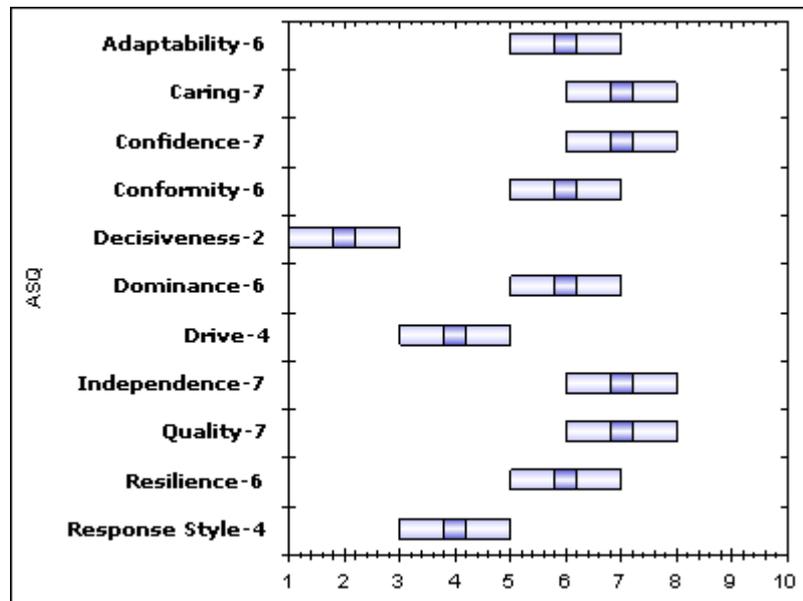


**Example Salesperson
Advanced Sales Questionnaire (ASQ)
Norm group - Generic**

Test Date: 31/03/2009 GMT



The blocks represent the score achieved by the candidate and the bars the margin of error.

INTRODUCTION

The conclusions reached in this report are based on a systematic comparison of Example Salesperson's answers to the questionnaire with those of a large group of salespeople.

When interpreting this report it is important to remember that all qualifiers use the 'average salesperson', not the 'average person', as their point of reference. If, for example, the respondent is described as 'very ambitious' this means 'very' when compared with the 'average salesperson' not the 'average person'. If, as is likely, the average salesperson is more ambitious than the average person then the respondent is particularly ambitious compared with the average person. Alternatively, the respondent may be described as averagely ambitious, meaning their level of ambition is the same as that of the average salesperson. As the average salesperson is more ambitious than the average person the respondent is very ambitious compared to the average person.

The description of Example Salesperson's results on each factor is accompanied by a paragraph of Comments and Concerns raised by the results about his suitability for a sales role. Scale names are provided for each factor and it must be borne in mind that these are single words that cannot do justice to an entire scale. Please do not try and interpret the names and read more into them than is provided in the accompanying paragraph about Example Salesperson. The interview guide suggests suitable follow-up areas to be pursued at interview - his responses to which should confirm or deny any reservations about his suitability. When there is an apparent conflict between scores on different factors this is identified, a possible interpretation offered and suitable follow-up questions suggested.

Being a successful salesperson is difficult and staff turnover in the industry is high. This questionnaire is intended to highlight possible areas of concern that should be considered when selecting salespeople. There are often occasions when the tone of the report is critical. This is because it has to raise all possible areas of concern so that they can be addressed in the interview and considered as part of the decision making process. It is inevitable that almost every applicant will have something in his or her character that causes concern in terms of suitability to be a salesperson. Your circumstances and the nature of your environment should determine how particular you must be in making your selection decision. For our part we hope to raise all possible areas of concern to assist you in your difficult selection decisions.

This text report should not be used for any purpose other than to assist with the assessment of salespeople. Where it is being used with sales managers the report is mainly relevant to their ability to write business. It does not focus on management skills or aptitude. Any other use of the questionnaire is invalid, unfair and could lead to a contravention of employment legislation. Used sensibly and as a guide to possible areas of concern this questionnaire can assist you in selecting better salespeople and reduce the chances of your making an expensive mistake.

