demandDrive

Aligning SDR Hiring Practices with Modern Buyers

SURVEY RESULTS + EXPERT ADVICE + EVENT RECAP

demandDrive

Aligning SDR Hiring Practices with Modern Buyers

Who is demandDrive? demandDrive builds and manages sales development functions for companies in the B2B technology space. Our process combines the flexibility of outsourcing with the intimacy of an in-house team to deliver our clients fully qualified sales leads.

To learn more and/or get in touch with our team, **visit our website.**

Table of Contents

Introduction: What's Changed for SDRs and Hiring Managers?

Building an SDR team is no easy task. The formula has evolved past:

🤝 🎓 + (📄 + 💻 + 📞) + 🏫 = 🤑

Hire College Grad + Give them a list, laptop, and phone + 1 week of training = Sales Leads

Now, as the role becomes more nuanced to meet the expectations of modern buyers, building out a successful team takes more effort. Buyers don't want to be sold to, they want to be helped. That means training reps to **guide** prospects down the funnel with tactics like:

- Storytelling
- Social Proof
- Social Nurturing
- Consultative Selling
- Subject Matter Expertise

We could go on and on. The point is this:

Buyers have changed. Because of that, sellers have changed. But...has the way we hire those sellers changed?

Short answer - **no**. A lot of teams are still hiring reps with a skillset that suits 2015, not 2022. They're looking for resilience, grit, and the ability to make 150+ dials in a day.

There's nothing inherently wrong with that, but it can't be all you look for. And for a lot of teams, that's what their SDR function is all about - more dials, more emails, more activities. More, more, more.

So the question becomes...how do we fix it? What can we do to shrink that gap in expectations and better align the types of SDRs we hire to the types of activity we expect?

Our goal in this eBook is to help shrink that gap through advice and insights from sales development leaders.

- Like any good story, we'll start with exposition. What's going on in the world of sales development and why is this important?
- Then we'll get an idea of what sales dev leaders look for in an ideal candidate and how to select for the skills and traits that drive the right behavior.
- Next, we'll share some examples of how a couple of hiring managers are doing that today.
- And we'll wrap it all up with some final thoughts on aligning expectations.

Let's dive in.

The Shift in Expectations Based on Buyer Behavior

As we see sellers adapt to the demands of the modern buyer, it begs the question: Which came first - sellers changing their behavior on their own or managers demanding they change it?

We'll take a look at the past few years for both managers and SDRs - what's been expected of them and how they've risen to the occasion (or failed to do so).

For Managers

Backwards Waterfall.

How does that make you feel? Chances are if you're a sales manager, that's a phrase you've heard many times before.

For the uninitiated, the process of a 'backwards waterfall' involves doing some basic sales math around your conversion rates to forecast the number of closed-won deals from your sales efforts. For example:

- Let's say your sales team is closing leads at a **20%** rate. So 1 out of every 5 leads passed to them by the SDR function is turning into closed-won business.

- Based on an ACV of $10,000 and a quarterly goal of $100,000, sales reps need to close **10** deals to hit quota. That means they need to convert **50** leads quarterly (20% of 50 leads = 10 deals).

- For SDRs to pass 50 leads, we need to look at their conversion rates. Let's say they have a **2%** lead rate (# of passed leads / # of total activities). So for every 50 activities, they pass 1 lead to the sales rep.

- To get to that 50 lead number, they'll have to do **2500** activities for the quarter (50 activities/lead X 50 leads).

The math (which is admittedly simplistic compared to reality) checks out on paper - 2500 outbound activities should yield 10 closed-won deals...in a vacuum.

And last we checked, sales isn't done in a vacuum.

Now we're not saying that benchmarking your activities based on conversion rates is bad. It's a great way to understand the performance of your sales function and forecast your pipeline revenue quarter after quarter.

The issue is with **scale**. Because while math can scale infinitely, sales cannot. Looking at the numbers above you can deduce that if 2500 activities = 10 closed-won deals, then 5000 activities should yield 20 closed-won deals.

* Insert Ron Howard narrator voice from Arrested Development *

It doesn't.

