales professionals is their single most important job.

What is the estimated cost to hire an enterprise-level sales professional? Greg Doyle, Sr. Vice President of Sales, Junction Solutions and former Vice President, SAP, proposes a simple, but effective approach to this calculation: **“Think about the quota that you are going to assign to the individual and multiple that times 3 or 5.** This will give you the expected sales revenue over that period of years. Let’s assume the quota is \$2.5M X 3 years = \$7.5m. Now when is the last time you purchased something that cost \$7.5M dollars? Reflect on how much due diligence you did before you made that purchase. Ask yourself and your team, ‘have we done enough due diligence on this candidate?’ The answer is almost always no.”

Well-known sales coach and author of **Hope is Not a Strategy**, **Rick Page** notes: “If our accounting practices required us to take a write-off or write a check for this amount every time an employee went out the door, this [poor hiring techniques] would stop.” His studies have shown that a bad hire can cost a company much more than direct costs. Consider the cost of lost opportunities, time and stress, angry customers, employee morale, wasted support resources, lost productivity, and management credibility and reputation.

A vacant territory too frequently drives hiring practices. **Hiring under pressure for a vacant territory vs. the cost of a wrong hire must be weighed.** Don’t be swayed. Don’t be rushed into a hasty decision by the need to put a warm body on the street. Anticipate your hiring needs in advance by practicing continuous interviewing. If you have three candidates and none have the qualities of a finalist, don’t pick the best of a bad bunch. Keep interviewing for that \$7.5M star performer.

ON COST OF A BAD HIRE: *“Think about the quota that you are going to assign to the individual and multiple that times 3 or 5. This will give you the expected sales revenue over that period of years. Let’s assume the quota is \$2.5M X 3 years = \$7.5m.”*



- Greg Doyle, Sr. Vice President of Sales

MISTAKE #2: HIRING SALES ROOKIES

In high tech today there are sufficient sales candidates in the market to find experienced account executives, pre-sales, and channels management professionals. **It often seems attractive and smart to “promote” the star pre-sales engineer or solutions consultant to a sales position.** After all, they have been part of your successful deals, have seen the good and bad in sales techniques, and they understand your industry and products. What’s the downside? **Sometimes there is no downside, and sometimes it is a huge mistake.** Experience shows that 1 in 4 people successfully make that jump from SE to AE. Additionally, the company and regional team may be impacted by the loss of this pre-sales talent. Some pre-sales people will leave a company if they are not given a shot at an account executive position. The VP of North America of one of the largest ERP firms votes against this practice every time it comes up. However, some of the most successful salespeople in the world came up through this process. It’s a tough call at best.

What can you do to pre-qualify potential sales rookies to mitigate any risk? There are several areas where sales rookies fall short: the front end and back end of the sales process. Pre-sales consultants usually understand well the mid-sales cycle diagnosis and qualification process. Prospecting and forecasting on the front end and closing and contract negotiations on the back end are areas where they are lacking expertise. Pre-qualify the skills there, and you may find a teachable sales consultant who could be a winner.

Hiring non-salespeople from outside your firm for a sales position is a bad practice. Don’t do it. Those non-sales skilled individuals do not have the benefit of any learning curve. Rookie sales managers seem to think that hiring non-salespeople to a “farmer” position is safe. In many high tech firms, however, some of the largest new deals are made in the customer “install base”. As much as 70% of new license revenue can come from these accounts. Customers are tough and can be skeptical about past delivery, too. You need a professional, not a novice to handle your valued customers. In **William Miller’s ProActive Sales Management**, the **Golden Rule of Hiring** is “it’s easier to teach a competent salesperson what to sell, than it is to teach a product-competent person how to sell.”

Similarly, a company’s source for pre-sales professionals tends to be the professional services organizations. These professional services candidates may or may not be sales-savvy enough to make the shift to a pre-sales consultant position. They may know your product, but they may not understand sales processes and customer qualification dynamics. Can they be trained as value engineering diagnosticians? Again, high tech pre-sales candidates are available in the marketplace with successful sales cycle experience.

MISTAKE #3: NOT CONDUCTING A CONSISTENT AND THOROUGH INITIAL INTERVIEW

The first interview with a candidate must be thorough and consistent. Novice sales managers fail to understand that interviews are a buying and selling process.

