



Do you want to get better at sales? And beef up your sales resume so you could land a higher-paying sales job with generous compensation? There are certain hard and soft sales skills you need to master, and of course, back it up with increased revenue numbers credited to your performance.

We've done our research and compiled the top 30 sales representative skills you need to master if you want to achieve complete sales enlightenment.

But first, before we dive into this, we should note that while we have some generalized notion of "selling" modern sales organizations have grown in complexity and have evolved into a roster of functions — such as marketing, business development, closing, account management, and customer success — that require different specialized skill sets for their respective teams.

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Technology Will Never Replace Sales Talent

Master These Sales Skills & Get Ahead of The Competition

How to List Sales Skills On Your Resume

What Are Hard Skills In Sales?

[Hard skills](#) for sales are formal and technical abilities learned from academic institutions, workplaces, seminars, mentorships, and training courses, including role-critical skills that are specialized for a specific function. [Soft skills](#), on the other hand, are informal abilities that are learned over a person's lifetime and usually relate to the person's aptitude in performing common tasks and connecting with other people.

What Are Qualities of a Good Salesperson?

These broadly refer to a person's mindset, attitude, and behavioral tendencies. While the boundaries between skills and traits sometimes become hazy, we try to avoid these cases to maintain clarity. We list the top sales skills and [essential traits](#) we believe sales professionals need to excel in their fields and outperform their competition.

What Actually Makes a Great Sales Rep?

Many books, articles and studies have attempted to identify the [characteristics of a high-performing salesperson](#), but consensus has yet to be achieved. Many agree on a few indispensable skills but otherwise recommend disparate skill sets and desirable qualities. We found at least 30 common denominators and listed the sales skills you need to master — and to put in your resume to level up in your sales career.

What Sales Skills Should I Put On My Resume?

We compiled a full list of 30+ sales skills you need to master to become a top performer who generates consistent revenue and vault yourself to the top of the totem pole in the sales field.

Soft Skills For Sales Professionals



1) Relationship-building

The ability to positively engage other people, build long-term relationships, and form mutually beneficial networks will find frequent use in any salesperson's workflow. From meeting clients and gathering referrals to soliciting advice and achieving team objectives, relationship-building skills enable a salesperson to accomplish tasks easier and make better-informed decisions. Relationship-building involves trust, rapport, and a genuine desire to help other people. Relationship-building leads to [relationship selling](#), so don't think it's just a bunch of fluff. This creates opportunities if you play your cards right!

2) Knowing When To Shut Up

That's right. [Shut up and listen](#)! Listening is the best method to understand where clients are coming from, what their pain points are, and how you can effectively provide solutions for their challenges. Without listening skills, a sales professional risks compromising other stages in the sales process such as lead qualification and customer-solution matching.

3) Time Management

While selling involves money, something a lot more precious gets exchanged and utilized along the way — time. Your client's time is important. So is yours. A salesperson's ability to optimize time improves productivity and cost efficiency, creating the environment needed for high performance. This soft skill coupled with software automation, analytics and other technologies delivers significant ROI for any business.

Pro Tip: Become a Google Chrome powerhouse by learning how to use these [Chrome Extensions](#) to maximize sales productivity and efficiency!

4) Storytelling

Selling not only requires showing the features of your product but also convincing customers that these features will solve their problems or will benefit them in some significant way. In most cases, you need to articulate your message by [telling a story that deeply resonates with your target audience](#). A lack of baseline communication skills is a glaring red flag for anyone planning to enter the world of sales.

5) Research/Information Gathering

Accurate information about clients, market trends, rival solutions and other business intelligence enables a salesperson to make better decisions, engage the right customers better, and [close high value deals while shortening the sales cycle](#). Your CRM, competitive analysis tools, rival websites, and social media are great places where you can start your research.

6) Critical Thinking/Problem Solving

Having an ocean of data is hardly enough to get you anywhere, however. You still need [critical thinking skills](#) to process information, analyze disparate data, and sift through the heap for relevant bits of information that will help you formulate solutions for problems your prospects or your team are experiencing.

7) Affinity with Technology

Tomorrow's sales professionals must at least be comfortable around digital devices. This makes it easier to adapt to emerging technological advances in AI, big data, and other fields that will transform the way organizations run businesses and the way brands engage audiences.

8) Collaboration

[Sales teams rarely operate as a one-person army.](#) Hence, the ability to align one's personal goals, workflows, and schedule with those of others is an important skill for sales professionals. Sales teams follow a game plan that assigns different roles and requires different outcomes from members. Most of these roles and outcomes are dependent on each other for collective success. That means the lack of teamwork and flat leadership will likely lead to unwanted outcomes and missed objectives.

Hard Skills For Sales Professionals



9) Product Knowledge

Inadequate product knowledge is unacceptable in the world of selling. Any sales professional who goes to the field without having an intimate knowledge of the features, benefits, and weaknesses of their product will have a hard time creating effective pitches and connecting customer needs to the best solutions available. Deep and extensive product knowledge is a prerequisite to high sales performance. In addition, [demonstrating that you are a subject matter expert generates trust](#) among your customers.

10) Strong Knowledge of Common Business Software & Sales Enablement Solutions

Sales ops and [sales enablement](#) technology — through products such as CRMs, document management software, and [workplace productivity apps](#) — makes selling easier and more profitable. Sales professionals should learn how to use the software, platforms and other tools their organizations use to run operations and engage customers.

11) Business Communication

Your talent at [engaging prospects during the sales conversation](#) or articulating a concept can still be honed for the business landscape. It is imperative that sales professionals learn the best practices in both oral (e.g., phone calls, presentations, pitches, etc.) and written (e.g., proposals, memos, referral requests, etc) communications. This will help you become more effective at connecting with clients and making a positive impact in how they perceive your brand.

12) Client Engagement

Getting along with people and having good communication skills are baseline traits. For high-performing sales professionals, there is a science and a method for establishing and maintaining excellent client engagement. For example, there are [sales call techniques](#) that can help you build rapport with a prospect, research methods that will help you glean valuable information about a customer, and communication techniques that will allow you to nurture long term relationships with clients.

13) Active Listening

There are different levels of listening but you need to operate at full throttle when it comes to your customers. [Active listening in sales](#) requires focus as well as occasional/follow-up queries. These allow you not only to glean complete and clear information from your clients but also to build rapport and demonstrate that you genuinely care about their concerns.

14) Conflict Management and Resolution

In sales, expect to encounter regular episodes of complaints, conflicts, and rejections. These incidents may involve just about anyone, including clients, peers, management and other parties. Because these can occur at any time, sales professionals need to learn and practice [how to proactively handle objections](#) and manage conflicts. High-performing salespeople have been known to use these incidents as a platform for converting new leads or an avenue for demonstrating a workplace solution to management.

15) Sales Presentations & Sales Demos

In the beginning, there was PowerPoint. Now you have Prezi, Keynote, and other presentation software. Whatever tool you use, being good at presenting and public speaking is a great skill to have in the world of selling. [Excellent sales demos & presentations](#) convey subject mastery and build trust around your brand. For B2B sellers, conducting a lively and compelling demo is also a requisite skill.

16) Social Media & Social Selling

Because social has become a major part of our digital lives, many companies now employ social media managers to oversee their brand's online presence. You need not be as technically adept as these specialists but [you need to know your way around social media](#). For B2B sellers, knowing the best practices and tricks for engaging prospects on LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, and other networks will help bolster your lead generation and conversion efforts.