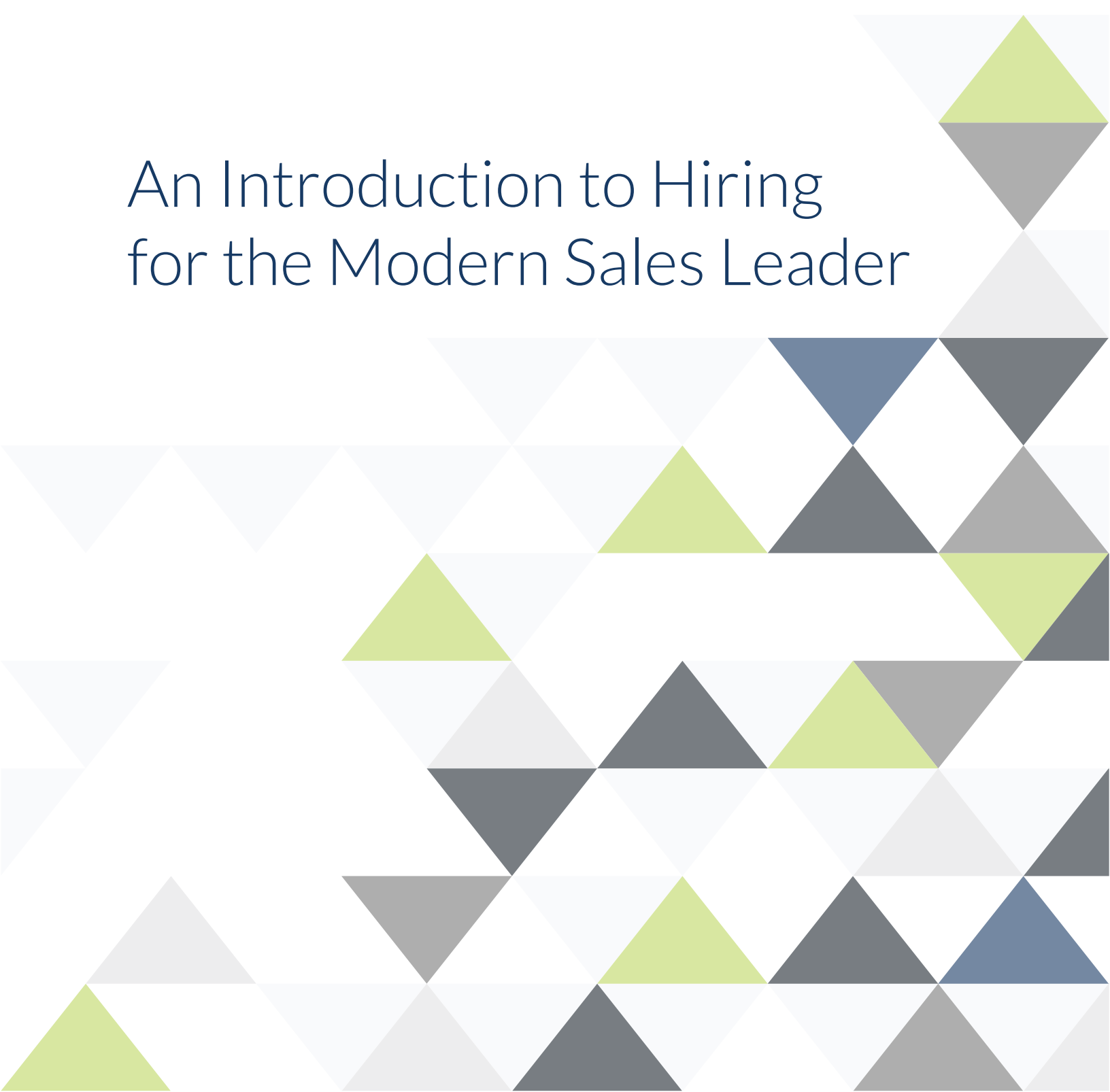


# An Introduction to Hiring for the Modern Sales Leader



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# INTRODUCTION

Hiring a Sales Leader is crucial to the success of your organization. A great Sales Leader will build a scalable sales process and accelerate your growth, having a long-term effect on revenue. A bad Sales Leader, or no Sales Leader at all, can cause your company to stagnate and eventually wither away.

Finding a great Sales Leader, however, is a challenge for many organizations. The hiring manager is usually a company executive, who does not have the time and expertise to recruit a qualified Sales Leader. As a result, the recruitment process may be handed off to HR, which can be a big turn off to candidates who would rather speak to an executive.

