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AccuVision™ SALES SYSTEM

From AlignMark

Interview Guide

For
John Doe
111-11-1111

Date:
03-18-1996

Interviewer's Name: _____

Summary comments/recommendations from interview:

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ORGANIZATIONALLY SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

In the space below, list any additional interview questions to be asked. These should include any questions needed to clarify information from the participant's resume/application, as well as questions specific to the position/organization. (Use the back of this page or insert additional pages if necessary.)

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SUGGESTIONS FOR CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEW

Before the session begins...

- Take the steps necessary to ensure that the session will not be interrupted. The participant should receive your undivided attention.
- Review the participant's application/resume to identify any background information that needs to be explored or clarified. List questions for these items, as well as any additional questions you intend to ask, on the sheet titled "ORGANIZATIONALLY SPECIFIC QUESTIONS."

Starting the session...

- Attempt to establish rapport and put the participant at ease.
- Explain the general purpose and format of the interview.
- Ask for and respond to any questions the participant may have.

Conducting the interview...

- Ask the interview questions and take notes on the participant's responses.

Closing the session...

- Indicate that all interview questions have been covered.
- Explain any relevant follow-up activities.
- Ask for and respond to any questions the participant may have.
- Thank the participant and close the session.

After the session...

- Evaluate the Organizationally Specific Questions and the AccuVision interview questions (including the oral and interpersonal areas). The following rating scale can be used for making these evaluations.

- 3 - More than acceptable
- 2 - Acceptable
- 1 - Less than acceptable

- Summarize the results of the interview in the space provided on the cover page.

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GENERAL QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: As a sales professional, you will be required to make presentations to groups of people. What experiences do you have in making formal presentations? For example, what size groups have you presented to, what was the purpose of your presentation, and what type of preparation was required?

NOTES:

SAMPLE EFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1. Describing experiences in giving formal presentations, particularly instances in which the focus of the presentation is selling or influencing others.
2. Describing experiences in which considerable preparation was necessary before giving a formal presentation (e.g., making overheads, presenting to others as a "dry run" before the presentation, etc.).

SAMPLE INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIOR:

1. Failing to describe experiences involving formal presentations and/or failing to describe relevant preparation activities typically required of formal presentations.

RATING FOR RESPONSE: _____

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GENERAL QUESTIONS

QUESTION 2: As you think about performing multiple activities and duties, such as selling and providing post-sales service to a large number of organizations, how would you organize and plan your activities to meet such demands?

NOTES:

SAMPLE EFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1. Explaining the need for setting priorities and making plans based on relevant criteria (e.g., relative importance, urgency, etc.).
2. Mentioning the need for written plans and objectives.
3. Explaining the need to maintain a balance between prospecting activities and managing existing customers.
4. Separating short-range from long-range plans and activities.

SAMPLE INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIOR:

1. Failing to mention the need for up-front planning/organizing efforts and/or the need to maintain balance between selling and service activities.

RATING FOR RESPONSE: _____

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GENERAL QUESTIONS

QUESTION 3: As a sales professional you will have the opportunity to meet and interact with many different people whose values and views may differ from your own. What experiences have you had that would indicate your ability to effectively deal with people having values and views different from your own?

NOTES:

SAMPLE EFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1. Describing work, civic, or community-related examples of activities that reflect an ability to deal with different types of people in relatively formal settings.
2. Describing prior work experiences that emphasize dealing with the public.
3. Describing prior work experiences that emphasize sales-related activities.

SAMPLE INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1. Failing to describe concrete examples or describing examples that focus primarily on interactions with friends in social settings.

RATING FOR RESPONSE: _____

AccuVision™ SALES SYSTEM

GENERAL QUESTIONS

QUESTION: Assume that for several weeks you've been in contact with Mary, a department manager in a large organization, to discuss a sale and are now ready to meet and sign the purchase contract. Mary has told you that your company's products would benefit her department, and that other departments within her organization have also expressed an interest. Today, when calling Mary to set up a meeting time, she informs you that unexpected events have caused a reorganization in her department and she can't sign the purchase contract for at least three months. She then says she'll contact you again at that time to follow through with the sale. What, if any, additional action would you take now?

NOTES:

SAMPLE EFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1. Asking questions to clarify the obstacles that are causing the sale to be postponed and to determine if there is potential for overcoming them.
2. Asking questions to clarify the status of the postponed sale (i.e., her commitment to buy, how/when the next contact will be made, etc.).
3. Asking questions to find out about the potential for doing business with the other interested departments within her organization (i.e., the extent of the reorganization, how she feels about you approaching them, etc.).
4. If there is potential for doing business with the other departments, asking for her help to lay the groundwork for contacting interested department managers (e.g., set up initial meeting, etc.).

SAMPLE INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1. Failing to ask about/verify the status of the sales process.
2. Failing to ask about potential sales opportunities in other departments within her organization.