For years, managers who have been behind on numbers, selling to VCs, or presenting to leadership, have relied on waterfalling to justify one of the most common myths in sales:

More activities = More Revenue.

It's not...wrong. But it's also not right. And lately, we've seen that myth busted more than ever before.

Previously, sales was responsible for **starting** the conversation & buying process. They were educators - the more people they got in touch with and introduced to their product, the more chances they had to get someone in the funnel. In this case, the numbers scale more predictably, and 'backwards waterfalling' had more accurate outputs.

Now, buyers are starting the sales process on their own. They research products and build use cases before anyone on the sales team gets in touch with them. Instead of educating buyers, sellers have to **be the delta between what buyers can and can't find online**. You can't just call up anyone and regurgitate information from your website or ungated content. This is your chance to show prospects the value that they can get from your solution - not just anyone.

That means they're doing more research, having more conversations with stakeholders, and carving out more space in the prospect's brain for their name & brand.

Fun note: According to **Gartner**, *33% of all buyers desire a seller-free sales experience – a preference that climbs to 44% for millennials.*

SDRs who recognize that shift and adapt accordingly are succeeding. They're not injecting themselves into the process with obtrusive sales tactics. Instead, they're offering up their insight and credibility as a consultant to help guide prospective buyers. And more importantly than that, the best managers out there are enabling their SDRs to do just that.

The ones who don't (dubbed '**dashboard managers**') are watching their reports like a hawk. Dips in activity are met with PIPs and pipeline reviews. It creates a stressful environment and often contributes to burnout, turnover, and churn (which can be really expensive in the long run).

For the most part, managers are changing at a slower pace than SDRs - and that's to be expected. Companies invest a lot of time, effort, and money into building their sales development function. Their processes and frameworks can take months to years to build out - you can't expect them to shift on a dime.

But you **can** expect them to start taking steps towards addressing the gap. Looking at...

* **People** - the types of SDRs you hire and the people in charge of training them
* **Processes** - the systems and frameworks in place to generate revenue
* **Technology** - the tools you have to enable your reps & processes

will help us understand what has changed and what still needs to change.

Throughout this eBook, we're primarily focusing on that first bullet point: **people**.

We'll touch on process & technology a bit as well, they just won't be our main focus.

For SDRs

Imagine: You've just graduated from college. You find a fast-growing company looking for "rockstar SDRs" - whatever that means. You just know you've got what it takes and you're hungry to prove it. They promised a ride aboard "the rocket ship," high OTE, and a chance for growth. What's not to love?

Flash forward a few months and you've about had it with the company, your manager, and the SDR job in general.

Your growth and commission are limitless - but good luck even hitting quota with the resources you've been given. All your manager does is tell you to 'make more calls' instead of investing in you - personally or professionally. And that rocket ship you're on is seeking more VC money - not because you're growing, but because without it you'll go bankrupt.

SDRs are often sold a bill of goods when applying for the role. They're promised one thing and given another, mostly because the role is still seen as that 'stepping stone' to a full cycle sales role (AE). If you want that promotion, you have to earn it. You have to cut your teeth on the SDR role to prove that you can make it as an AE.

All of that is a mechanism for self-selection in the sales development role. A common trope is sales is dominated by former athletes and college bros - and for good reason. Those are the types of people that seek out and are interested in positions that reward competition, grit, and high energy. It's a classic situation of "if you build it, they will come."

Like we discussed above, however, the prototypical SDR from a few years ago isn't well equipped to handle the demands of modern buyers. Prospects don't want someone calling them daily pitching them a product they don't need. They want someone to respect their situation, understand their goals and challenges, and make themselves available for consultation and questions.

More often than not, struggling reps and their managers look to the other pillars - process and technology - for reasons that they might be struggling to hit quota. Managers claim that reps aren't following the process tightly enough, they're not putting in the effort, or they're going off-script. Maybe reps blame their enablement tools or CRM - either they can't reach out to enough people or their data is dirty and it impedes them from reaching prospects.

And we're not saying those **aren't** possible issues, but more often than not the 'people' pillar ends up being the root of the issue - not to the fault of the reps themselves, but of the systems in place to recruit and hire them.

