



**AN INTRODUCTION TO**  
**HIRING FOR THE**  
**MODERN SALES**  
**OPERATIONS MANAGER**

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# INTRODUCTION

The Sales Operations Manager is a role that's only become necessary since the technology boom, but the need for this position is increasing by the day. Companies are realizing that as the sales process changes, so does the need for specialized roles.

As a startup's sales team grows and territories and quotas need to be adjusted, the sales team requires direction on how to best segment growing areas and manage the greater influx of sales leads. CRM systems have evolved to manage these growing pipelines but they need a manager to serve as a systems administrator.

**A SALES OPERATIONS MANAGER'S JOB IS TO HELP OPTIMIZE A SALES TEAM'S OPERATIONS AND MAXIMIZE ON A COMPANY'S GROWTH.**

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That's where the Sales Operations Manager comes in. A Sales Operations Manager's job is to help optimize a sales team's operations and maximize on a company's growth. Incorporating the new technologies that play a crucial role in sales efforts is a key function of the Sales Operations Manager.

Sales Operations Managers are a unique breed with a unique skill set. They need to have the right combination of technical ability and process creating experience in order to effectively generate a comprehensive outline for company growth.

Altogether, this creates a challenge for hiring organizations that are looking to hire a Sales Operations Manager — the competition is fierce among companies hoping to fill these positions, and not many people have the Sales Operations Manager job title or experience.

In this eBook, we offer an in-depth look into the Sales Operations Manager role and provide insights you can use to build or scale your own Sales Operations team.

# WHAT IS A SALES OPERATIONS MANAGER?

## WHO ARE THEY

As the sales industry has seen a pronounced rise in the need for optimization, companies have found a greater need for data analytics. Sales Operations Managers help companies understand their day-to-day data and use this information to outline sales processes. Sales Operations Managers usually have startup experience and understand building systems and protocols from the ground up in a B2B or B2C environment. Ideal candidates for this position can come from many different backgrounds. Many Sales Operations Managers have 2-5 years experience using a CRM System or working at a CRM corporation. These employees can also come from a business intelligence background, where they worked as data analysts. Lastly, some Sales Operations Managers move out of sales development and into operations after expanding their technical and analytical proficiency.

**SALES OPERATIONS MANAGERS HELP COMPANIES UNDERSTAND THEIR DAY-TO-DAY DATA AND USE THIS INFORMATION TO OUTLINE SALES PROCESSES.**

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The Sales Operations department, as its name suggests, is the link between Sales and Operations. The ideal candidate will have the same qualities of both a future VP of Sales and a Chief Operations Officer.

## WHAT DO THEY DO

Sales Operations Managers work closely with a company's sales team and SDRs. Initially, Sales Operations Managers map out territories for all sales team members in new markets, as well as adjust quotas and ramp times. At the beginning of the sales cycle, Sales Operations Managers monitor lead inbound and flow, and help sort leads to different sales representatives. These employees also monitor conversion rates and compensation planning for sales teams. Sales Operations Managers help build sales teams in a

scalable way, based on efficient and scientific analytics.

Additionally, Sales Operations Managers establish a company's CRM system and manage data import and export from the system. They generate useful reports and dashboards to help sales teams track their activity up to the minute and discover weakness points. The Sales Operations Managers then maintain and improve the CRM over time. They monitor deal flow, automate follow-up activity, and use data to help optimize marketing campaigns. Lastly, Sales Operations Managers continually serve as the system administrator.

**SALES OPERATIONS MANAGERS HELP BUILD SALES TEAMS IN A SCALABLE WAY, BASED ON EFFICIENT AND SCIENTIFIC ANALYTICS.**

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## WHEN DO YOU NEED THEM

Companies hire a Sales Operations Manager after their sales department has gained steam. Once a company's sales team enters double digits, issues of territories, regions, and verticals arise. Sales Operations Managers help companies strategically map their growth in line with their sales priorities so a growing sales team doesn't lose focus.

**SALES OPERATIONS MANAGERS HELP COMPANIES STRATEGICALLY MAP THEIR GROWTH IN LINE WITH THEIR SALES PRIORITIES.**

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A Sales Operations Manager helps a sales team maintain their success by charting the path of expansion. If your sales team is spending time outlining where their area stops and their team member's starts, it may be time to hire someone to manage this division and optimize the process. The goal of a Sales Operations Manager is to remove and streamline all barriers between a sales team, their tools, and their customers.