RATING FOR RESPONSE: _____

AccuVision™ SALES SYSTEM

GENERAL QUESTIONS

QUESTION: Assume that you have been in contact with a customer concerning services your company offers and that the customer has indicated an interest in purchasing one of your services. However, your attempts at finalizing the sale come to a standstill because the customer says the price is too high. What would you do or say to counter the customer's argument concerning a high price?

NOTES:

SAMPLE EFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1. Countering pricing issues directly by noting relevant benefits and asking for his/her views about the relative worth of those benefits.
2. If possible, doing a cost/benefit analysis to demonstrate the relative worth of the service and/or of specific benefits.

SAMPLE INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIOR:

1. Failing to tie customer needs directly to benefits and/or failing to ask questions to determine the customer's views regarding the relative worth of benefits.

RATING FOR RESPONSE: _____

AccuVision™ SALES SYSTEM

GENERAL QUESTIONS

QUESTION: Assume that you have had several contacts with a customer and the customer has agreed that the products your company offers would be useful for his business. Despite the customer's initial positive reaction to your company's products, he is hesitant to buy. The following are common examples of why a customer is hesitant to purchase. How would you deal with the customer in each of the following situations?

- A. The customer says your selling price is too expensive.
- B. The customer wants more time to think about the purchase.
- C. The customer wants to talk it over with his boss before committing to purchase.

NOTES:

SAMPLE EFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

- Example A - Asking questions or making statements to redirect the focus of the conversation from the expense to the benefits offered by the products (especially those involving anticipated savings and/or increased productivity or output).
- Example B - Asking questions to determine what the customer's concerns are that he wants to "think over." Dealing appropriately with each concern that is voiced.
- Example C - Asking questions to determine what the customer's concerns are that require discussion with his boss. If the decision will ultimately be made by his boss, requesting to meet directly with the boss.

SAMPLE INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIOR:

1. Failing to ask questions to find out reasons for reluctance/resistance and/or failing to state appropriate information, to handle concerns.

RATING FOR RESPONSE: _____

AccuVision™ SALES SYSTEM

GENERAL QUESTIONS

QUESTION: Consider the following: An organization has requested proposals from several companies for a major project. After several meetings with this customer, your company submitted a proposal. Now assume that you present your proposal at a meeting with the customer and find out your proposal is one of two they are now considering. After the meeting the customer tells you, "If we decide to do this project, can I have your assurance that your company can complete the project in the proposed time frame?"

How would you interpret and respond to the customer's question?

NOTES:

SAMPLE EFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1. Stating that part of the question is positive. Noting that asking if time is a factor can be a good sign because it may indicate positive interest in your company.
2. Asking questions to clarify the "if" part of the question, since it may convey that the organization has yet to commit to doing the proposed project, and/or attempting to clarify and deal with any obstacles voiced by the customer.

SAMPLE INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1. Failing to respond to the vagueness of the customer's statement (i.e., use of "if") and/or providing inaccurate/incomplete interpretation of the statement.

RATING FOR RESPONSE: _____

AccuVision™ SALES SYSTEM

GENERAL QUESTIONS

QUESTION: Assume that a potential customer has called you to inquire about the products your company offers. The caller tells you that his boss asked him to contact you to find out as much as possible about your company and its products. In response to the customer's request, you tell him you'll send your company's sales brochure, which provides general information about your company and its products. What, if any, additional action would you now take to further the sales process?

NOTES:

SAMPLE EFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1. Questioning the customer to determine pertinent information concerning the sales process, including the time frame for purchasing, who the decision maker for purchase is, etc.
2. Asking when it would be appropriate to contact the customer to follow-up in order to answer any questions the customer may have, further explore products the customer may find interesting/useful, etc.

SAMPLE INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1. Failing to ask pertinent questions concerning customer's business, purchasing budget, time frame for purchasing, etc., and/or asking questions having little or no relevance.
2. Failing to mention the need for scheduling any follow-up activities.

RATING FOR RESPONSE: _____

AccuVision™ SALES SYSTEM

GENERAL QUESTIONS

QUESTION: Assume that you are the lead sales representative of a three-person sales team. Your team has been in frequent contact, both on the phone and in face-to-face meetings, with a large potential customer. Assume also that you were away from the office for two days and returned to find a message from the customer requesting that you call him about another one of your team members named Randy. Before returning the call, you ask Randy what's up, and he says the customer called yesterday and wanted some information, so he met with the customer, but was unable to answer some of the questions that were asked. Later, when speaking to the customer, you hear a different story: Randy was asked to come over and make a presentation but **didn't have** a presentation prepared when he arrived and wasn't able to answer several key questions. The customer now wants Randy taken off the sales team because the customer feels it's apparent he isn't "on top" of what's going on. How do you respond to the customer? What, if anything, do you say to Randy? Why?

