

JOB PROFILE: SALES MANAGER

WHAT DOES A SALES MANAGER DO?

Sales Managers work for manufacturers of all sorts of food and drink products. They act as the link between producers and retail, wholesale or catering organisations.

The main priority is to visit these outlets on a regular basis and advise customers on what products your company offers, how much profit they can make by selling your products and how the products should be displayed to make most effective use of the product.

As a manager you will be in charge of a team with assignment to a particular geographical region.

WHAT'S A WORKING WEEK LIKE?

As the role involves visiting outlets on a regular basis you will need to be out on the road and enjoy being your own boss.

The ability to work on your own initiative is essential.

You will often need to carry samples of the product you're promoting and how this is to be launched.

Liaise on sales, orders, price, quality and display with store managers.

WHAT SKILLS WOULD I NEED TO BECOME A SALES MANAGER?

- Good negotiation and influencing skills
- Good commercial awareness
- Data and statistical analysis

- Detailed product (and sometimes category) knowledge
- Ability to build relationships with customers
- Enthusiastic, assertive, self motivated and outgoing
- Confident presentation skills
- Highest level of customer service
- Good delegation skills

HOW DO I BECOME A SALES MANAGER?

Most people entering this field are graduates, and start on a graduate training scheme.

Three or four years experience in sales and a strong record of achievement are needed to enter this work. Although some companies do not ask for academic qualifications, many will expect candidates to be educated to higher national diploma (HND) or degree level. A higher qualification in a sales, marketing or business subject, or in a subject related to the products the company sells would be viewed favourably.

Entry qualifications for a HND are four GCSEs (A-C)/S grades (1-3) plus one A level/two Highers. Requirements for a degree are usually five GCSEs (A-C)/S grades (1-3) plus two A levels/three Highers. Equivalent qualifications may be accepted.

TRAINING FOR WORK

Training is usually on the job and consists of in-house training on product knowledge and then courses on sales techniques.

It is possible to study for relevant advanced qualifications, including:

- NVQ Level 4 in Sales Management or SVQ Level 4 in Management
- The Institute of Sales and Marketing Management (ISMM) Level 4 Diploma in Sales Management, and Level 4 Diploma in Key Account Management
- The Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) Diploma in Professional Sales or Advanced Certificate in Professional Sales Management
- Managing and Marketing Sales Association (MAMSA) Advanced Diploma in Sales Management.
- Universities and colleges also offer degree and postgraduate courses in subjects related to sales, marketing, management and business.

SALARIES

(Figures are intended as a guideline only)
Salaries vary depending on the company. Due to the nature of the job, a company car is usually included.

Starting salaries can range from £15,000 to £30,000 a year.

Experienced sales managers can earn between £25,000 and £55,000.

Top salaries can be over £70,000 a year.

FURTHER INFORMATION

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