Think about it like this - an SDR is hired because they:

- Love competition
- Show grit and resilience
- Are hungry to grow at a rapid pace

Then, they get placed in an environment where those skills and traits end up not being as useful. But management still focuses on them as traits to build/develop because the system they've built is predicated on them.

So now you have an SDR who isn't doing the right work, and a manager who doesn't know what the "right work" even is.

Point is, there's a lot of misalignment here. The system is set up improperly to value the skills and traits that best set SDRs up for success.
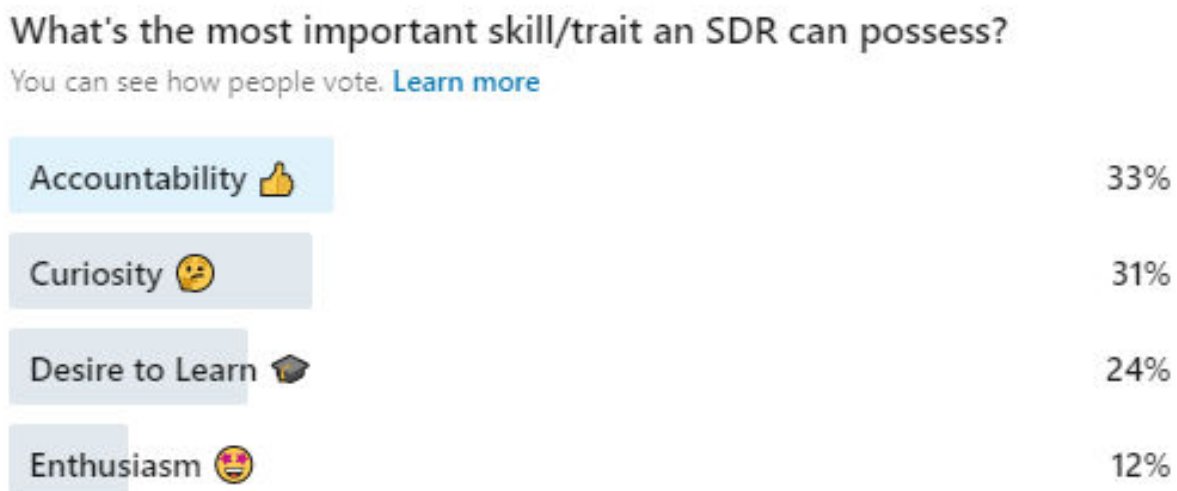
So, how do we align these expectations? What can we do to uncover and develop the skills required to move modern buyers into sales development rep's funnels?

We'll start by taking a look at some survey results that answer the question: *What skill/trait do you most look for in an SDR candidate and why?* Then we'll recap an event from April (of 2021) where we talk with 2 hiring managers who share their insights and processes. Then we'll wrap it up with some predictions of our own!

Survey Results: What You *Should* Be Looking For In A Candidate?

Back in 2020 we ran a quick poll on LinkedIn asking a simple question: *What's the most important skill/trait an SDR can possess?* And **we weren't alone in asking that** - it's something that sales leadership and recruiting teams are constantly thinking about.

Because it's LinkedIn, we were only able to include 4 possible answers: Accountability, Curiosity, Desire to Learn, and Enthusiasm. Here's how it shook out:

What's the most important skill/trait an SDR can possess?
You can see how people vote. Learn more

Accountability 👍	33%
Curiosity 🫤	31%
Desire to Learn 🎓	24%
Enthusiasm 🤩	12%

Even though we got an "answer" to the poll, the comments prompted us to run a more comprehensive survey. The goal for this new survey was to find out the skills that sales leaders expect top SDRs to possess and specifically look for in a candidate.

After consulting with a few people, this is the full list we came up with:

- Curiosity/Desire To Learn
- Intelligence
- Accountability / Discipline
- Enthusiasm
- Tenacity / Persistence
- Resilience
- Stamina
- Patience
- Relevant Background
- Listening
- Question Asking
- Creativity
- Ambition
- Passion
- Focus
- Fearlessness
- Communication
- Connection

And out of those, our respondents narrowed the list down to a top 6:

1. Accountability / Discipline
2. Curiosity / Desire to Learn
3. Listening
4. Enthusiasm
5. Tenacity / Persistence
6. Creativity

Let's dig into a few answers to see why these skills in particular were the most sought after.

