

# Sales Management Readiness Indicator



This tool is designed to help aspiring sales managers, in complex B2B, to determine their suitability for the role. It is split into two sections – ‘Attributes’, which some people call ‘talents’, which are character traits, which can be developed over time, but with some difficulty. ‘Competencies’ on the other hand can normally be developed much more quickly. All sales management roles are slightly different, and you may want to discuss the contents of this tool with your current manager / mentor / coach / HR; please do not hesitate to modify it to suit your own situation, and to reflect the particular sales manager job description that your company is using.

	Attributes	Description	Rating	Evidence	Comments
1	Strength of character and personal integrity	A successful sales managers need to build trust, and will need to be trustworthy, based on high levels of personal integrity, ethics and strength of character.			
2	Delight in the success of others	Sales management is about achieving results through others; you can only succeed in the long term if you get genuine delight from the success of others.			
3	Desire to succeed	By itself this will not make you successful, but your desire is going to be infectious for others			
4	Resilience	You will face difficulties & frustrations, both externally and internally; can you deal with adversity, especially when things are not under your personal control.			
5	Growth mindset	You are entering into a new career, in a role that is constantly changing; if you have got this far you probably have a growth mindset, but you should check that you are constantly trying to improve			
6	Proactivity and Accountability	Having a strong desire to succeed as well as being able to cope with set-backs, you also need the ability to drive through actions to ‘make stuff happen’.			

**Ratings** are :

- N/A not applicable for this particular role
- 0 Possible major issue: lacks required attribute / no evidence available
- 1 Threshold: some evidence, but requires further development or demonstration
- 2 Adequate: demonstrates enough of this attribute to be a competent first line sales manager
- 3 Exemplar: demonstrates higher levels of this attribute and is a role model for others

**Evidence:** give specific examples of your behaviour and results in context, demonstrating your competency in this area.

In addition to the basic characteristics and Attributes above, there are a number of competencies that you will need to demonstrate. These can be developed relatively easily by training and coaching, and again your own company will have their particular set.

	<i>Competency</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Level</i>	<i>Evidence</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1	Strategic thinking	Higher level thinking skills to evaluate options for achieving goals and objectives, not constrained by narrow thinking			
2	High Standards	Sets very high standards for themselves and all team members; does not accept mediocrity.			
3	Pipeline Management	Ensuring that the team are generating / identifying projects at all stages of maturity			
4	Leadership	Inspiring others to want to follow your direction			
5	Team builder	Able to get a group of disparate individuals working together towards a common goal			
6	Coaching and mentoring	Effectively helping team members to develop themselves, including the ability to give precise, accepted feedback			
7	Planning Skills (team, territory, account, deal...)	Able to clearly analyse situations, set Goals and Objectives, generate multiple strategies and select optimal, translate into actionable tactics.			
8	Time Management	Efficient and effective to tackle the huge amount of potential work required			
9	Delegation	The ability to effectively delegate responsibilities and / or tasks to individuals			
10	Deal qualification and forecasting accuracy	Master level qualifier and able to manage individuals and processes for high forecast accuracy			

11	Managing in ambiguity	Effectiveness when operating in ambiguity, with potentially conflicting goals, messages, expectations and constraints,			
12	Decision Making	including high levels of data-informed, combined with own and others knowledge, experience and wisdom			
13	Organisational sensitivity	Able to get things done across the whole organisation. Includes internal relationship building, agility and managing your boss.			
14	Adaptability	Being able to change direction & tactics when your environment changes – not just blowing with the wind but taking proactive steps.			
15	Assertiveness	Being able to assert your own rights, while respecting the rights of others. Exhibiting “I’m Okay, You’re Okay”			
16	Business and Financial Acumen	Comfortable dealing in all areas of business relevant internally and with your customers in their markets			
17	Emotional intelligence	Your ability to understand, interpret, and respond to the emotions of others, plus able to understand and control your own emotions.			
18	Problem solving techniques	In many different and difficult problems, the ability to use a range of different techniques to maximum effect.			
19	Managing conflict and co-operation	The role involves numerous dependencies, with many (potential) conflict situations; your ability to handle these effectively			
20	Relationship building and networking	Being able to very quickly develop meaningful personal relationships with individuals at many levels in an ever changing network.			
21	Effective communication	Comfortable using an array of techniques and channels at the centre of a web of relationships with many different stakeholders.			