In this eBook, we offer an in-depth look into this critical role and provide insights you can use to hire a Sales Leader.

**A GREAT SALES LEADER WILL  
BUILD A SCALABLE SALES  
PROCESS AND ACCELERATE  
YOUR GROWTH.**

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# THE MODERN SALES LEADER

The Modern Sales Leader is generally responsible for implementing sales processes, hiring top talent, inspiring their team and scaling revenue.

However, this role can vary slightly from organization to organization, and may depend on the size, goals, and lifecycle stage of the company.

Sales Leaders typically fit into one of four categories:

## HEAD OF SALES

The “Head of Sales” position is typically a company’s first sales hire, and will join the team pre-revenue to find your first customers.

This hire should have director or senior director level experience with a proven track record of sales success. They will evangelize for your brand, and maintain great customer relationships. A great head of sales can turn your early clients into evangelists who will advocate for your brand through word of mouth and participate in case studies and white papers. While they won’t have an actual sales team, they may manage some junior level talent. The salary range for this position should be between

\$145,000-175,000 with a double on-target earning (for \$290,000-350,000 total package), plus equity.

**A GREAT HEAD OF SALES CAN  
TURN YOUR EARLY CLIENTS  
INTO EVANGELISTS THAT  
WILL ADVOCATE FOR YOUR  
BRAND.**

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# FIRST VICE PRESIDENT OF SALES

Your first Vice President of Sales is the person who will help you scale, so they will be one of the most important hires your company will make.

This person will be an architect for your sales process and team, so they should have:

- A sales playbook
- Experience scaling significant revenue at a smaller company
- Sales recruitment experience
- Team management experience
- The ability to get their hands dirty and sell
- Some sales operations experience, particularly architecting in Salesforce

**YOUR FIRST VICE PRESIDENT OF SALES IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT HIRES YOUR COMPANY WILL MAKE.**

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The salary range for your first Vice President of Sales should be between \$175,000 and \$250,000 with a double on-target earning (\$350,000-500,000 total package) and equity. Salary would be on the lower end of this range for someone who has built a sales team and sales process once before, and on the higher end of the range for someone who has done it multiple times.

## LARGE COMPANY VICE PRESIDENT OF SALES

The Vice President of Sales at a larger company may have a similar background to the “First Vice President of Sales,” but will be more focused on gauging past metrics and setting the stage for future success. They will generally create key performance indicators and metrics to measure future success, but also may need to revamp quotas or fix broken processes. The Vice President of Sales at a large company needs to have sales DNA, as well as an analytical mind.

The salary range for a Vice President of Sales at a larger company should range from \$200,000 to \$250,000, with double on-target earning and equity.

**THE VICE PRESIDENT OF SALES AT A LARGE COMPANY NEEDS TO HAVE SALES DNA, AS WELL AS AN ANALYTICAL MIND.**

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## EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT OF SALES

An Executive Vice President of Sales is more strategy focused and will need to have strong communication skills to keep key stakeholders aligned with the strategic direction. This role is found in larger organizations, where there are two or three layers of management between them and the sales team.

The Executive Vice President of Sales may also lead a company for their Initial Public Offering (IPO), and communicate with key people after the IPO has taken place.

An Executive Vice President's salary should be in the \$250,000 to 300,000 range, with double on-target earning plus equity.

# WHAT MOTIVATES THE MODERN SALES LEADER?

While you're looking for a Sales Leader with a proven track record of success, they're looking for an opportunity where they can continue to be successful.

They want to work with a disruptive product that has the ability to be best in class, or already is. Particularly if you're recruiting them for a role similar to what they're currently in, the opportunity to sell a better product can be enticing. Most people will be more excited to work with a company that is well known in their space, and Sales Leaders are no exception. Working at a high caliber company helps them build their reputation and maintain their track record of success.

In addition, they want to work with an executive team with a proven track record, but that is also open to change if needed. They want to own revenue so they can build the processes and teams they need to be successful. In short, they want to know if your company is set up for success, and whether they will be encouraged to play a role in that success.

Finally, they want to hold a large chunk of equity. They want to feel like they're building something great, and that they'll be rewarded for it. Equity makes them financially invested in your company's success.

# BUILDING A DREAM TEAM: STITCH LABS

INTERVIEW WITH  
**JAKE GASAWAY**

**CO-FOUNDER**





## **WHY DID YOU START LOOKING FOR A SALES LEADER?**

We were at a point where we had a small sales team and had tested several ways to close customers. We had a very sellable product and we needed a Sales Leader with experience in building processes and scaling a SaaS sales organization.

