



Superstar-growth strategy

Here's a strategy that has catapulted even the smallest of companies into super-growth mode.

By Chet Holmes

In this special report, you will learn:

- No matter how small your company is, you can hire a sales force that can catapult company growth like you never imagined (one company that took this advice grew 500% in two years).
- No matter how large you are, you're probably using the wrong criterion for hiring salespeople.
- How to attract star talent to your organization.
- How to learn their weaknesses BEFORE you hire them (most companies have to hire a salesperson to find out all the problems they're going to have- We'll show you how to get rid of the lightweights in just five minutes).

I've helped one-person armies who were struggling, re-think their model to hire sales-staff, and suddenly they are sold-out. But I've also helped multi-billion dollar companies understand the unique psychological profile of top producers and why they should hire for psychological profile rather than background.

The type of person I'm talking about is someone you can put in a bad situation with poor tools, no training, bad resources and still, within a few months, they begin to outsell your best salespeople or build your company in ways you never dreamed possible.

Two things drive the superstar and they are both critical and work together perfectly when you can find them: empathy and self esteem—a strong sense of self). Empathy: Top producers need to bond with others, to find something likable about every person. This is a wonderful trait to find in a salesperson. They just keep going at the client every which way, trying to find more and more ways to serve that client, to please that client. Empathy is a key trait and part of your interview process must be specifically designed to weed out their empathy.

Self esteem: Make no mistake; great sales results come from people with super strong self-esteem. Only a person with an extra dose of self-esteem barrels into a client eight times after the client has said no. People with weak self esteem go away after only a single rejection. People with weak self esteem fear rejection and so never actually close a sale.

Studies show that 52% of salespeople give up after only one rejection. Only 4% will try more than 4 times. Yet today, it takes 8.4 rejections to get a meeting. And what makes the difference between someone who will face that rejection one time and quit or 40 times and never quit, is purely personal (self esteem).

Yes, you CAN train some people to go back again and again, and I've got training programs that do that. But you can hire someone who, without you ever asking or training, is built that way. These people will have WAY more heart about getting that sale made.

Another aspect of a strong self esteem is personal ambition. Don't you love it when you hire someone who innovates, expands upon and improves every single task you assign to them? This self esteem and need to please can make these people seem overly eager-to-please in a job interview. Maybe even come on too strong. Don't let a little bravado put you off; it is the quintessential ingredient in every superstar.

In an interview, the person IS the product, so they must present themselves with confidence, assure you that they are the one you're looking for. This aggressive behavior will scare some employers, but it is exactly what you need in a salesperson.

Ground Rules for Hiring Superstars

First, age and background are not relevant. I've hired 24-year-olds who have out-sold 20-year veterans. One of my greatest finds came from a stereo store. Here was an awesome salesperson that might've never become the millionaire I helped him become had I not seen the traits he had. Another great find was a salesperson who tried to sell me a sweater in a clothing store. I snatched her right out of there and she ended up running three divisions of a company I ran. I recently found a 70-year-old man who has the best skills I have ever seen for getting top executives on the telephone. And he had been a line producer for feature films. So disregard age or background.

Second, you must design your ad to attract this rare animal. My ads begin like this:

SUPERSTARS ONLY:

Don't even call unless you are an overachiever and can prove it.

The ad does not request a resume. Whenever I run an ad, I spend two hours per day for five straight days doing nothing but screening calls. Put it right in your ad: "call between 12:00 and 2:00 only." I make it a point to talk directly to the respondents on the telephone BEFORE Interviewing them.

When screening calls, I always apologize for being gruff and to the point, explaining that I am overwhelmed with responses; then I say, "Tell me why you think you're a superstar." I then deliberately act unimpressed and slightly abrasive. If I intimidate them over the phone, I brush them off quickly. A top producer will not be intimidated. If they can't talk their way into an interview what makes you think they'll ever talk their way into a client. Save yourself a lot of trouble and get rid of the weak egos right off the bat.

Too often you interview candidates as the nice person that you are and it gives them the chance to be nice as well. Then you hire them and find out six months later that they can't close a sale and shy away from the really big sales out of fear (weak self esteem). With the technique above, you find out early how well they handle rejection. It saves everyone a lot of time and YOU a lot of money.

The Interview: Relax, Probe, Attack

Relax: Once a candidate has talked their way in for an interview, begin by giving them every opportunity to show their best side by helping them relax. You should be friendly and be a great listener.

Probe: The purpose of this portion of the interview is to really get to know the person. Before you begin, you must tell prospects that they don't have to answer any questions they don't want to. Frame the interview that you "hire based upon psychological profile rather than background." That gives you permission to really probe into what shaped them.

Additionally, this portion of the interview test that "empathy" trait we talked about. If they become stiff during this section, you don't have a natural bond.

Ask about their childhood, their mother, their father, and questions about how they grew up. Ask for situations in which they showed true grit or overachieved in some way. If they become uncomfortable, you don't have a superstar. Superstars like to bond with others.

This method of probing a candidate's childhood opens them up in many ways. You will get a true sense of how a person thinks and feels. It's easy to make mistakes in hiring; you will find that the "probe" approach reduces the number of bad hires. I start with their childhood and then go over the business background last. You'll get more truthful answers that way.

Attack: You may sense you've found a high achiever, but you'll often be surprised when you "attack." Try saying something like, "You seem like a nice person. If I had two positions, I'd probably hire you. But to be truthful, I don't get the impression you're really a superstar."

Be tactful, but suggest that your candidate doesn't have what it takes. You'll be amazed at how many people crumble. Here you thought you had the perfect candidate and when you tell them you don't think they have the stuff, suddenly they agree and thank you for your time. Let that person go. Superstars never crumble. They have tremendous faith in themselves, and nothing can convince them they can't do *any* job.

Reward

The last aspect of hiring top talent is to create a performance-based relationship with little or no base pay. There are a hundred variables about this but let me give you an example. I had a client that paid \$9 per hour, plus commission. So he would put that in his ads. His top producer, however, was earning \$92,000 per year. I put it to him this way: "Do you want to attract the kid of person who will be like your top producer or do you want to attract \$9 per hour type talent?" We put "Can earn as high as \$100K if you are a star" right in his ad. This dramatically changed the type of person he started to attract.

How to never get top producers in your company: I once had a client that did "hiring by committee." This is where a salesperson had to interview with everyone else and then they'd all have to vote unanimously on that person or they wouldn't be hired. The result? When a real player would enter the arena, NO ONE wanted that person to get the job because they feared the competition. This company hired a lot of very nice people who couldn't sell.

End.

Chet Holmes is President and CEO of Jordan Productions, an international training firm that helps companies accelerate growth using Chet's proprietary techniques. Chet was the number one producer in every sales position held and doubled the sales of every company given to him as a line executive working for billionaire Charlie Munger. He has conducted training in more than 50 Fortune 500 and other prestigious companies and is author of The Mega Marketing & Sales Training Program, Business Growth Masters Series and Guerrilla Marketing Meets Karate Master. To quote Jay Levinson of Guerrilla Marketing: "Chet Holmes has the best skills for building companies I've ever seen." See www.chetholmes.com to attend a webinar about Chet's concepts.