In order to insure a full and consistent first interview, it is wise to have several tools at hand: an Ideal Candidate profile, an Account Executive or Pre-sales Consultant Job Description, and an Interview

Questionnaire. These can be attached to the resume. (Note: some firms believe that writing on a resume can muddle future legal issues.) Keep examples of any pre-interview documents that the candidate has prepared. Note the questions they asked. With these tools in hand, you'll be able to conduct interviews that you can recall accurately, and score and compare appropriately.

Lynn Anderson, former Vice President, CapGemini, Oracle Services East Business Unit and current Founder, Coaching4Abundance suggests: "I like my candidates to provide concrete examples of what they have accomplished (numbers, results, outcome, etc.) They should be prepared to discuss what they are not great at. We all are not great at something. As an interviewer, I loved to ask this question just to see what they would say, and how they would react."

During the interview Lynn Anderson also recommends: "...create a candidate matrix (kind of like your own personal SWOT analysis – strength, weakness, opportunities, threats) so that you may relate what these candidates have to offer to the role you are seeking to fill." This is a great communications tool.

Check yourself on the "halo effect" and the first impression trap. Often a single favorable or unfavorable item will warp sound judgment. "He is friendly with the largest account in our territory" vs. "she drives an old car." A first impression trap can kill your intended process. For instance an example is, "I liked her style and confidence the moment I saw her." Use the profile to make a complete, well-rounded go/no-go decision. Stick to your SWOT analysis.

ON INTERVIEW EVALUATIONS: *"...create a candidate matrix (kind of like your own personal SWOT analysis – strength, weakness, opportunities, threats) so that you may relate what these*

candidates have to offer to the role you are seeking to fill."



--Lynn Anderson, former Vice President CapGemini, Oracle East Business Practice and Founder, Coaching4Abundance

A candidate's interview preparation is a key insight to their selling approach. Interviewing skills can reveal a salesperson's diagnostic vs. traditional approach to sales cycles. In my sales candidate interviews, you will get dismissed within twenty minutes of interview start without adequate preparation. All hiring managers should be insulted by a lack of candidate preparation. An extreme exception to this rule would be a short-notice interview. Human Resources Vice President, Global360, Denise Quintanilla observes, "If you [the candidate] are not invested in learning about the company why should my company invest in learning about you?"

Consider incorporating a Behavioral Clues profile in the interview process. This profile can help match the candidate to your company's sales culture. Some of these behavior clues may include: what is a candidate's "ruling passion", who does this person admire, how did the candidate prepare for the interview, how does this candidate reach decisions, and what are the candidate's recreational activities.

The "selling" side of an interview dictates that you present your company in the best light. Make sure you also present yourself well. Was your interview respectful of the candidate's time and preparation efforts? Did you answer your cell phone and emails during the interview? Does this behavior reflect how you act as a sales

manager? Probably it does. The message you could be sending is “I’m a busy person and an inconsiderate one too.” **Sell yourself as well as your firm.** Top candidate are in high demand. Selling works both ways.

Don’t hesitate to end an interview early if a candidate proves disruptive or has misrepresented her experience in her resume. Don’t lose control of an interview or its goals. Often a glib, egocentric, evasive, talky, or argumentative candidate forces us to lose control of the process. Many candidates incorrectly enhance their resumes. Your time is valuable, and your goal is a critical hire. Move along.

[Sales Strategy Consultants Note: you may request a copy of the SSC Ideal Interview Questionnaire, SSC Account Executive Profile, SSC Pre-sales Consultant Profile, SSC Account Executive Job description, and SSC Pre-sales Job Description, Sales Behavioral Clues profile, Interview Questions that Cannot be Asked, Reference Checklist.]

MISTAKE #4: NOT HAVING A JOB DESCRIPTION

Without a roadmap for the job, how can you conduct an appropriately thorough interview? Denise Quintanilla, Vice President, Human Resources, 360Global states, “Not having a job description or examples of the metrics the salesperson will be expected to achieve [is not a sound practice]. An “A” player will want to know those things early in the process.”

Many sales managers ask us how detailed this **job description** should be. Make it as detailed as possible. The job description can be a launching pad for other important documents and events: the 90-day training plan, the 90-day performance review (critical), and the annual review. Measuring against initial expectations leaves no question or ambiguity on performance standards. Share the job description with your recruiters, candidates, and extended sales team. Early guidelines set clear expectations.

