



SALES EXECUTIVE

JOB DESCRIPTION

Sales executives make contact with potential customers—either individuals or businesses—to sell their company's goods or services. They develop a thorough understanding of their company's products so that they can address a customer's queries with confidence to complete a sale. Sales executives must have a good understanding of both customer psychology and sales strategies to be successful.



SALARY

Retail sales worker ★★★★★
Business sales executive ★★★★★

INDUSTRY PROFILE

Job opportunities in all commercial sectors • Demand for sales executives varies with market conditions • Financial rewards often linked to sales targets

AT A GLANCE



YOUR INTERESTS Sales • Marketing • Customer service • Finance • English • Business studies • Mathematics • Advertising • Languages



ENTRY QUALIFICATIONS A degree is not required for most sales jobs, but one may be required when selling technical or financial products.



LIFESTYLE Sales executives may need to work long hours to meet sales targets or to deal with customers in other countries and time zones.



LOCATION Depending on the sector, sales executives may be based in stores or offices; they may travel widely to visit clients at their premises.



THE REALITIES Competition between colleagues and rivals can be intense. The role demands a thick skin to deal with rejection from customers.

▼ RELATED CAREERS

- ▶ **BRAND MANAGER** Promotes a company or a product by managing its profile and reputation among its customers and the wider public. Uses a variety of techniques, such as advertising and public relations, to enhance the brand's image.
- ▶ **INTERNET MARKETING MANAGER** Develops strategies to attract customers to an online store, and ensures that the design and usability of a retail website helps to increase sales.
- ▶ **RETAIL MANAGER** Manages the day-to-day operations of supermarkets and stores.

More than 12 percent
of all jobs in the
US are full-time
sales positions.

CAREER PATHS

Sales executives need to be ambitious and determined because career progress depends entirely on hitting sales targets. Successful salespeople are typically promoted to handle larger and more valuable clients, and may go on to join a company's management team. Sales skills are highly transferable, and it is not unusual for sales executives to move between different industries.

SALES ASSISTANT You may begin your career in an administrative role, supporting senior salespeople. Your employer is likely to teach you about the company's products and sales techniques before you start to deal with customers.

SALES EXECUTIVE Sales executives represent an organization's products or services, and build and manage relationships with customers. With experience they can move into several other fields of work.

KEY ACCOUNT MANAGER

Takes on responsibility for dealing with their employer's most valuable clients or product areas.

SALES MANAGER Coordinates a company's sales operations in a region or country, setting targets and advising staff on ways to improve their performance.

SKILLS GUIDE



Excellent communication skills for presenting product information to potential customers.



Good interpersonal skills to handle queries and complaints in a professional manner.



Strong organizational skills and self-motivation in planning and making sales calls and visits.



A sound knowledge of business practices, and an awareness of customer expectations.



Good numerical skills for calculating percentages, discounts, and profits on sales.



SPECIALIZED SALES EXECUTIVE

Works in the financial sector, selling products such as mortgages and investments, or in other fields, selling products, such as pharmaceuticals or Information Technology (IT) systems.

MARKETING EXECUTIVE

Researches customer needs and behavior and plans a company's strategy to promote its products.