Matt Roman of Metrohm USA listed his top skill as **accountability.**

"Above all else, my reps need to be accountable! No one likes someone who has an excuse for every wrong move or missed opportunity. If you're an accountable person and own up to your mistakes, I can handle you not making quota. Accountability paves the way for success."

Not only do top reps take accountability for their actions, but they learn from their mistakes. The best reps understand that the SDR role is a huge learning experience, and if you neglect that part of the job you'll never progress.

Managers love accountable reps because honestly, it's one less headache for them. The role of a manager involves more than just managing reps - you have to train and coach them as well. The less hand-holding you do (like ensuring activities are logged in the CRM or their comp is accurate), the more time you have to coach and upskill your team.

If you have a team of accountable reps, you have a team that's hungry for progress. They experiment and fail, they learn from those experiences, and they iterate and grow. An accountable rep is more likely to understand and meet the demands of modern buyers, and if your team recognizes that without a huge push from leadership then you have a much easier job as their manager.

Gerard O'Toole of Exclusive Concepts and **Aleksandra Andree** agree that **Curiosity / Desire to Learn** is their top skill for an SDR.

Playing on the above, an accountable rep is usually a rep who's curious and has a desire to learn as much as they can about the role. Gerard mentions why that's important and how it separates the good from the great:

"Any individual with consistent effort can produce satisfactory results. When a rep continuously adds new knowledge and tactics to their toolbelt is when they truly rise to the top. Consistent and reliable effort + the desire to learn is the formula that results in becoming a top 10% BDR and a successful account executive."

To us, 'consistent and reliable effort' sums up 'accountable' pretty well.

Layering that level of curiosity and a desire to learn on top of accountability is what makes a truly great SDR. In our example, a rep who is accountable and has the desire to learn would recognize this shift in buyer behavior through experimentation and research. They would take it upon themselves to try new messaging & outreach tactics and see how it impacts their engagement. They would be following the top minds in sales development and see them talking about it on LinkedIn and through podcasts/articles. They would be ahead of the curve and be the first to see results in this modern environment.

Additionally, according to Aleksandra, curious SDRs are better equipped to handle the needs and pace of modern buyers. She quotes Stephen Covey in saying, *"'The biggest communication problem is that we listen to reply, not to understand."* Curious and ambitious SDRs know *how* to listen and *when* to reply.

In this modern environment, the role of the SDR isn't to get as many people on the phone as possible and pitch them all the same thing. It's to learn about the prospect's situation, where your solution could add value, and how to best approach next steps. Curious SDRs have a knack for **active listening** - basically, actually listening to your prospect and following up with a relevant point or question.

When SDRs are wired to 'listen to reply' they don't actually move the conversation forward. Concerns or questions are met with prepared responses, not answers that help the prospect come to a satisfactory conclusion. But curious SDRs are wired to understand, and that's the difference between responding to your prospect and actually answering their question. And when you can answer their question, you start to build trust and credibility - absolute necessities for separating yourself from the other SDRs and companies reaching out to them.

Michael Maiorano of Techne Partners follows that line of thinking when he says that **listening** is his top skill - but he broadens it a bit:

"Listening, but broader definition. Customer-empathy. This skill means putting the customer first. It is hard, and requires courage. The fruits of this practice are extreme, as the difference between consultant and "pitch robot" is vast and can change the trajectory of an organization."

His last point is particularly important - the difference between a 'pitch robot' and a consultant. As we've mentioned a few times already, that's the direction that the SDR role is shifting towards - consultant. Instead of blindly pitching your solution to anyone who will listen, the best SDRs today are guiding prospects down the funnel.

It's less about listing out tons of features and hoping the prospect is interested/in-market. It's more about listening to them, understanding their situation, and suggesting the next best steps based on that.

Mark Padgett of Bitwise Technology Consulting believes that the ability to ask good questions is at the top of the list. And there's an emphasis on **good**.