MISTAKE #5: NOT HAVING AN IDEAL CANDIDATE PROFILE

Do you have an **Ideal Candidate Profile**? Do you socialize this profile with all the interviewers in the process? Do you share the profile with outside recruiters? How do you assess the cultural fit to your firm? Does your profile include standards for verifiable past performance, sales process skills, and industry knowledge? Pat Burke, Regional Vice President of Sales - Distribution, of the ERP firm INFOR advises, “You must understand the competencies needed for the position you are about to fill. You must specify the correct characteristics to fit to your company and culture. If you are lucky enough to be hiring into a business which is in alignment, where you understand what the role and skills should be to accomplish the goals for the role, you are a long way toward a successful hire.”

Sales skills and past success are the main reason you agree to interview a candidate. Once a candidate is in your office, you must be able to see a cultural fit to your sales organization and methodology. If you do not have a hiring profile (different than a job description), how can you articulate your needs to HR, candidates, recruiting firms, and your interview team? Take the time to develop your **Ideal Profile** or obtain one from outside sources. Per Denise Quintanilla, Global360, “This is so critical in the hiring process. You can’t successfully hire if the hiring team is not in synch on the Candidate Profile.”

ON HAVING AN IDEAL CANDIDATE PROFILE: *““This is so critical in the hiring process. You can’t successfully hire if the hiring team is not in synch on the Candidate Profile.”*

-Denise Quintanilla, Vice President, Human Resources Global360

MISTAKE #6: ONLY CONDUCT ONE INTERVIEW

Hope is Not a Strategy's author Rich Page notes "Before I hire a salesperson or principal for our firm, I meet them for at least eight hours, THEN two outside the office at dinner."

An **ideal interview process** should include:

- a) **The initial interview phone or face-to-face interview.** Decision for location may be based on logistics.
- b) **A face-to-face second interview,** with potential other team member interviews. Ideally, you will ask an Account executive or Sales Engineer to prepare to describe the processes and buying influences of a deal that they "won" and a deal that they lost. Explain what happened, who they sold, and what they would have done differently.
- c) **Additional finalist lunch/dinner meeting** takes place. Headcount is approved by this time.
- d) **Reference checks are completed.** Background checks are finished, if your company requires one. You and your recruiter have verified the finalist's intention to resign from current employer and give two week's notice.
- e) **FINAL PRESENTATION:** Finalists attend a regional or Headquarters visit with the extended sales team and corporate executives. Each candidate gives a prescribed sales presentation to a select audience.
- f) **Offer is tendered within a few days.** That's why you do background checks before the HQ visit.

High tech sales success requires excellent presentation skills and deep industry knowledge. Today's selling environment requires the salesperson to be a diagnostician. Sales managers vary in their approach to final interview, but they should include, minimally, a sales presentation or territory plan. Some presentation styles to consider include: 1) candidates follow set presentations of your solutions, 2) candidates role-play closing discussions, and 3) candidates prepare their own presentation of current solutions. The final test for hiring sometimes hangs on this effort.

ON DETERMINING SALES ABILITY DURING MULTIPLE INTERVIEWS: "There has been too much emphasis in the past on sales skills vs. effort, coachability, sales discipline and determination. It is also important to pay attention to how a candidate might 'fit in' with the rest of the team. Team chemistry is fragile. Do not give too much credence to the volume of experience, instead focus on the quality of that experience."



-Dave Levitt, SVP Sales, LiquidFrameworks

A hybrid approach to **finalist presentations** may prove optimal. Give the 3 finalist candidates some guidelines to follow for a product or service – that they already know – for one of your target industries. Let them put together

the content. Let the candidate pull together a **30-60-90 day start-up plan** for their territory, too. This shows you their attention to detail, their presentation skills, and still offers you the opportunity to do a Q&A drill-down. Include extended sales team members or marketing professionals in the audience. Ask attendees to throw objections into the mix. Notice if some diagnostic techniques are used prior to the presentation. See how the candidate handles the hot seat. Do they sweat profusely or are they composed and prepared? This exercise will greatly enhance the ability to rank the finalists. When a winner emerges among the candidates, be prepared to make timely offers. **See Mistake #8.**

This interview process allows candidates to spend 12 or more hours with company members, and at least 8 hours with their future sales manager. Your candidate should now be thoroughly sold on your company. After all, **acceptance of an offer is a two-way street. See Mistake # 7.** Don't forget to sell the opportunity to the candidate!