**THE GOAL OF A SALES OPERATIONS MANAGER IS TO REMOVE AND STREAMLINE ALL BARRIERS BETWEEN A SALES TEAM, THEIR TOOLS, AND THEIR CUSTOMERS.**

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# WHAT DO YOU PAY THEM

## *SAN FRANCISCO/NEW YORK:*

1-2 years experience:

\$70,000-90,000 (+Bonus 5-20%)

3-5 years experience:

\$100,000-150,000 (+Bonus 5-20%)

## *AUSTIN, UK:*

1-2 years experience:

\$40,000-60,000 (+Bonus 5-20%)

3-5 years experience:

\$60,000-90,000 (+Bonus 5-20%)

## *LONDON, UK:*

1-2 years experience:

\$40,000-60,000 (+Bonus 5-20%)

3-5 years experience:

\$50,000-70,000 (+Bonus 5-20%)

# **HOW TO BUILD YOUR DREAM TEAM**

# INTRODUCTION

If you're starting to build out your Sales Operations team, or trying to expand your current team, one of the most important things to do is establish your hiring process.

Try to keep things simple, efficient, and timely to maintain your candidates' interests. A long hiring process not only means that your position goes unfilled, but it may also cause your ideal candidates to drop out of the process. The best candidates are in high demand with plenty of choices about where to work. Tighten up your hiring process so you don't lose them to a competitor.

Once your hiring process is determined, communicate it to your candidates so they have clear expectations about timing and next steps.

The hiring process for a Sales Operations Managers typically takes 2-4 weeks and consists of 5 parts: sourcing and screening, phone interview, onsite interview, technical skills demonstration, and offer.

You should customize the hiring process to meet your organization's unique needs, but we have broken down each part to help you get started.

## SOURCING AND SCREENING



If you're beginning your search for your next strategic sales hire on your own, the best places to start are with internal referrals and LinkedIn searches.

As with any role, internal referrals can be a great source of candidates – particularly if they're from a current Sales Operations Manager who knows what it takes to succeed. However, you may also find great candidates



within your other employees' networks, or even your own.

While you're waiting for those referrals to roll in, you should also take a more proactive approach to recruiting by running searches on LinkedIn for your ideal candidate profile. Because of the highly specialized nature of sales operations, look at companies with similarly sized sales teams or sales cycles. Viewing the qualifications of the strategic team members at these other organizations can help identify what skills are necessary for a Sales Operations Manager at your company. Also looking for candidates with the job title of Business Strategist can aid your search. Strategic sales hires are new, and have dramatically grown in popularity with the tech scene. By focusing on what you need your strategic sales hire to accomplish, you can narrow down the candidate pool to those that can help you achieve success.

Finally, you can try job postings to find candidates – although, in most cases, you'll end up with too many applicants to sift through and may not find anyone that is truly qualified.

Many organizations use a recruitment firm like Betts Recruiting to both source and screen candidates. We provide higher quality candidates than other methods — and faster. When organizations need to hire strategic sales hires on an accelerated timeline, our pipeline of great candidates is already ready to go. Plus, we perform consultative searches and pre-screen all candidates to ensure that our clients will be satisfied with the results we provide.

**RECRUITMENT FIRMS CAN  
HELP YOU SOURCE AND  
SCREEN HIGHER QUALITY  
CANDIDATES, FASTER.**

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It's for these reasons we get so much of our business through client referrals. We have a solid reputation for delivering great candidates, which in turn helps our clients reach their business goals.

# PHONE INTERVIEW



After the sourcing and screening phase, most companies will begin the interview process with a phone call.

During the phone interview, start off by explaining the role in detail, and try to determine if the candidate's technical experience is a good fit. Your goal is to make sure they fit the basic requirements of the job, and to try to identify any red flags.

## SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR A PHONE INTERVIEW:

- 1 What are your day-to-day responsibilities in your current role?
- 2 To what extent have you used SFDC?
- 3 What functions of Microsoft Excel are you familiar with?
- 4 Have you created a territory plan? A quota plan?
- 5 How familiar are you with SQL?
- 6 What is your company's current ARR (Accounting Rate of Return) on the average deal size?

# ONSITE INTERVIEWS



The onsite interview is your opportunity to ask more in-depth interview questions and look for a culture fit.