22	Useage of sales tools / systems / technologies / methodologies	Proficient in use of all the various tools available to sales managers; including knowledge of best practices			
23	Performance Management	Able to deal with poor performers, in line with company policy, with positive outcomes.			
24	Market & Industry Credibility	Be perceived as an expert in your particular market / application / field			
25	Sales craft & sales innovation	Occassional 'super salesperson' used in front of customers, plus coming up with new ideas in sales situations			
	<inset here company or role specific competencies>			Repeat as appropriate	

**Levels** are :

- N/A not applicable for this particular role
- 0 Development required: lacks required skill / no evidence available
- 1 Threshold: some evidence but requires additional development to be able to perform as fully expected all of the time
- 2 Competent: understands the skill, leverages the skill to enhance their performance and is performing at least as expected.
- 3 Expert: has fully mastered the skill and acts as a role model and consultant/teacher to others.

**Evidence:** give specific examples of your behaviour and results in context, demonstrating your competency in this area.

**Comments:** any other relevant information that enables yourself and others to accurately assess your competency in this area.

**Other possible competencies**, which have been observed in different competency frameworks, include:

Attention to detail, Change Management, Consultative Selling skills, Crisis management, Cross-Functional Collaboration, Cultural sensitivity, Customer-Centric Approach, Development of pricing and proposition strategies, Diversity appreciation, Influence & persuasion, Innovation & creativity, Legal and regulatory knowledge and experience, Market Understanding, Meeting Management, Motivator, Presentaion skills, Project Management, Risk management, Sales process optimization, Self Development, Sense of objectives, Strategic Selling skills



## Notes on using the SMRI

The tool is a first approximation, but should be modified to reflect the Attributes and Competencies of a particular role in your organization. You should go through and agree with your manager / coach / mentor / HR representative, the Attributes and Competencies that you should be focusing on.

The tool can be used as a self evaluation, or you could ask others to give you feedback (if you want a simple spreadsheet that enables you to compare and average the feedback from others, please email [info@realsalesmanager.com](mailto:info@realsalesmanager.com)).

Your ratings should be based on actual behaviour as much as possible, and you will want to provide evidence of actual accomplishments.

**For Aspiring Sales Managers**, you can use this to help guide you towards deciding if Sales Management is something that you should pursue Now, Next or Never, and you can download a copy of the Now, Next or Never article from <https://www.realsalesmanager.com/resources>.

You may have a lack of evidence in a number of competencies, due to your not being in a formal sales management role, but it is often possible to make a good judgement, based on evidence from what you have been doing in your sales role – for example leading virtual account teams, any special projects that you have been involved with, any periods / tasks where you have ‘stood-in’ for your existing manager when they have not been available etc.

If you are satisfied (and a recruiting executive is satisfied) that you possess all of the essential Attributes for a sales manager in your company, then your ratings of competencies will help you decide how much development, if any, you need before moving into your first management role.

If you are not satisfied that you possess all of the essential Attributes, then it is strongly recommended that you reconsider if sales management is going to be the best career option for you; it may not be impossible, but typically the essential Attributes will require long and difficult development paths.

**For new sales managers**, again the ratings can be used as a benchmark for how you are operating today and you can decide which competencies you want to focus on in your development and agree with your manager / coach.

Help from Real Sales Manager. We are dedicated to helping aspiring and new sales managers in complex B2B, to be as successful as possible, as quickly as possible. You should check out our free podcasts where we interview successful experienced sales leaders for their thoughts on the sales manager role, plus our unique blend of online, ondemand training intertwined with 1-1 coaching. Full details at [www.realsalesmanager.com](http://www.realsalesmanager.com)

How these competencies align against key Sales Management activities in RealSalesManager training

		Foundation	Sales Framework	Forecast / pipeline reviews	Sales team planning	Coaching	Recruiting	Style & Motivation	Teamwork	Business Reviews	Leadership	Managing individuals	Develop self
1	Strategic thinking	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
2	High Standards	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
3	Pipeline Management	x	x	x		x			x	x	x	x	
4	Leadership	x			x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x
5	Team builder	x		x	x			x	x	x			
6	Coaching & Mentoring	x		x		x		x	x	x	x	x	
7	Planning Skills	x	x		x	x			x	x	x	x	
8	Time Management	x	x	x					x	x		x	x
9	Delegation	x	x		x	x		x	x		x	x	x
10	Deal Qualification, Forecast accuracy	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x		
11	Managing in ambiguity	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x		x
12	Decision making	x		x	x		x			x	x		x
13	Organisational sensitivity	x	x		x	x		x	x	x	x		x
14	Adaptability	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	
15	Assertiveness	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
16	Business & Financial Acumen	x		x	x	x		x		x	x	x	x
17	Emotional intelligence	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
18	Problem solving techniques	x	x	x	x	x				x		x	x
19	Managing conflict	x		x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	
20	Relationship building, networking	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
21	Effective communication	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
22	Use of sales tools / systems	x	x	x	x					x		x	
23	Performance Management	x			x	x		x	x		x	x	x
24	Market & Industry Credibility	x		x	x	x	x		x	x	x		x
25	Sales craft & sales innovation	x		x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	
	Company specific												