RESPONSE STYLE - 4

This scale assesses the way in which Example Salesperson has responded to the questions in the ASQ. Some people describe themselves in a particularly positive fashion and some tend to be more critical. There is no right or wrong style but response style can affect the results in certain areas being measured by the questionnaire.

- Example Salesperson's pattern of responses suggest that he has responded in neither a highly positive nor highly self-critical fashion. This suggests that the report is likely to be an accurate representation of him which is neither more favourable nor less favourable than justified.

ADAPTABILITY - 6

This scale assesses the extent to which a person prefers a role where they can be flexible and adaptable in carrying out tasks and meeting challenges. The majority of sales roles require this type of approach. Where the environment is highly regulated or the organisation demands a rigid and procedural sales process, a less adaptable person may be more successful.

- Example Salesperson's responses suggest that he is relatively adaptable. He gets some satisfaction and enjoyment from the challenge and variety of new activities and different situations. He can, when necessary, switch rapidly from one activity to another although he may have difficulty maintaining the momentum of several tasks simultaneously to the extent required in some sales environments.

Comments and Concerns

His responses on this scale are not cause for great concern. He is likely to fit into most sales environments except those requiring either extremely conformist or extremely flexible styles. He should be comfortable in roles where there is an established sales process that he can adapt to suit his needs.

CARING - 7

This scale assesses a person's attitude to other people and the extent to which they are genuinely concerned about them. The majority of sales roles require people whose scores are neither very high nor very low. Very high scorers may empathise too much with the customer and fail to close sales. Very low scorers are likely to regard other people as a means to an end and find they alienate both colleagues and customers.

- His answers indicate that he is likely to be regarded as tolerant and patient. He tends to see the positive qualities in others and tries to be a helpful, co-operative member of the team. The extent to which this leads others to take advantage of his good nature may depend on his experience and environment.

Comments and Concerns

Genuine empathy and concern for the needs of the customer will guide his sales style. The extent to which this fits in with the proposed role should be evaluated. He is likely to be a positive and supportive member of the team, one who helps his colleagues rather than competes with them. This can be a positive or a negative characteristic according to the needs of the particular role for which he is being considered. His style may lead to repeat business although he may not be the toughest negotiator.

CONFIDENCE - 7

This scale assesses his confidence to deal with the problems and situations he encounters. On the whole, successful salespeople are confident. They need to convey to customers a confidence in their product or service. In addition, unless they feel it likely that they will be successful they are unlikely to pursue sales opportunities with enthusiasm and commitment. However, there is a danger in over-confidence; it can lead to mistakes and assumptions that can lose sales.

- His answers suggest a high level of self-confidence. He confidently meets new challenges and is generally sure that he can overcome most of the obstacles that he meets. He is likely to be able to recover from failures quite quickly and focus on the next opportunity. He needs little reassurance when faced with difficulties or when his progress is temporarily slowed or halted. He feels that he succeeds at most things he attempts and has faith in his own ability to make the right decisions and get the most out of a situation.

Comments and Concerns

His responses are in line with those of many successful salespeople. He has the self-assurance to confidently pursue new opportunities and is likely to deal positively with setbacks. However, dependent on his abilities and experience, he may sometimes make mistakes through over-confidence. This can affect the quality of his pre-sales efforts or assumptions he makes about the likelihood of securing the sale. He may not double-check his work or question his strategies as much as a cautious person would. On the other hand he may be actively pursuing opportunities whilst a cautious person is still mulling over what to do. He may also be harder to manage due to his faith in his own decisions and approach.

- His relaxed nature should not be seen as a lack of diligence on his part as he approaches his work in a thorough and conscientious fashion.

CONFORMITY - 6

This scale assesses the extent to which a person wants to work in a set procedural fashion. High scorers are inclined to respect authority and stick to the established rules. Low scorers see rules and regulations as restrictive and see them as reducing their effectiveness. Many heavily regulated environments, such as health and financial services, require higher scorers on this scale. Lower scorers may sometimes be very effective. However they are often hard to manage and may not always judge accurately just how far they can stray from authorised procedures. When hiring lower scorers it is essential to consider whether they have the intelligence, experience and knowledge to judge what is acceptable and what is not.

- His responses indicate that to a large extent he is likely to respect the rules and procedures of the organisation. This approach is likely to be tempered by pragmatism according to the circumstances he finds himself in.

