

Sales Hiring = Purple Squirrel

A recurrent problem many companies are experiencing is the inability to find and recruit sales, sales trainers or sales enablement professionals. Their job advertisement for these important roles appear for 5 months running – What gives?

Once we discuss this issue with some of these firms, several reasons become immediately apparent. *Have these reasons also plagued your sales recruiting efforts?*

For the last decade, I've been helping organizations find and train the best talent available for their sales organizations. A key to my success has been my previous experience of *several decades* of building and leading sales organizations - ranging from startups to large corporations - often while also carrying a sales quota both for myself and my sales team. My experience has shown that there are *four main reasons* why it can be challenging to attract and to hire candidates.

1. A potential Candidate is unable to create a vision of success at your company. Poorly written job descriptions, boring and internally-focused job postings, flawed interviewing practices and no (or flawed) onboarding plans are main reasons for this failure. Simply stated, hiring companies often don't realize that *they are the ones who have to do the selling* - both of their position and its career potential.
2. Compensation is inadequate. In a competitive hiring market, a company must keep current with the competitive offers that top candidates receive. With unemployment below 4% in Massachusetts, it will remain challenging *for the foreseeable future*.
3. You are looking for a Purple Squirrel. Does your Candidate Profile describe a professional who simply does not exist? I often see job postings that specify only 2 to 5 years of experience - but with “must have” requirements for a deep industry background *plus* sales training proficiency *plus* the ability to engage with multiple departments *plus* train sales professionals of all skill levels. *This is a description of a senior-level professional*. In other words, the specified career tenure and the experience level don't match up.
4. You don't have the time. The recruiting process is *extremely* time-consuming. Hiring managers often have many other duties, and internal recruiting resources may not have the background to find and qualify sales and sales trainer talent. What's more, the competitive job-scape dictates the need to be highly responsive; an offer needs to be made *within two weeks (or less)* of the initial interview. Successful sourcing, engaging interest, then qualifying a candidate takes time and expertise - and needs to be a primary focus. 90% of our placements come from *direct outreach to targeted candidates* – not job boards.

Think back to your efforts in hiring. Could several of the reasons above be contributing to your experience with a lengthy time-to-hire, less than successful hires - and more critically, delaying the training that will propel your sales team to top performance?

If the reasons in this article resonate with you, I suggest a brief phone discussion that can help you outline a plan for success to meet your sales training challenges – recruitment, sales enablement, training and one-on-one and team coaching.

Just email me at mwarner@warnerprosales.com and we can set it up.