MISTAKE #7: DON'T PREPARE THE EXTENDED INTERVIEW TEAM IN ADVANCE.

Keep in mind the goals of the final interviews. It is a major mistake to conduct these without proper preparation of all the interview members. Set expectations. Otherwise this important step can be counterproductive. It can blow up in your face.

Former VP Sales, Vision Chain, Mike Sorenson, recalls a worst-case scenario: "After that very-marketable candidate's first brief meeting with the hiring manager, she has her next meeting with a higher level executive and neither the candidate or the executive are clear on who is supposed to be "selling" and who is supposed to be "buying" during the interview. **The executive expects the marketable candidate to be already sold** on coming to work for the company. The marketable candidate is still forming her opinion on why she may want to work for the company. The executive asks 'tell me the reasons you want to work here' and the marketable candidate thinks 'tell me why this is a good place to work'. Neither participant ends up very impressed with the other one and the match never happens."

ON LACK OF INTERVIEW PREPARATION FOR EXECUTIVES: *"The executive asks 'tell me the reasons you want to work here' and the marketable candidate thinks 'tell me why this is a good place to work'. Neither participant ends up very impressed with the other one and the match never happens. "*



- Mike Sorenson, former VP Sales, Vision Chain

Give interviewing executives two important items: a synopsis of the candidate's background and talking points for what you want to accomplish from this interview – selling the company. At this point in the process candidate disqualifications should have already occurred. You are at the stage to impress and stack-rank candidates for impending offers. This could be your \$7.5M+ performer.

The HQ or regional office interviews should be organized appropriately. Pre-selected questions, candidate profiles and resumes, interview time schedules, and presentation guidelines should be set in advance. Feedback from interviewers should be required within a day.

The extended sales team interviews can be conducted by pre-sales professionals, channel and partner managers, professional services directors, and marketing managers. Each brings a different insight to the interview process. **Candidates should be expected to “close” the interviews.** I once watched a marketing manager vote “no” to a sales manager’s 3 finalist candidates who did not ask for his recommendation. Perhaps these candidates should have been eliminated earlier?

HR managers tend to be very nervous about the types of questions asked during interviews for fear of future litigation. Take the variability out of your hiring approach by insisting on each interviewer’s training and preparedness. Give them some guidelines, for instance: **“Interview Questions That Cannot Be Asked.”**

Set proper expectations for the weight and influence of this extended panel. Gather everyone’s scores and comments, but understand that you, the hiring manager, make the decision. Committees can’t always spot unusual, unique talent. They may not be able to spot that \$7.5M “A” player. **It’s your judgment on the line.**

MISTAKE # 8: FAILING TO DO REFERENCE CHECKS (ESPECIALLY BACK-DOOR ONES)

“We don’t do reference checks because no one will give us them”, one sales manager told me last year. It seems that trying to get a detailed reference from a human resources department is futile. However, back-door references are still available to the smart sales manager who does their homework.

Have a **Reference Checklist**. Reference checking is a key part of hiring for several reasons. Candidate references can represent a stable of recruit-able contacts. Candidate references can give you tips with future coaching points for your new sales professional. References can obviously give reasons for candidate disqualification. If a candidate reference hesitates to answer, or gives short, non-enthusiastic responses to your questions, that speaks volumes, too. Denise Quintanilla, Global360 adds, “It’s typical of HR departments to give such limited information in the reference process that back door checks are essential. This is another way our networks help us.” Your current sales team is a good source of back-door references for candidates.

Psychological testing of candidates and sales profiling has been used in the past two decades with mixed results. It should never be used in place of reference checks. These tests can give further insight into a candidate’s cultural fit. Can a Myers-Briggs or similar profile tell you what you need to know? Does a sales candidate have to be an “ENTJ”? One sales manager who was in favor of testing said: “I want to know if this candidate has the personality to be beat up, chewed up, bloodied, get up and try again. Profiling may not be 100% accurate but it can tell me whether a salesperson has some of the key qualities we’re looking for.” Those who are opposed to psychological testing comment that many viable candidates may be falsely eliminated. **The best predictor of success is past achievement.** One hiring manager stated: “Show me references, show me a W-2. You need real-world evidence... I’m just not convinced that a psychological test can prove anything.” Understand the benefits and limitations of psychological testing, but do not substitute these tests for solid reference checking.