"While there are many traits that an SDR can (and should learn), the ability to ask a prospect thoughtful questions that helps them to reconsider a previously held opinion, or a long-standing process, etc. is essential to the work of an SDR. Timely and thoughtful questions can get the prospect to begin to see their world differently, to begin to open up to the possibility of change, to see an opportunity where previously all that was visible was the status quo, and hence will often open the door to an agreement to explore mutual fit on a scheduled meeting."

Any SDR can ask a question for the sake of asking a question. But when you ask questions that really get prospects to think - about their current situation or the future - you have more fruitful conversations.

And this skill is intentionally connected to our previous skill - listening. Because asking good questions is just half the battle. If you don't listen to your prospect, you won't really gain anything.

The skills of both listening and question asking force the SDR to have a dialogue, and not just a one-sided conversation. Through dialogue, you uncover more qualification information and are better able to assess whether or not this prospect needs a follow-up conversation. And if you ask good questions and actively listen to what your prospect is saying, they'll come to the same conclusion.

Austin Fuller of Viking Cloud weighs in on the importance of **creativity**.

"Today's buyer either has problems they don't know they have or don't know their problems well enough to solve them. With most of the buyer's journey being conducted without engaging an SDR, we need reps that can create new methods to be a part of the buyer's journey earlier than the end. The modern SDR must think outside of the box to discover potential pain for buyers before they know they have a problem."

His point around buyers engaging with brands "without engaging an SDR" is particularly important. As we've talked about before, buyers are doing a majority of their research without the aid of sales. That means messaging from an SDR goes from, "I wonder what this is about?" to "yeah, I already knew that." And you really want to avoid that.

You need to be the delta between what buyers can and can't find online (we talked about that already), and you have to make that message stand out. Creative SDRs are leveraging different channels and messaging tactics to make sure they're being noticed by their prospects.

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So out of the skills and traits listed, the ones that really piqued most of our respondents' interest were focused on the **buyer**. Whether it's...

- Taking it upon themselves to find new and creative ways to get in touch with prospects,
- Deepening their understanding of prospect's challenges through question-asking and effective listening,
- Tapping into empathy to more easily put themselves in prospect's shoes,
- Staying hungry and learning more about the industry to better tailor messaging,
- Or taking ownership of their actions,

the traits we look for in SDRs are built to guide, help, and nurture prospective buyers vs. sell to them.

Event Recap: Aligning Hiring Expectations

That shift in the skills we look for was the main focus of our **2021 SDR Hiring Resources webinar.** We grabbed our recruiting director, **Sean Harrison,** and brought in **Ben Stephenson** of SmartBear to talk about this skill and expectation misalignment.

As individuals responsible for recruiting, they both had their fair share of stories and challenges over the past couple of years. The ability to hire and retain quality SDRs is at a premium right now, so to hear from two individuals that have unlocked the secrets behind that was a real treat.

Skills and Traits Revisited

Sean kicked us off here by talking about the qualities in an SDR he thought were "ideal" a few years ago. His words were: *"We were almost looking for robots, in a way."*

Hearing that now seems odd, but several years ago that was the mentality around sales development - it was all quantitative. You needed people who could just pick up the phone and make 100 dials a day, every day.

With the shift to a more consultative approach, Sean and Ben had to shift their expectations and grading rubric for candidates. When we asked them about the traits they look for in an SDR now vs. 3 years ago, they agreed on a few right off the bat:

- Curiosity
- Active Listening
- Communication
- Coachability
- Empathy

None of those should come as a surprise based on what we've talked about already in this eBook. For an SDR to succeed in the current environment, they need to focus on helping vs. selling - and the traits mentioned during the webinar are key to making that a possibility.

But that doesn't mean the traits we valued from 5 years ago aren't still relevant.

Ben said it best: *"Resilience and grit are still as important as ever...it just needs to be a given at this point and not a differentiator."*

The SDR role is still a grind. It's still full of rejection. And it still takes a determined individual to succeed. But that used to be the only differentiator when it came to making a hiring decision. Now, as we've discussed, other traits and skills have surpassed it in terms of importance and as a predictor of success.

Interview Questions

Figuring out whether or not the candidate you're interviewing has those traits has also changed. Skills like active listening, coachability, and empathy are a bit harder to tease out than resilience during a conversation. But it's not impossible.