Comments and Concerns

Unless his proposed role calls for either extreme adherence to corporate procedures or a total lack of rules and guidance, his answers suggest that he should fit in to most sales environments.

DECISIVENESS - 2

This scale assesses the extent to which the person prefers a decisive, possibly risk-taking approach, or whether a more cautious risk-averse approach is the preference. In terms of successful salespeople, there is not a 'good' or 'bad' score. The success of any particular approach will depend on both the environment and the intelligence and judgement of the individual. The risk with a poor low-scorer is lack of sales performance. The risk with a poor high-scorer is that a lack of sales performance may be accompanied by decisions that have additional adverse effects.

- His responses in this area suggest that he is much more cautious than the average salesperson. His preference is to consider matters fully before taking important decisions. He will weigh up the facts and not feel the need to make an immediate decision. This does not in itself mean that he cannot take big decisions. It just means that he will think the matter through thoroughly before making up his mind.

Comments and Concerns

In general there is more risk associated with high scoring salespeople than low scoring ones. This is because those who rush decisions are more likely to make poor ones. Thus unless the role calls for a very decisive approach - such as snap decisions when negotiating major deals with limited scope for reflection, his responses do not give much cause for concern.

- His more cautious and deliberate approach is not due to any lack of belief on his part. Therefore whilst he may be careful in reaching decisions, he is likely to be happy with the decisions that he makes.

DOMINANCE - 6

This scale assesses the extent to which he wants to get his own way and assert his views. In most selling environments a very pushy approach is counter-productive. This means that many high-scorers on this scale may alienate both customers and colleagues. However a very low score can equally present problems. Selling involves influencing and persuading others. Therefore those who are reluctant to promote their cause are likely to fail to achieve their selling objectives.

- Like many other salespeople he will prefer persuading and influencing others rather than being persuaded and influenced himself. His responses do not suggest that he is extreme in this characteristic and he is likely to be regarded as a persuasive participant in any debate rather than one who insists on dominating the proceedings.

Comments and Concerns

His responses are typical of many successful salespeople. They suggest that he is comfortable pushing for a result but will also be able to take a back seat when circumstances warrant it. He will want to assert himself to achieve his objectives but is not likely to be regarded by customers and colleagues as domineering.

DRIVE - 4

This scale assesses an individual's ambition, drive and determination. High drive is about determination and the will to win. High drive is always a positive sign in a salesperson whilst low Drive is a major cause for concern.

- His responses indicate that he is less motivated and energetic than the average salesperson. He may not be comfortable in environments that require considerable pro-activity and a strong sense of purpose. This may be compensated for by technique and professionalism, however he may not be inclined to put the energy and hours into building and maintaining a customer base that is often required for success in sales.

Comments and Concerns

He probably lacks the energy and drive required to be successful in most sales environments. Being a salesperson often involves aiming for goals with a relatively low probability of success. His responses suggest that this may not suit his preferred working style. He may also be less willing to take the initiative than is often necessary in sales.

INDEPENDENCE - 7

This scale assesses whether he wants guidance and support to help him carry out his tasks or whether he prefers to be left to work on his own. Very high scorers may have difficulties in team-selling roles. They may be poor at communicating information to their colleagues and less willing to work towards group goals. Very low scorers are also likely to experience problems. Selling often calls for self-reliance. At the end of the day it is down to the individual to make his or her targets and a person who is very dependent on the support of others may find this difficult.

- His answers indicate that he will generally prefer a high degree of independence in the way he carries out his role. Although content to be a member of the team he sees himself as self-reliant. He will probably need to be managed with a degree of sensitivity and allowed to structure his activities himself, particularly when he is meeting his targets.

Comments and Concerns

His answers suggest that he is less suited to a very team-oriented selling environment. He may be particularly effective in roles where he can manage his customer base and workload. This often applies to field sales positions or ones where individuals are very much responsible for meeting their own sales targets.

- He is nevertheless a caring and understanding individual and tries to take into account the needs and concerns of others.