## **WHAT WERE YOU LOOKING FOR IN A SALES LEADER?**

We were looking for someone that could learn quickly and take charge of the team. It was very important that they had successfully built, or been part of, a team that had grown from a small group of salespeople into a team of many. It was also important that they were a strong recruiter and had the ability to put processes in place that would allow us to build our team and scale quickly.

## **WHAT DID YOUR RECRUITMENT PROCESS LOOK LIKE?**

We had a good idea of what we were looking for and we interviewed many candidates that ranged from extremely green candidates to seasoned Sales Leaders with experience selling into enterprise businesses. This gave us a good gauge of what was out there and allowed us to calibrate quickly and make a great decision.

## **HOW DO YOU DIFFERENTIATE YOURSELF, AND YOUR COMPANY, TO ATTRACT TALENT?**

Being a venture-backed start-up with a very sellable product, we were able to show our candidates what the opportunity was and that they would be in control of their own destiny. We had experimented enough to show attractive data and processes to our candidates, but expressed that they weren't set in stone and that there was a lot of room for improvement. On top of that, we had done a great job recruiting to that point, so being able to introduce our candidates to the team made a major difference and was a differentiator.

# BUILDING A DREAM TEAM: STITCH LABS

INTERVIEW WITH  
**MATT BALL**  
DIRECTOR OF SALES



## **WHAT INTERESTED YOU IN THE OPPORTUNITY AT STITCH LABS?**

When I first started looking at Stitch Labs, I thought the product was very interesting, as it solves many different problems. There were rave reviews online from many loyal customers who praised how Stitch Labs made their lives easier. Two of the founders, Brandon and Jake, were the difference for me. They were both highly intelligent, fun guys who were very dedicated to making Stitch Labs a success and made me want to be a part of it. I had a great experience at my previous company in our start-up phase and wanted to do it all over again. Stitch Labs did that for me.

## **HOW DO YOU DIFFERENTIATE YOURSELF AS A SALES LEADER?**

I prefer the term coach instead of manager - if I have to manage instead of coach, something went wrong. I coach my team on how to set goals, measure those goals and develop the tools they need to succeed. I prefer to help in the action instead of giving feedback afterward, and lead by setting a good example and showing how to have fun doing it.

## **WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS FOR THE DEPARTMENT?**

We always have booking goals each month, as well as new client goals and new hire goals. We also have a focus each month. For example, this month we will be focusing on completely exhausting all qualified leads. We have a definition of what that means and our data team helps us prequalify those leads to speed up the process.

## **WHAT DOES YOUR SALES PLAYBOOK INCLUDE?**

That's a secret! My sales playbook is a living Google Doc that's constantly being improved. The first few tabs share how to manage your data from different activities. I am a strong believer in getting the right data to make good decisions, which starts on the front line with the sales rep. The rest of the tabs contain probing, closing, and goal setting techniques and cheat sheets, and ways to take your sales abilities to the next level.

# BUILDING A DREAM TEAM: STITCH LABS

INTERVIEW WITH  
**BRITTNEY  
ROBANSER**

**SENIOR SALES SPECIALIST**



## WHAT INTERESTED YOU IN WORKING FOR STITCH LABS?

I was at a point in my sales career where I had been working for several larger start-ups and I did not feel passionate about what I was selling, nor did I feel like I was able to make the impact that I wanted to make. I had always been very interested in ecommerce and companies that worked with apparel and fashion based retailers, so Stitch Labs seemed like the perfect place for me! I was excited about the opportunity to be part of a small, fast growing team in this space and also very excited to make an impact as one of the earliest members of their sales team. I knew Stitch Labs was the type of company where I would get an invaluable opportunity to build something great and be part of an amazing, extremely talented team.

## WHAT IS IT LIKE TO WORK ON THE STITCH LABS TEAM?

Working with the team at Stitch Labs has been one of the most enjoyable and fulfilling experiences of my life! Every day, I am inspired by my teammates. My team members are some of the most intelligent, hard working and genuinely compassionate people I've ever had the chance to work with. There is not one day that goes by that I'm not learning something new, collaborating with my team to think of new processes, or being challenged to be better than I was the day before. Every member of this team is willing to help, whether that be a fellow coworker or a customer, and one of the biggest things I tell people about what makes our team special is the lack of egos that people have here. Everyone gives 110% every day and it is so inspiring to me. Lastly, I consider my Stitch Labs team not only to be amazing coworkers, but amazing friends as well. I can always count on my team for support, guidance and a good laugh!

## WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT WORKING WITH MATT BALL?

When Matt first joined our team, it was apparent that he was the missing puzzle piece to our team. His level of guidance, support and implementation of a sales process has taken our sales team to another level and I am grateful for that. The thing that I appreciate most about working with Matt is his ability to provide amazing coaching and leadership, as well as his ability to help our team solve problems. Matt is always there with solutions and an action plan, whether it's figuring out better ways to navigate customer conversations or helping us set goals. He is a leader that listens, gets things done fast and gives you a game plan so you know where you need to go. If you get stuck on anything, he's there to get you through it. He genuinely cares about our team's well-being and he is incredibly loyal. I love the fact that I can go to him with any problem (work or personal) and I know I'll get the best guidance and plan of action from him.

Another thing that I love about working with Matt is he has guided me on exploring projects that are outside of my day-to-day job and has encouraged me to run with it. He always encourages me to work on my professional and personal goals, and has given me confidence in my abilities. I feel very lucky to have him as both a mentor and a friend!

# HOW TO HIRE YOUR OWN SALES LEADER

Before jumping in to find a Sales Leader, take the time to define your recruitment process so you can communicate it all the way through.

A Sales Leadership position is an important decision (for both you and your candidate), so it's ok to take your time in the recruitment process to get to know one another. However, you should find out if your candidate is interviewing anywhere else and where they are in the process, so you can speed up your process if need be.

The recruitment process may vary from company to company, to meet your organization's unique needs, but we have provided the following framework to help you get started.

## SOURCING



If you're beginning your search for your Sales Leader on your own, the best place to start is within your own network. Reach out to Sales Leaders you've worked with in the past to see if they, or anyone they know, would be interested in your role. Also reach out to people outside the sales function to see if they've worked with any fantastic Sales Leaders in the past. This is a great way to uncover talent with a solid reputation and track record of success.

As with any executive search, you may also want to enlist the help of a specialist recruitment agency like Betts Recruiting. Specialist agencies have a solid understanding



of the market and the talent available, and can help you source and screen high-caliber candidates. They may also have great candidates ready to go, helping you quickly find the highest quality candidates on the market.

## PHONE SCREEN



Following the sourcing phase, most companies will begin the interview process with a phone call to gauge mutual interest. A high-level person in the company, rather than the HR manager, should give the phone screen.

Begin the interview by introducing your company to the candidate, and explaining the goal for the role. Then ask the candidate to introduce himself or herself, and what made them decide to take your call. Use this information as a starting off point to dig deeper into the candidate's background to determine fit.

Keep in mind that the candidate is screening you as much as you are screening them, so keep the phone call conversational and allow the candidate plenty of time to ask questions.

**YOUR CANDIDATES ARE  
SCREENING YOU AS MUCH AS  
YOU ARE SCREENING THEM.**

 Tweet This!

# ONSITE INTERVIEWS



Onsite interviews are your opportunity to ask more in-depth interview questions and look for a culture fit. They will generally take place over two or more days, to allow the candidate to meet the CEO and other key people in the organization, as well as to present a 3/6/9 month plan and ask any lingering questions.

The first onsite meeting should be a conversation with CEO to discuss the company direction, and how the Sales Leader's role will be important. It's crucial again to remember that interviews are a two-way street, and that the CEO should be selling the candidate on the company throughout the process.

The candidate should also meet with other key people in the company to determine mutual fit. Be careful not to go overboard: 10-15 minute interviews with between 3-5 people from your company should suffice.

**INTERVIEWS ARE A TWO-WAY STREET. WIN TOP TALENT BY SELLING THEM ON YOUR COMPANY.**

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Following the initial onsite interview, candidates should be asked to prepare a 3/6/9 month plan for their next onsite interview. Salespeople are great at talking the talk, but a good 3/6/9 month plan will help you understand if they can walk the walk as well. This is a great way to test your candidate's ability to actually do the job, and to get an idea of what you can expect in the first 9 months of their employment.

**A 3/6/9 MONTH PLAN IS A GREAT WAY TO SEE IF YOUR SALES CANDIDATE CAN TALK THE TALK AND WALK THE WALK.**

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Following the presentation of the 3/6/9 plan, the candidate should meet with the CEO one more time to answer any final questions and to get on the same page with compensation. If you decide to

extend an offer, you want to make sure there aren't any roadblocks to your candidate accepting it. Be specific when you discuss compensation, including the exact salary, percentage and shares of equity, and the benefits they will receive.

