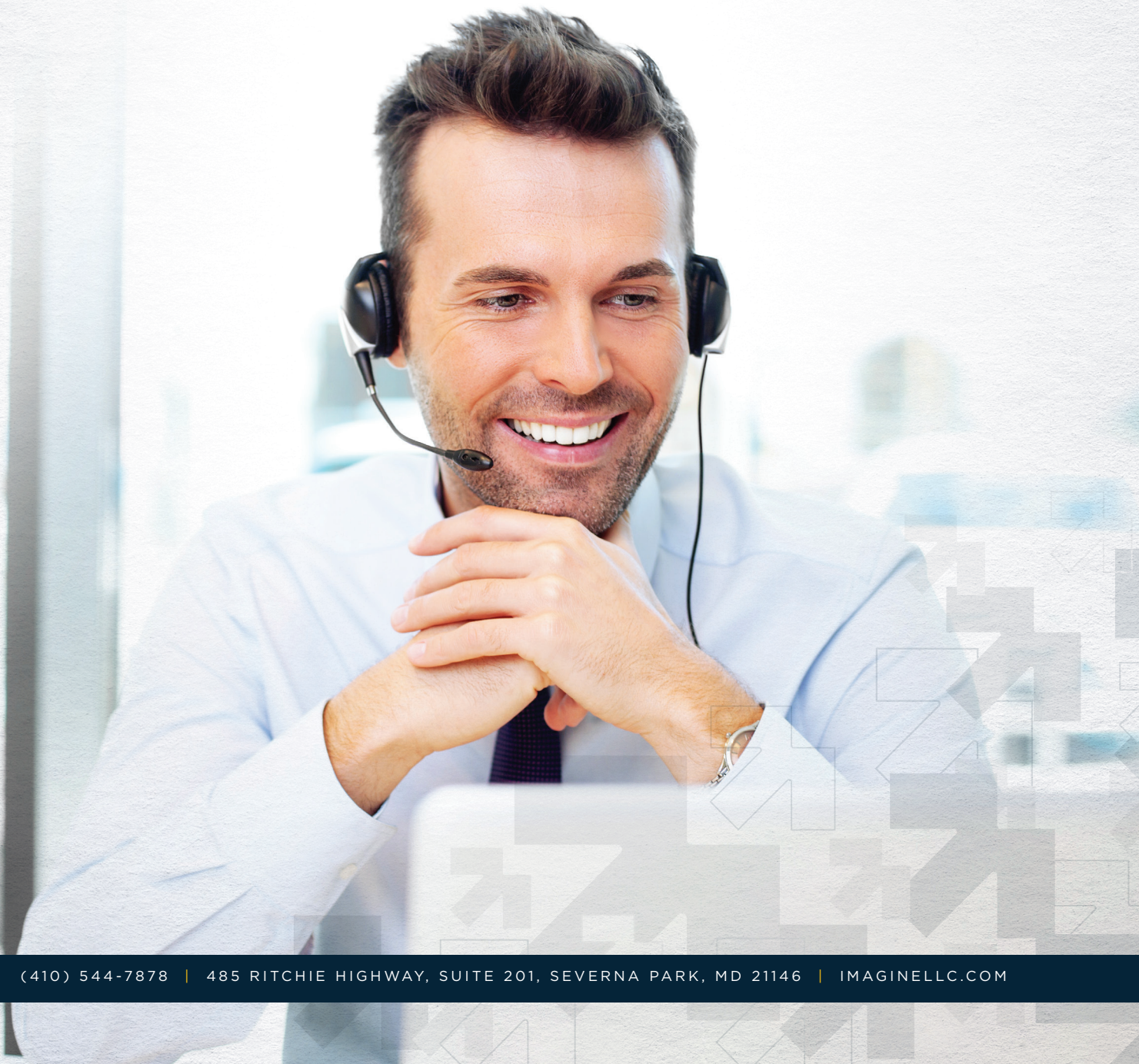


How to Effectively Hire **Sales Development Representatives**



Sales Developments Reps are made, not born.

Key points to successful hire

Be clear on the purpose of the position & have a plan

Sure, you want more sales; but before hiring a sales development rep (SDR) be very clear on why you're engaging in this strategy. Success in this endeavor takes a significant investment. Be sure you're ready to step up to it.

Don't mix jobs

It's easy to think you can have an SDR do other things, especially when they're starting out. Maybe you want them to handle small sales as well. If your purpose is to generate a consistently high volume of quality leads, don't make this mistake. Sales development is a full time mindset. Mixing the job creates complexity and drags performance.

Remember this is the beginning of a sales career

When interviewing and managing an SDR, remember that you're typically looking for someone who is in the early, upward slope of their career. This means that you're not hiring a "finished product," and that consistent coaching and training are crucial to success (of course, that's also true for grizzled vets).

Crystal clear process

Sales development is a high volume, process driven strategy. A simple rule applies here: you cannot under-focus process. Without a solid, continuously improving process, you won't meet your objectives. The process should be clearly laid out in a written sales development playbook.

Data, Data, Data

The decisions you make regarding sales development efforts must be driven by data. Gut instinct will almost always push you in the wrong direction. An extension to this point is that you should also be constantly testing and experimenting; then follow the data.

Feedback

Feedback is the breakfast of champions. As leads are passed on, be sure the loop is closed. The SDR should be clear on which leads were good, which weren't; and more importantly why.