## START OFF BY ASKING SITUATIONAL QUESTIONS, SUCH AS:

- 1 How do you determine which technologies to implement as a sales team scales?
- 2 Can you tell me about a time you architecture a reporting system?
- 3 How would you create and administer a compensation plan?

Following the situational questions, the candidate should meet with a few people from your company to determine culture fit. Be careful not to go overboard: 10-15 minute interviews with between 3-5 people from your company should suffice, and we recommend that you include one person who's not on your direct team or in your department.

Remind the interviewers to keep the conversation open, and to give the candidate the opportunity to ask questions that give them a better sense of the company culture. Remember that Sales Operations candidates are in high demand, so your goal should be to connect with the candidate on a personal level — you want them to feel the culture fit as much as you do.

# SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR CULTURE FIT

- 1 What excites you about waking up to go to work everyday?
- 2 How do you want to feel when you leave at the end of the day?
- 3 What shows that you're a good fit for a startup?
- 4 What do you like to do in your spare time?
- 5 Where do you see yourself in 5-10 years?
- 6 What excites you about technology?
- 7 What's your ideal work environment: one in which you can work on several dynamic projects simultaneously, or one in which you can work on one task at a time through completion?
- 8 What do think makes a good team player? Would you describe yourself this way? How do you deal with those who are not?

# TECHNICAL SKILLS DEMONSTRATION



A great way to test your candidate’s ability to actually do the job is to ask them to complete a technical skills demonstration. Have your candidate walk you through a white boarding outline on how they think about specific strategic decisions, or run through excel and CRM reporting tests that mirror a sales operations typical task. Asking situational questions about choosing a forecasting model for growth, how they would present results to the executive board, or about best practices for certain objectives can give you more insight into how a candidate approaches a problem and creates a solution.

Testing candidates on one of the technical aspects of day-to-day activities of the position will give you valuable insights into whether they’re able to effectively and quickly implement the tools your company needs.

After this point, you should have a clear idea about whether or not you’d like to extend an offer to your candidate. However, be sure to provide feedback to each of your candidates, regardless of whether they will be receiving an offer – this can help them in their next interview, and will leave a lasting positive impression of your company.

# OFFER



Once you've decided to extend an offer, there are a few things you can do to increase your chances of it being accepted.

The first, and perhaps most important step, is to pre-close your candidate. By this point, you should have an idea as to why the candidate is looking for a new opportunity and what it will take to get them onboard. This is your chance to present your offer and see if they will verbally accept.

Your offer should include at least a 10% increase over the candidate's current compensation, and you should discuss all benefits, perks, and equity. This is also a great opportunity to revisit the conversations you've had about the candidate's motivations, so you can reinforce that it will be a great fit for both parties.

**THE BEST WAY TO ENSURE YOUR EMPLOYMENT OFFER IS ACCEPTED IS TO PRE-CLOSE YOUR CANDIDATE.**

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If your candidate has any reservations or would like to negotiate the offer, respond within a day (if not immediately) to show that you're excited to have them onboard.

Timeliness is key here, so be sure to contact the candidate with a verbal offer as quickly as possible, and ask that they respond within 48 hours. If any further discussion is needed, do your best to keep the conversation moving and find a resolution as quickly as you can. Any delays could be the difference between hiring your top choice candidate and losing them to a competitor or a counter-offer.

Only once the candidate has verbally accepted should you send out a written offer with the same details you agreed to in the verbal offer.

Then take a deep breath, and congratulate yourself for a job well done.

# CONCLUSION

Sales Operations Managers are emerging positions that play a key role in organizations expanding within the technology industry. It will become more competitive to hire for this role as companies realize they need it to maintain their competitive advantage.

You're on the right track by starting to build your team now, but you may still face challenges finding candidates with the right skillset. Competition for top talent will be fierce, so make yourself stand out as an employer of choice and attract top talent with a solid product, enterprise customer accounts to manage, a strong leadership team, a fun culture, growth opportunities, and/or equity. Having sales team members that also understand the technical side of an expanding sales team is an integral step for tech startups to move past the initial growth phase and increase their expansion.

**SALES OPERATIONS MANAGERS ARE EMERGING POSITIONS THAT PLAY A KEY ROLE IN ORGANIZATIONS EXPANDING WITHIN THE TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY.**

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