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## How do I find a great sales manager?

How to create an enticing job posting and weed out the weak candidates.



**Scott Zimmer, Owner and President, AAA Labor Minneapolis**

Where can I find a top-notch sales manager (who would also be the sole salesperson, for now) to help me expand the clientele for my temporary-staffing firm? I'm willing to offer a very competitive pay package, but it's difficult to find skilled, experienced candidates.



**By Anne Fisher, Fortune Small Business contributor**

*Dear Scott:* As sluggish as the overall job market has turned, demand for the best salespeople is holding strong, so they have plenty of opportunities to choose from.

Kathleen Steffey, owner of a Tampa-based sales-recruiting firm called [Naviga Business Services](#), wonders if your job postings contain enough information to entice a top sales pro. The ads should "mention your sales quota if you have one," she says. "That will scare off the ones who can't meet it. You should also describe exactly what business you're in, your company's culture, and how much experience your ideal candidate should have. For a salesperson who can take the reins and grow revenues, that would be about seven years minimum." If you're willing to let the person telecommute occasionally, she adds, say so: "That's important to a lot of good salespeople."

As you assess candidates, Steffey says, look for "someone whose references say they met or exceeded their targets. Don't believe anyone who makes excuses, blaming the tough economy or some other factor for not meeting their goals." Before you sit down with applicants for the job, Steffey urges you to read *Topgrading for Sales: World-Class Methods to Interview, Hire, and Coach Top Sales Representatives*, by Bradford D. Smart and Greg Alexander. Its compact 113 pages will tell you, Steffey says, "everything you need to know to make a great sales hire."