

Development and Validation of the Sales Express Assessment

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INTRODUCTION

The Express Attitude Profile series was created to provide quick yet accurate assessments of job applicant attitudes in key areas. The Sales Express assessment was designed to best approximate the content and validity of the Sales Productivity Scale in a brief, 10-item format.

PROCEDURE

Items were selected for Sales Express assessment from the extensively validated Sales Productivity Scale. The ten items that, in combination, proved to be the strongest predictors of employee sales performance in previous validation studies were selected to constitute the Sales Express assessment. The validity of the Sales Express assessment was demonstrated in four separate samples. Two of the samples were retail stores, and two were telemarketing centers. The two telemarketing centers supplied productivity measures based on the ratio of incoming telemarketing center phone calls that were converted into sales. One retail chain provided figures for the amount of individual sales per hour. The second retail site provided information on the percentage of individual employee sales volume compared to the average sales volume in the department.

RESULTS

The Sales Express assessment showed substantial correlations with these objective sales productivity metrics, averaging $r = .32$ across the four sample (See Table 1). These results indicate that higher scores on the Sales Express assessment are associated with higher levels of income generation for the employer. The reliability of the Sales Express was assessed using a diverse sample of 4,996 applicants for jobs in a variety of industries. The Sales Express assessment produced a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of .57, indicating an acceptable level of internal consistency. The Sales Express assessment is composed of two underlying factors. One factor, labeled Influential, involves the endorsement of items pertaining to being persuasive, capable of working with difficult people, and valuing pay based on performance. The second factor, labeled Customer-Friendly, involves being accommodating to customers and motivated by values that are not limited to money. These two factors both contribute to the prediction of sales productivity, but they are only somewhat correlated with each other (.32 in the normative sample), which explains the moderate internal consistency for the full Sales Express scale. Individuals scoring in the lowest 13% of the norm sample on the Sales Express assessment were classified as "High Risk"; those scoring above the 13th percentile were classified as "Low Risk". The "High Risk" vs. "Low Risk" classification had no adverse impact on any ethnic group or gender.

For illustrative purposes, comparisons were made between the sales productivity of "Low Risk" and "High Risk" employees in the validation studies described earlier. Striking differences were found between the two groups (See also Figures 1 and 2):

- "Low Risk" employees in the car rental telemarketing center produced 6.6% greater conversion of calls to sales, and 6.3% greater revenue per call compared to "High Risk" employees
- "Low Risk" employees in the retail chain showed 15.6% higher average sales revenue per hour compared to "High Risk" employees

CONCLUSION

In summary, these research results indicate that the Sales Express assessment is an effective screening tool to help identify potential employees who are unlikely to generate adequate revenue in a sales position.

Table 1: Correlations between the Sales Express Assessment and Relevant Criterion Measures in Four Samples

Sample	Criterion Measure	Correlation
Car Rental Telemarketing Center (N = 71)	Confirmation Ratio	.43**
Hospitality Telemarketing Center (N = 99)	Confirmation Ratio	.33**
Retail Chain (N = 42)	Average sales per hour	.36**
Department Store (N = 88)	Percent of Department Sales Average	.14*
Average (N = 300)		.32

* $p < .10$, ** $p < .01$

Figure 1: Revenue Generated per Incoming Telemarketing Center Phone Call

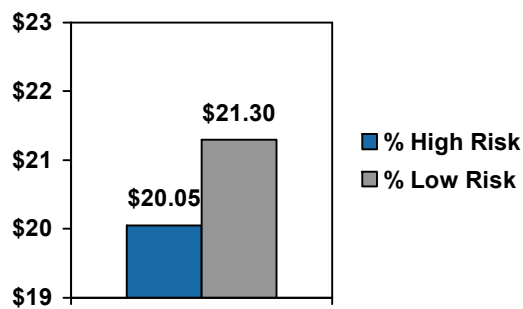


Figure 2: Sales Revenue Generated per Hour by Retail Sales Associates