NOTES:

SAMPLE EFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1. Explaining that Randy may have misunderstood the nature of the meeting and, therefore, wasn't prepared to make a formal presentation.
2. Explaining that Randy is competent, despite the recent occurrence, and suggesting he remain on the sales team.
3. Identifying what questions were not answered during the meeting so that you can provide answers to them in the near future.

4. Questioning Randy to determine what his expectations were going into the meeting and what information he asked for/received before the meeting.
5. Telling Randy about the issue with the customer and the need to clarify expectations in the future.

SAMPLE INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1. Failing to perceive the issue being caused by an apparent misunderstanding and/or agreeing to take Randy off the team.
2. Failing to determine Randy's perceptions of events and/or not discussing the issue with him.
3. Failing to follow-up with the customer regarding the unanswered questions.

RATING FOR RESPONSE: _____

AccuVision™ SALES SYSTEM

GENERAL QUESTIONS

QUESTION: Assume you have been in contact with a department manager from a large organization for the past three weeks concerning the services offered by your company. The department manager has requested that you send information describing two of the services so that he can further evaluate their usefulness for his department. Assume also that the department manager requesting this information said that from now on you should contact his assistant manager, Sue, and that she would be the ultimate decision maker for this sale. Since then, you have called Sue on four separate occasions over a two-week period, but have not been able to reach her directly. She has yet to return your calls. What action, if any, do you take now?

NOTES:

SAMPLE EFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1. Contacting the assistant manager using other means (e.g., by mail, etc.).
2. When attempting to contact the assistant manager, requesting that she contact you and phrasing your request in a positive manner.
3. If the assistant manager continues to not respond, directly contacting the department manager and inquiring about status of the sale (e.g., is there still an interest, how to establish communication with the assistant manager, etc.).

SAMPLE INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1. Contacting the department manager without first attempting to contact the assistant manager by other means, e.g., mail, etc.
2. If other means of contacting the assistant manager are unsuccessful, failing to contact the department manager directly to determine the status of the sale and how to initiate contact with the assistant manager.

RATING FOR RESPONSE: _____

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GENERAL QUESTIONS

QUESTION: Assume that your company offers a price on a particular product that is 2% higher than your competitor's. Your price includes shipping and handling charges and same-day mail-out, which is not included in your competitor's price. You could, however, match your competitor's price and still make an acceptable profit. Now assume that you have been in contact with a potential customer on several occasions over the past week about a medium-sized sale. The customer has been reluctant to pay your price, but appears eager to buy from your company. If the customer says he will sign the purchase order today, but only if you meet the competitor's price, what would you do?

NOTES:

SAMPLE EFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1. Attempting to close the sale at your original price (2% above the competitor) by explaining the differences between your offer and that of your competitor's: your price includes shipping and handling costs, but if he buys from the competitor, he will have to cover these costs; and your cost also includes additional benefits such as same-day mail-out, which is not included in the competitor's offer.
2. If the customer remains unwilling to buy at the original asking price, negotiating the sale based on some middle-ground price (e.g., 1% over competitor's, etc.).

SAMPLE INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1. Failing to attempt closing the sale at the original price by discussing differences between your offer and your competitor's.
2. Failing to suggest a "middle-ground" offer if the customer remains unwilling to pay the original asking price.

RATING FOR RESPONSE: _____

AccuVision™ SALES SYSTEM

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

No questions are asked for this area. Rather, the participant is evaluated based on behaviors observed during the overall interview session.

NOTES:

SAMPLE EFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1. Expressed comments in a concise manner.
2. Enunciated clearly.
3. Spoke in a fluid manner.
4. Looked at interviewer when speaking.
5. Used gestures to emphasize points.
6. Expressed ideas in an easy to understand manner.
7. Used proper grammar.
8. Used voice inflection to emphasize points..

SAMPLE INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1. Rambled on or was overly wordy.
2. Had slurred speech.
3. Was overly hesitant or choppy when speaking.
4. Failed to maintain eye contact when speaking.
5. Expressed ideas in a manner that was difficult to follow and/or understand.
6. Made grammatical errors.
7. Spoke in a monotone and/or failed to use gestures.

RATING FOR RESPONSE: _____

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INTERPERSONAL

No questions are asked for this area. Rather, the participant is evaluated based on behaviors observed during the overall interview session.

NOTES:

SAMPLE EFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1. At the start of the session, offered a polite and enthusiastic greeting.
2. As appropriate, used amenities such as "please" and "thank you."
3. Maintained a polite, courteous, and enthusiastic demeanor during the session.
4. Actively listened to the interviewer's comments (e.g., maintained eye contact while listening, nodding while listening, etc.).
5. At the close of the session, expressed appreciation for the interviewer's time and consideration.

SAMPLE INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1. Asked questions in an abrupt or curt manner.
2. Displayed little enthusiasm or politeness.

RATING FOR RESPONSE: _____