Failure to do reference checks can lead to buyer remorse. Do the homework necessary to hire that \$7.5M individual. Require your sales candidates to show proof of past performance via hard evidence. Ask their references to verify this evidence. **The cost of a bad hire is high. See Mistake # 1.**

MISTAKE #9: DELAYING A FINAL DECISION. RELEASING CANDIDATES #2 & 3 TOO SOON.

The efficiency of your interview and hiring process reflects the efficiency of your organization. When an interview process takes too long the message being sent is “we don’t know what we’re doing or who can make this decision.” In the meantime, top quality candidates normally have four or five interviews with other firms happening simultaneously. **Top quality candidates have a “shelf-life.”** Make sure you have your references lined up in advance of an offer. Do a trial close on the candidate.

Lynn Anderson, CapGemini, notes, “... the speed of the process is key. Someone who has strong skills and experience will be in high demand. Also, this person can add great value to your team so why put them through a long, onerous process. It demonstrates how inefficient and bureaucratic your environment is. Have a standard, set timeline and deadlines just like you would to close an important sale. Don’t let the process linger. The process reflects on the efficiency of the company.”

During the 2007-08 downturn, a large ERP firm was known to bottleneck the sales headcount approval process at the COO’s desk. **Make sure all your headcount approvals are in place prior to finalist interviews.**

Once you have stack-ranked the candidates from final interviews, make an offer. Make sure you’ve determined that the lead candidate is ready to leave their current position, not take a counteroffer, and accept your offer. Failure to qualify candidates for speedy resignation makes hiring a guessing-game. A month notice is too long for a sales or pre-sales candidate to take prior to your company’s start-date. Pre-qualify that a two-week notice will be given. Coach the candidate on the perils of counteroffers. **Do not release candidates #2 or #3 without a “signed and resigned” #1 candidate.** Cement the deal. Call your lead candidate immediately following their resignation. Some savvy hiring managers send a welcome gift to their candidate’s home and spouse. Remember that candidates #2 and #3 may come to work for you at some point. Make a personal effort to make sure these runners-up feel valued.

Be decisive and well organized in making offers. Have the bench strength to back up your plans.

On Firing Bad Hires Quickly: “...if you don’t get rid of the bad hires quickly, they can do much more harm than good. You have to spend more time managing them and less time driving strategy and maturing your top talent. The principal I always use is after about 306 months, I ask ‘knowing what I know NOW about the hire, would I hire them again?’”



- Jay Armant, Vice President, Honeywell

MISTAKE #10: FAILURE TO CONTINUOUSLY INTERVIEW, UPGRADE, AND BACKFILL. FAILURE TO FIRE EARLY.

Both the recent Covid-19 Pandemic and the 2007-08 financial crisis stressed the hiring process. It has become critical to examine the need to continually interview and upgrade the sales team during times of economic downturns. The savvy sales managers kept the interview processes intact and continued to “Top Grade” when possible.

One of the most common errors in sales management is failing to let poor performers go early enough. The complacency that keeps a non-performing warm body in the territory tends to de-motivate the remainder of the sales team.

Performance management starts during the interview process. Using the **Job Description** communicate your expectations during the interview process, during the initial training period, during the 90-day performance review, and during the quarterly territory reviews. Performance metrics should be mutually agreed upon and measurable. Job expectations should never be a surprise to anyone.

ON FAILURE TO FIRE EARLY: “If you aren’t ‘fired with enthusiasm’, you’ll be fired with enthusiasm.”

--Vince Lombardi, Green Bay Packers coach

Disagreement surrounds performance and corrective action plan success rates and their practical utilization. Some sales managers think they should be used often. Most sales managers think it is rare that a sales or pre-sales professional who is put on a short-term performance plan makes their goals effectively. Very occasionally an underperforming employee does meet the performance plan criteria. Often this individual leaves within 3 months anyway. If your firm prior to employee termination requires performance plans, this process should be well documented and well communicated.

