

Interview Guide

Inbound Inside Sales Benchmark

Signature Profile

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Predictive Competencies:

- Tailors Style to Fit Customer Expectations
- Analyzes and Resolves Customer Problems
- Identifies and Addresses Customer Needs
- Achieves Results by Prioritizing Customer Satisfaction
- Makes Profitable and Pragmatic Recommendations

Applicant Name: _____

Interview Date: _____

Interviewed By: _____

Overall
Comments: _____

Tailors Style to Fit Customer Expectations

<p>Question 1: Describe some of the different contacts you had in your last job.</p>	<p>Notes:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Question 2: What steps did you take to prepare for these interactions?</p> <p>Look for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ becomes familiar with the contact and their businesses/markets ▪ curiosity about and sensitivity to the company culture and background of the individuals ▪ involvement in industry activities that would acquaint them with the contact's expectations ▪ studies the image or style that will allow them to fit in with and be trusted by the contact 	<p>Notes:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Question 3: Do you believe you made a good impression? Why or why not?</p> <p>Look for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ flexibility in adapting style to meet contact's expectations ▪ recognizes the business etiquette appropriate to each situation ▪ sincerity and genuineness in the image projected, not obviously playing a role ▪ promotes themselves and the company in ways compatible with the contact's expectations 	<p>Notes:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

- Excellent | Always matched the points to look for
- Average | Matched some of the points to look for
- Poor | Did not match any of the points to look for

Analyzes and Resolves Customer Problems

<p>Question 1: Tell me about a particularly challenging problem you've faced.</p>	<p>Notes:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Question 2: How did you address the situation?</p> <p>Look for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ an objective analysis of the problem ▪ taking ownership of the solution ▪ a willingness to look beyond standard procedures ▪ identifying the root of the problem, not just treating symptoms 	<p>Notes:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Question 3: Would your manager or peers describe you as an effective problem solver? Why?</p> <p>Look for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ genuine interest in resolving problems ▪ viewing problem resolution as an opportunity to strengthen relationships, not as an inconvenience ▪ a commitment to stay focused until the solution is found ▪ closing the loop to ensure satisfaction; not passing the problem on to someone else 	<p>Notes:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

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Identifies and Addresses Customer Needs

<p>Question 1: Tell me about the customer base of your last employer.</p>	<p>Notes:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Question 2: How did you determine what those customers needed?</p> <p>Look for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ consistent questioning through a needs analysis that addresses customer processes and challenges ▪ giving priority to the customer's agenda ▪ taking time to listen to customer responses and input 	<p>Notes:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Question 3: How frequently were you able to successfully satisfy customer requirements and why?</p> <p>Look for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ tailors business plan or solutions to the customer's needs rather than force a standard solution ▪ willingness to accept modification or rejection of their suggestions in order to accommodate the customer ▪ spends time analyzing the customer's objectives versus rush an existing solution ▪ explores alternatives that better fit the customer's methods or goals 	<p>Notes:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

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Achieves Results by Prioritizing Customer Satisfaction

<p>Question 1: Describe the impact that customer satisfaction has had on your effort to succeed in past positions.</p>	<p>Notes:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Question 2: How did you approach problems or issues that could have jeopardized a long-standing client relationship? How did you protect relatively new relationships?</p> <p>Look for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ determination and urgency in the face of problems ▪ focus on the solution, not on being impressive to the customer ▪ disregard for the length or strength of the customer relationship; fair rather than preferential treatment ▪ proactive in uncovering potential problems; avoidance of a negative does not make it nonexistent 	<p>Notes:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Question 3: What was your hit rate at restoring customer confidence and satisfaction? Why?</p> <p>Look for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ understanding that their ultimate success depends on a willingness and ability to provide customers with a genuine benefit ▪ recognition that the client is not the problem ▪ sustained effort to set high expectations for satisfaction regardless of the ease or difficulty of the relationship ▪ execution of the basics of customer care without becoming caught up in appearances 	<p>Notes:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

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Makes Profitable and Pragmatic Recommendations

<p>Question 1: What would you consider to be the primary business objective of your last employer?</p> <p>(If there is no work history, what would you consider to be the primary objective of most employers?)</p> <p>Look for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ profitability 	<p>Notes:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Question 2: How would you determine if a process or function supported that objective?</p> <p>Look for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ knowledge of key performance criteria and methodologies to control assets ▪ recognizes impact of actions and decisions on overall organizational profitability ▪ judges success by the result, not the effort or method of getting there ▪ looks for efficiencies by reducing unnecessary detail and/or expenses that do not add to the value proposition, e.g., over-engineering 	<p>Notes:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Question 3: What have you done, or would you do, to successfully demonstrate fiscal responsibility in terms of an organization's bottom-line?</p> <p>Look for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ awareness of time and material costs of each step ▪ a realistic grasp of the financial aspects of the organization ▪ decisions that enhance the organization's financial position ▪ sees the big picture; is not restricted by a focus on isolated pieces of a solution ▪ identification of alternatives that circumvent potential threats to profitability 	<p>Notes:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

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