QUALITY - 7

This scale assesses the extent to which the person is organised and pays attention to details. It examines whether the person is likely to sacrifice quality for speed and whether they plan ahead or prioritise on the fly. Just about all salespeople must - to some extent - be personally organised. The extent to which a high Quality score is important will depend on the work volume, the level of sales support provided by the organisation and the responsibility of the salesperson for ensuring that commitments to customers are met.

- His responses indicate that compared to the average salesperson, he has a relatively structured and organised approach to work and a preference for dealing with problems in a systematic way. In matters of detail his approach tends to be thorough and accurate. He plans ahead and prioritises tasks to make efficient use of his time. He is unlikely to be late for appointments and will tend to meet the commitments he has entered into in a timely fashion. It is possible that his methodical approach to his workload may reduce the flexibility with which he can respond to new and unexpected events.

Comments and Concerns

For many sales roles his responses in this area are a very positive indication. They suggest that he has a meticulous and structured approach - an area that is often lacking in salespeople. He should be capable of managing a large part of his sales administration and content doing this. It is possible that some of his colleagues may see him as a perfectionist and that he may spend time attending to unnecessary details. The extent to which this is important in his proposed environment should be considered.

RESILIENCE - 6

This scale assesses how the person copes with pressure, setbacks and unpopularity. Resilience is often important as most salespeople experience rejection and rudeness in their work and have to be able to bounce back and make the next sales call. The more pressure and stress there is in the role the more you are looking for a higher scorer on this scale. A lower scorer will not be comfortable working in hard sales environments and where many sales calls have to be made for each sale achieved.

- His answers suggest that he is averagely resilient when compared to most salespeople. Whilst he can cope with rejection, setbacks and the occasional rude comment, he prefers this to be the exception rather than the norm.

Comments and Concerns

His answers suggest that he will be able to cope in many sales environments. He may have more problems in relatively tough sales roles where quite a few rejections are received for each sale achieved. However, in general, his responses indicate that he can deal with the pressures and setbacks of being a salesperson.

INTERVIEW SUMMARY POINTS

When interviewing Example Salesperson you should consider his personal characteristics in the context of his proposed sales role.

This candidate appears to have answered the questionnaire in neither a particularly positive fashion nor in a particularly candid or self-critical way.

Ask him how easy it was to complete the questionnaire, how long it took him to complete and how candid he felt he was.

His average Adaptability score suggests that you should consider the following:

Does the role require an extremely conformist or extremely flexible style? If so, how will he cope?

His high Caring score suggests that you should consider the following:

How does he balance the needs of his employer and those of his customers and colleagues?

How likely is he to let others take advantage of his caring nature? His concern for others may affect his attitude to selling certain products and services. How does this fit in with his proposed role?

His high Confidence score suggests that you should consider the following:

Is he liable to make mistakes through being over-confident?

What lessons has he learnt from previous failures? Have there been times he has lost sales that he thought were assured? Discuss what happened and how he tries to prevent this re-occurring.

His average Conformity score suggests that detailed probing in this area is not necessary unless the sales role calls for extremes of behaviour relevant to this scale. Nevertheless you may like to ask the following question:

Do procedures add or detract from his effectiveness? How?

His low Decisiveness score suggests that you should consider the following:

To what extent will he need to make decisions under pressure and how effective is he likely to be at this?

His average Dominance score suggests that detailed probing in this area is not necessary unless the sales role calls for extremes of behaviour relevant to this scale. Nevertheless you may like to ask the following question:

How does he deal with particularly assertive people?

His low Drive score suggests that you should consider the following:

Does he have sufficient energy and self-motivation to achieve and exceed his targets?

Discuss how he has coped with occasions when he has had trouble meeting his objectives and the effect this had on his attitude and motivation.

His high Independence score suggests that you should consider the following:

Discuss how he works in a team environment and assess whether this suits his proposed role.

Evaluate how he responds to guidance from others and determine if this will present a problem.

His high Quality score suggests that you should consider the following:

Is his very planned approach to his tasks and commitments likely to make him too inflexible for his proposed role?

Will he be comfortable working closely with less organised colleagues?

His average Resilience score suggests that you should consider the following:

Discuss how he copes with rejection.

Has he previously endured a run of poor sales? Discuss how he kept himself motivated to get through the bad patch.