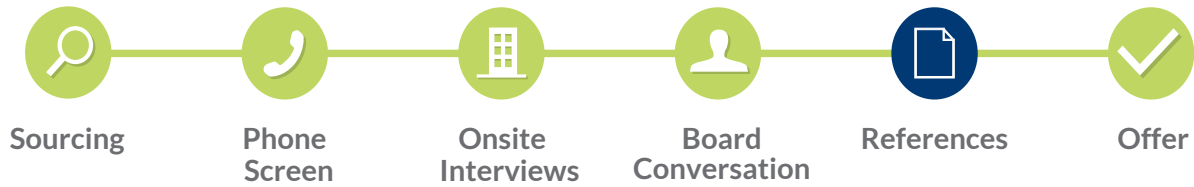
## BOARD CONVERSATION



Following successful onsite interviews, the Sales Leadership candidate may speak with board members or investors. This allows both parties to make sure they're on the same page in regard to your company's growth strategy.

A Sales Leadership hire is a critical position, and an additional layer of screening can help ensure a strong fit.

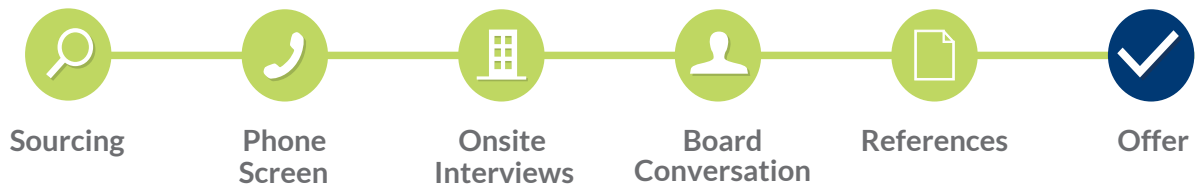
# REFERENCES



Once the candidate has convinced you of their ability to do the job, it's a good idea to fact-check by calling their references. Past performance is a strong indicator of future performance and reference checks can validate key metrics, experiences and skills that translate to your position.

You should always speak with at least one of their past supervisors, one of their peers, and one of their direct reports to get a complete view the candidate. The difference in perspective can determine how a candidate will fit into your own organization.

# OFFER



When you decide to extend an offer to your top candidate, you should already be on the same page about what your offer will contain. Whatever you do, don't lowball your top candidate at this stage – your offer will likely be refused and you will lose the candidate's respect.

Present the offer to the candidate verbally, explaining why you're excited to have them on board. Discuss how your organization and role fulfills the candidate's motivations for considering your opportunity. Then discuss the details of the offer and see if your candidate will verbally accept.

Follow up by sending a written offer with the same details you agreed to in the verbal offer. It's normal for a candidate to take 24-48 hours to review the offer, but you should follow up if you don't hear back by then. The candidate may have some lingering concerns or questions, and a quick phone call can help you win your top candidate.

# CONCLUSION

The Modern Sales Leader wears a lot of hats. They must be a great salesperson, sales recruiter, team leader, and master of process. Finding such a person can be challenging – but it is crucial to the success of your organization. A Sales Leader is a critical component of scaling revenue and can position your company for long-term growth.

The best Sales Leaders will have a proven track record of success, which they want to continue building upon with future opportunities. If you want to recruit a great Sales Leader for your organization, you need to prove that your role will be a good fit for their experience and goals. While you're evaluating them, remember that they will also be evaluating you. From the phone screen, all the way through to the offer, you need to invest the time and energy to show your candidates why they should choose your opportunity.

Hiring a Sales Leader should be seen as an investment in your company's future revenue, and should be your top priority.

# CONNECT WITH BETTS

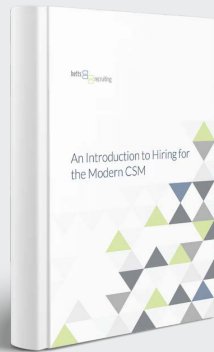
At Betts Recruiting we partner with the fastest growing and most innovative Tech startups in the United States. We personally match all of our candidates and specialize in recruiting for revenue generating roles such as: Sales, Marketing, Customer Success, Business Development, and People Operations.

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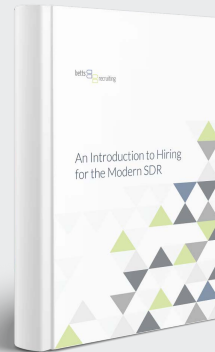


## OTHER RESOURCES

If you enjoyed this ebook, master building out the rest of your sales team with our other "Introduction to Hiring" ebooks:



**AN  
INTRODUCTION  
TO HIRING FOR  
THE MODERN  
CSM**



**AN  
INTRODUCTION  
TO HIRING FOR  
THE MODERN  
SDR**

THANK YOU AND  
GOOD LUCK IN  
YOUR HIRING!

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