Make them a hero

It's easy to get excited when a new contract is signed. For an SDR, setting an appointment with a sales qualified lead is the same thing. The efforts of your SDRs should be celebrated and a successful SDR should feel like a hero.

Sample Job Description

In the role of Sales Development Representative, you will manage the new account qualification process and create opportunities for our new sales team. Once provided with a targeted list, it will be your task to pick up the phone and contact each individual to explain our service offerings and generate interest. Your goal is to take prospects from a marketing campaign and qualify them (through a call or email). You will quickly learn how to turn prospects into leads, enabling our client sales teams to turn those leads into clients.

Supported by a team, you will not be buried with tedious tasks like researching lists of people or drafting email scripts. You will know who to call and how to contact them; you will know what to say and how to engage them. You will spend more time in conversation and less time on back-end support. Our processes are data-backed and efficient.

Responsibilities

- Qualify and market our clients' service offerings to potential new customers. This involves conducting high-level, strategic conversations with senior executives.
- Utilize [company] sales techniques (including outbound calling, inbound lead follow up, and overall lead management) to generate new business opportunities for our clients.
- Work with marketing to follow-through on new leads created by our existing efforts.
- Log, track and maintain customer contact records.
- Prepare internal client account executives with lead information, as needed.
- Work alongside sales development peers to collaborate and share best practices.

Qualifications

- Experience working in a customer-focused environment. Experience serving clients through telephone interaction is a plus.
- Ability to write succinct, crisp emails and a great phone manner.
- Comfortable with technology. Knowledge of Salesforce or Hubspot is a plus.
- Experience setting, committing, and following through to ensure completion of a goal.
- Ability to juggle priorities and stay focused while handling multiple accounts.

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Attributes

- Coachable. You are open to new ideas, and willing to change. You demonstrate a willingness to learn new ways of approaching your work to achieve better results.
- Curious. You are intellectually curious and eager to understand the needs of others. You know what questions to ask and when.
- Tech Savvy. You are adept with technology. What you don't know, you can easily learn.
- Self-motivated. You work with a sense of urgency and take initiative without being asked. You don't wait for things to happen; you initiate action and make things happen.
- Results-driven. You take initiative and work hard to make a difference. You play to win, and you hate to lose.
- Communicator. You possess exceptional written and oral communication skills and communicate effectively with any audience.

What's Attractive to the Right Candidate?

- Our approach is proven. You will be operating within a system that gets results. You will have clear expectations and the support you need to be successful.
- In this role, you will be acknowledged for your accomplishments. You will have success daily – and your success will be celebrated daily.
- If you want to advance a career in sales, there is no better place. Working with clients from all industries, you will quickly learn the enterprise sales landscape.
- Our compensation plan follows a clear, merit-based structure. You will know exactly what to expect (title, pay, and rewards) from the first day you join our team.

11 Power Interview Questions

Give me your life story in 90 seconds.

SDRs need to communicate complex thoughts in very short periods of time. The ability to quickly and succinctly communicate is crucial for success. This question reveals the candidate's ability to hit the critical points of a story in a short amount of time.

Tell me about a time you faced a challenge. How did you deal with it, and what motivated you to keep going?

Prospecting is tough. An SDR might make 10, 20, or 50 calls in a row with no answer. Where will they draw their inspiration to keep dialing? They'll constantly face rejection. This question will expose the candidate's primary motivators.

What is your main motivation as a sales professional?

Wanting to make money is great, but your SDR should be aiming for something bigger. Sales development is often the start of a sales career. As the saying goes, the how is easy if your why is big enough. Understanding their motivation is important to predict success.

Do you feel comfortable cold-calling?

While effective sales development is well beyond cold-calling, you want to be certain that someone is comfortable making lots of calls to people they don't know. You don't want someone who THINKS they can do, you want someone who KNOWS they can.

What makes you uncomfortable in sales?

Sales development requires people to constantly work outside their comfort zone. They'll be talking to people they don't know, who have much more experience than the SDR does. You want to know what makes them uncomfortable and how they manage it.

Tell me about your worst sales call ever?

We learn far more from our failures than our successes. You want someone who is comfortable sharing failures. The unwillingness to be open about failures is a clear indication that they won't be coachable.

How do you deal with rejection?

As the people primarily responsible for calling and emailing, SDRs deal with an awful lot of rejection. If the candidate admits they get flustered or frustrated after an extended period of rejection, they're probably not cut out for the job. "Fall down seven times, stand up eight" is the mantra of the best SDRs.

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Can you leave us a voicemail message right now?

Don't make them sell you a pen. Have them sell themselves. Ask them to leave you a voice mail based upon the job they are interviewing for. You're looking for them to be able to clearly communicate important points succinctly.

Could I give you some feedback? I would change X, Y, and Z. Now could you try again?

Coachability is critical for sales development reps. Observe how well the candidate incorporates your feedback into their second attempt. This will indicate their level of coachability, as well as demonstrate their listening skills.

What's the most recent thing you've learned about selling?

Always be learning is the battle cry of a successful SDR. Find out what they're doing to learn and master their profession.

Do you have any questions for me?

An interview is a great opportunity to see how a SDR is going to behave in a real situation. You should be looking for the candidate to ask good questions. The type of questions they're going to ask you here are the type they'll ask your prospects.



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