There are a wide range of emotions and fears that circle the corrective action process. The sequence of events should be straightforward: counsel early, give a written warning and a short-term plan, monitor this short-term plan, then terminate or re-start. **Help an underperformer find happiness by efficiently easing them into another job or line of work.** No one is happy when a salesperson is underperforming, not either of the parties involved.

An experienced sales manager will focus 70% your time on the “A” or “soon to be A” players, not on the “C- or D+” players. These players who may be consistently off and on a performance plans drag down the team and steal your time. Create measurements of success and hold individuals to them.

Develop bench strength. Practice continuous interviewing. Trim poor performer before their lack of enthusiasm overlays your team with malaise. The goal is to continually upgrade your team.

CONCLUSION

In the article, “**What Makes Great Salespeople?**” author **Geoffrey Brewer** proposes, “Top Guns know that if they want to triple their success rate, they’ve got to triple their failure rate ...Baseball and sales are a lot alike, They’re the only places where you can fail 70 percent of the time and still make the Hall of Fame.” Finding and hiring these elusive homerun hitters is your top priority as a sales management executive. The cost of a poor hire is so high that sufficient time has to be devoted to the hiring process.

Identify and retain the best recruiters to help find top performers. Groom and coach these recruiters to present candidates who only meet the **Ideal Candidate Profile**. Rookie sales managers wait until an opening occurs. They quit interviewing when their current positions are filled. Top candidates may look for a year for the right career move. Are you ready for those candidates when they are available? Have you kept in touch with them over the past year?

The successful salesperson is not only a valued member of your company, but he is considered to be a competitive advantage for your customer’s team. Practice good hiring techniques and avoid the “Top 10 Hiring Mistakes to Avoid.” **Your team’s performance will reflect your hiring acumen.**

ABOUT SALES STRATEGY CONSULTANTS

Sales Strategy Consultants is a firm dedicated to assisting large and small high tech firms who seek to improve their sales productivity, talent management, and performance. We offer the following services:

- **Retained and contingent recruiting for sales, pre-sales, channel marketing, sales operations, field and Product Marketing**
- Sales process and methodology planning and enablement
- **Custom Job Description, Reference Question, and Ideal Candidate templates**
- Compensation plan evaluation and creation
- Sales systems evaluation and recommendations, RFP preparation and analysis
- Assess forecasting methodology for accuracy and validity
- Assess reseller strengths, revenue record, and viability
- Investigate alternative selling solutions
- Go-to-market sales strategy.
- Territory analysis and planning
- Custom sales methodology training
- Conduct custom sales negotiation training
- Team performance evaluation and monitoring
- Planning and conducting yearly sales annual kick-off meetings

ABOUT THE FIRST INTERVIEW NETWORK

First Interview is the largest network for Sales and Marketing recruiting firms in the world. We have member firms in all states of the US, Canada, and Europe. Your primary contact, Sales Strategy Consultants, will reach out to the other affiliates and will qualify your top 5-6 candidates for each of your searches We have over 38 “Tech/Software” recruiters, over 30+ Industrial and B2B recruiters, and over 350 Medical/Pharma recruiters. HQ: Buford, Georgia www.firstinterview.com Tricia Conover is on the Advisory Board for First Interview.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: TRICIA CONOVER

Tricia Conover is the Founder and General Manager of Sales Strategy Consultants and a member of the Board of Advisors, First Interview Network.

Tricia has been in the IT Industry for over 25 years. She has worked in a number of sales, senior sales management , Vice President of Sales and Sales Operations positions for companies including SAP, Oracle, PeopleSoft, Texas Instruments, Manugistics/Blue Yonder, ReachLocal, and Sybase.

Tricia has lead sales and sales operations teams in the areas of channel management strategies, sales force automation, recruiting and hiring process enablement and reengineering, sales negotiations strategies, compensation planning, sales and pre-sales training, sales KPI – Key Performance Indicator measurement, and customer profitability analysis. Her customers have included Fortune 500 corporations as well as ISV's - Independent Software Vendors. Her business and IT areas of expertise include ERP software, supply chain planning, field service, Big Data, Marketing software, enterprise performance management, business process reengineering, customer relationship management, and engineering and document management software. She is a trainer in the **Challenger Sales methodology** as well as other sales methodology methods.