Sean and Ben have a few go-to questions they ask to get to the root of the skills they're looking for in a new rep:

Give me an example of a time you had a tough conversation with a customer/colleague and how you handled it…

This is a great question to ask for determining the empathy levels of your candidate. Depending on how they handled the situation and what they learned from it (if anything) can tell you a lot about their ability to connect with a prospect.

Will they actually care about helping them, or are they simply going to try and force a meeting because there's a supposed fit?

Tell me about a time you identified an inefficiency and what you did to improve it…

This is a great question to gauge the proactivity and creativity of your candidate. Hearing examples of how your candidate was able to tweak and improve a process or messaging will tell you about how they can do the same for your team.

Nobody has a perfect system, message, or cadence. If someone believes they can improve the current way of doing things, it's going to lift the whole team and make everyone's job easier.

Can I give you some feedback? *(Editor's Note: This is my favorite)*

This is a great question to ask to see how coachable your candidate is. Depending on how they react, you'll be able to see what a future coaching session might look like.

This doesn't have to be too extensive, either. It can be as simple as noting that the candidate used a lot of filler words, for example. You're mentioning this to gauge their reaction - whether or not they're grateful for it and will plan to learn and grow, or if they push back and seem more rigid in their approach. If your team values growth and adaptability, you want to see that in your candidates before they start working for you.

Modern Expectations

After covering new skills and interview questions, it was time to get philosophical.

Realistically, compared to 3 years ago, we're asking for a lot more of our SDRs (and the people that hire them). The pace at which the role has modernized is quick - and in some cases/industries, too quick.

So we asked Sean & Ben - **are we expecting too much from SDRs?** After all, these are entry-level roles! A lot of companies are building SDR functions that have 22 year-olds working like they have 3-5 years of experience.

They bother answered no, and here's why - while the role has become more specialized and difficult, the resources available to SDRs have increased proportionately.

First off, the internal resources at a lot of organizations have improved dramatically. The way we onboard and train our SDRs now is **considerably different** from the "onboarding and training" processes we saw a few years back. Teams have documentation around specific processes and tools that can help speed up the ramp time for their reps. They have courses and training modules to help reps learn the basics of being an SDR plus how they can **develop new skills for continued success**.

That, and a lot of companies have adopted continuous coaching and training programs to ensure that reps are supported at every stage of their career. There are far fewer "sink or swim" teams out there now.

Teams are also investing more technology resources into their SDR teams. Enablement tools like Outreach, Salesloft, Gong, etc. give reps insight and feedback in ways that were previously unattainable. Just being able to see the engagement on your last email campaign can tell a rep whether or not their messaging or cadence needs a tweak. The ability to pull call recordings and learn where you could improve your pitch or ask for the meeting can help a new rep grow tremendously.

SDRs are even getting support from outside of their companies now with the rise in online micro-communities. Organizations like **Sales Hacker**, **RevGenius**, and **SDRevolution** are dedicated to helping SDRs upskill and develop in ways that didn't exist previously. These communities are focused on helping reps learn from experts, sparking discussions around common issues, and broadening their point of view around how they approach the craft.

So while we're expecting a lot from an SDR of today vs. 3 years ago, we're also arming them with numerous resources that help make the job easier.

Conclusion & Recap: Aligning Expectations to Buyer Behavior

The biggest thing to take away from all of this is that both sides have leveled up. Not only are we expecting more from our SDRs, but select companies are leading the charge on arming those reps with the resources required to meet those expectations. Organizations like **demandDrive**, **SmartBear**, **Gong**, **Clari**, and **Chili Piper** (to name a few) have shown the value of innovating your sales development function to meet the demands of modern buyers.

But it doesn't happen overnight. Truthfully, all of this is easier said than done. Overhauling systems like recruiting, hiring, onboarding, and training is a bear of a project. Not to mention the philosophical shift that your leadership has to make to move away from the "more activities = better results" mentality of a few years ago.

Building a successful and sustainable SDR function usually starts by hitting the big, red, "reset" button on what you currently have in place.

