

Profile Interpretation Manual

Specialized Technical Sales Benchmark

Signature Profile

Benchmark Profile Description

The Specialized Technical Sales role is tasked with selling a specialized set of products and is not typically bound by territorial constraints. They are product experts who act as resources to the customer to help its personnel do their job more effectively by using the seller's offering. Additional aspects of the role include acting as a liaison with the seller's internal contacts and providing continuous updates associated with market and legislative changes that might impact the customer's needs.

Predictive Competencies

- Anticipates Obstacles That Could Impede Progress
- Identifies and Addresses Customer Needs
- Builds Credibility by Sharing Knowledge
- Maintains and Shares Market Trend Awareness
- Effectively Communicates in an Informal Manner

Predictive Competencies

Anticipates Obstacles that Could Impede Progress

Able to sort through bureaucracy, complexity or politics to focus on required results; is not caught unprepared when obstacles are encountered; meets self-imposed standards of excellence by delivering agreed upon results that are straightforward and customer-defined

LOW SCORES	HIGH SCORES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Uses own criteria to determine customer requirements ▪ May focus more on style and making a good impression than content and relevance in results achievement ▪ Can be caught off-guard by unexpected obstacles ▪ May revise commitments when faced with unanticipated barriers rather than be on the lookout for problems and prepare to resolve them as they arise ▪ May be restricted in effort to satisfy customer requirements by a discomfort with working around the system or taking the more complicated route when met with internal or external barriers ▪ May view 'not failing' as an acceptable measure of results achievement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sets the criteria for ensuring successful results in accordance with customer-defined requirements ▪ Delivers the result that was promised to the customer without unnecessary fanfare or embellishments ▪ Concentrates on meeting an objective of doing what is best for the customer rather than focus on an effort or result that is meant to favor own appearance or image ▪ Finds personal success in meeting customer requirements ▪ Realistically anticipates barriers to results accomplishment and is prepared to respond ▪ Cuts through administrative or political red tape to maximize results accomplishment ▪ Holds results achievement to a high personal standard

Lower scores may indicate:

- A desire to produce results with flair and style
- A tendency to use one's own criteria to determine customer requirements
- A willingness to accept less results output or revise commitments in the face of unanticipated obstacles

Identifies and Addresses Customer Needs

Seeks to provide an appropriate solution by understanding what the customer is trying to accomplish; spends time in a needs analysis process that identifies key objectives specific to an individual customer; gives the customer's agenda priority over a standard response; changes the sales approach or solution to accommodate the customer versus force fit the customer to an existing model

LOW SCORES	HIGH SCORES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lacks a thorough approach to a customer needs analysis, preferring to move immediately to an existing solution ▪ Can be distracted from learning customer requirements by the personalities or politics of a situation ▪ Tries to fit the customer's methods or goals into a standard model or solution ▪ Takes it as personal criticism when suggestions are challenged ▪ Can be too invested in own agenda to comfortably yield to the customer's agenda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Asks questions and studies the customer's key priorities ▪ Incorporates the customer's responses and input into a business plan tailored to fit that customer's needs ▪ Takes the time to explore options or alternatives for helping the customer to achieve key objectives ▪ Accepts the rejection or modification of suggestions in an effort to best understand and help the customer

Lower scores may indicate:

- A tendency to try to get the customer to change their methods or goals in order to better fit the sellers' model or solutions
- A frustration with having suggestions challenged
- A tendency to gloss over the needs analysis process and move quickly to proposing a fairly standard solution

Builds Credibility by Sharing Knowledge

Builds credibility in a resource role by remaining factual and timely in providing information; maintains sources for quick access to time-sensitive information and to stay abreast of new developments; proactively educates customers or shares information as part of the service they deserve

LOW SCORES	HIGH SCORES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Does not keep others in the loop when delays are encountered in the information gathering process ▪ May color information by filtering it through own biases or adding own interpretation ▪ Failure to keep information sources up-to-date and readily accessible can result in inaccurate information and unnecessary delays in providing a response ▪ Sees information sharing as an added bonus rather than an entitlement and therefore sets the wheels in motion at their own convenience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Takes pride in being a voluntary source of information ▪ Presents factual information without embellishment or bias ▪ Provides a timely response, even if that response can only confirm that an answer is being sought ▪ Keeps the customer informed through status reports if information is delayed ▪ Builds a reputation as a credible resource by keeping information sources current and accessible ▪ Does not focus on becoming the expert as much as investing resources in knowing how to access and communicate others' expertise

Lower scores may indicate:

- A lack of urgency to stay abreast of changing issues so can be providing outdated information
- A personal need to inject one's opinions or interpretation with the requested information
- A tendency to see oneself as a conduit of information and judge effectiveness on the quantity versus quality and relevance of the information that is provided

Maintains and Shares Market Trend Awareness

Stays in touch with market trends, including environmental and competitive forces influencing the market, so that they are seen as a valuable resource to important constituents internal or external to the organization; constantly seeks information that will be useful but is not readily available to colleagues; enjoys being sought for advice and instruction; spends the time to build a base of knowledge that ultimately helps others to be more effective

LOW SCORES	HIGH SCORES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ May believe they can get by on a cursory understanding of market trends and conditions because its added value to others isn't appreciated ▪ Comfortable with present knowledge of the market and may believe the incremental gains that could be achieved by developing knowledge base would not justify the time spent ▪ Does not increase understanding of market issues for the purpose of sharing that information with others ▪ Assumes customers will utilize their own resources to stay on top of changing market conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Takes professional pride in maintaining an in-depth awareness of market issues ▪ Believes there is a benefit to continually building and adding to own knowledge base in market and competitive issues ▪ Wants to be prepared to serve as a source of advice and information to customers ▪ Updates own market information in order to be of assistance to customers who may not have the time or resources to research changing market trends themselves

Lower scores may indicate:

- A lack of interest in training or teaching on an individual level
- A preference for providing information through a lecture format more than by hands-on demonstration
- A tendency to rely on a dazzling presentation to cover any inadequacies in content
- A belief that staying current has little added benefit to being a resource to others

Effectively Communicates in an Informal Manner

Communicates essential points in an informal and conversational manner; prefers to share information in a one-on-one or small group situation; varies style and language to ensure listener understanding and is attentive to closing the loop on communications; seeks feedback and responds appropriately to listener reactions; makes presentations that are unrehearsed and adapted to individual situations

LOW SCORES	HIGH SCORES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ May attempt a one-size-fits-all communication style that does not account for different information needs ▪ Sticking to a prepared script does not leave any room for customer feedback/reaction or adjustment in the presentation in response to that input ▪ Unwilling to risk personal rejection or judgment, they may create an image or persona rather than be natural ▪ Keeps the audience at arm's length, making the presentation seem less personal to the customer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sensitive to the customer's circumstances and response, adjusting the communication of information or ideas to accommodate their need to know or level of understanding ▪ Encourages questions, comments, and feedback from the customer ▪ Backs an informal presentation with professional tools and company guarantees ▪ Gives specific details of how/who/when, promising that the complexity of delivery and servicing of the product line will be shouldered by the seller ▪ Keeps the focus on content and substance, not flash and performance ▪ Creates a presentation that is informal, low-key, and unrehearsed ▪ Talks with the customer, creating a team feeling of working together, versus directing a speech at the customer

Lower scores may indicate:

- A tendency to rely on a very formal presentation style which is not as suitable for intimate groups or easily varied to meet their needs
- A preference for being reactive to questions rather than preparing a presentation of key ideas



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