As scary as that sounds, once you've made the conscious decision to do that you can start the system rebuild in earnest. That means revamping:

- The skills and values that you look for in an SDR candidate
- The processes you have to find and enable those SDRs
- How those SDRs interact with their prospects

But it all starts with that first bit - the skills and values you look for in a candidate. Foundationally, that's the biggest piece to this puzzle. And once you have that, you're well on your way to success in this modern sales environment.

Skills & Values

Think about the best SDRs you have and what sets them apart from the rest of your team. What skills or values do they have that you can search for in future new hires?

Our suggestions of skills like active listening and empathy are pretty all-encompassing. Chances are that your organization will have a few that mean more to you than to other organizations. Maybe they match up closely with your **core company values**? Maybe they have to do with your industry niche? Maybe your sales process dictates that reps have a specific skill? Whatever it might be, you need to go on a fact-finding mission to see what sets apart your A+ reps from the rest.

Then, once you have that, find out what other broader skills you want to include in your requirement for new hires.

A reminder of our top 6 + other examples given in this guide:

- Accountability / Discipline
- Curiosity / Desire to Learn
- Listening / Active Listening
- Enthusiasm
- Tenacity / Persistence

- Creativity
- Communication
- Coachability
- Empathy

Settle on what makes the most sense for your team and hold yourself accountable to those traits. And remember, resilience is still a good skill to look for, it just shouldn't be the only skill you look for!

It also helps if you make this information public - be it on your website (careers page), through social media, or in the content you produce. If you publicly declare the skills you look for in an SDR and the values you uphold as a company, you begin to attract the people who possess the traits you're looking for.

Internal Processes

Your interviews should be structured in a way that illuminates your top skills. You want to ask questions that allow candidates to show you whether or not they possess one of your key skills.

And remember that actions speak louder than words. It's one thing for a candidate to say that they're proactive, but if they spend the whole interview answering questions and not taking the initiative to ask any themselves, that's a red flag.

Once you have a team, it's important to continually support them with resources & training. If you're expecting your SDR team to approach this job in a way that's new or foreign to them (for college grads that's the case 100% of the time), you have to meet them at least halfway.

Like we said at the beginning of this guide, the days of

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are behind us. If you want your SDRs to connect with the modern buyer in a way they actually enjoy, you have to give them the resources to build that process. This means continuous coaching, industry-leading tools, and access to resources outside of your org for upskilling and development.

Putting It Together

With the right people in place, your SDR team is ready to go. But are they ready to succeed? If you want them to meet the demands of the modern buyer, you have to enable and incentivize them to do so.

This means creating an environment where the right work is encouraged. Like we said earlier:

"Prospects don't want someone calling them daily pitching them a product they don't need. They want someone to respect their situation, understand their goals and challenges, and make themselves available for consultation and questions."

If you want your SDRs to guide prospects and provide a consultative experience, you have to build a system where that's not only encouraged but the norm. Beyond hiring for the right skills and providing effective coaching, you have to set up compensation systems that incite the right behavior.

For example, quality conversations and pipeline revenue **are more valuable than metrics like dials and talk time** (as they should be). Knowing that you should be rewarding your SDRs for activities that uncover competitive intelligence or market sentiment.

You should also think about tying their comp to closed-won business that they've sourced, or to a certain pipeline revenue number. It's one thing to preach quality over quantity, but when you start tying that mantra to compensation it becomes very real very quick. Rebecca Garber **has talked about successfully implementing this in the past**, and it continues to be underutilized today.

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We've said it before and we'll say it again - this is all easier said than done. But you have to start somewhere.

It starts with proactivity. You need to seek out potential misalignment within your current hiring process. That will begin to tell you whether or not you have the right people in place for the job.

From there, it's about educating yourself on modern buyer behavior. Are your people, processes, and technology equipped to work with them? There are numerous resources that can help you better understand - and sell to - the modern buyer.

Some of our favorites include:

BDRs are a BFD - 6Sense
Discovery Calls & Demos - SDRevolution
SDRs Catching Lightning in a Bottle - AJ Alonzo
What the Modern Buyer Wants in 2021 - Crunchbase
Why B2B Buyers Don't Like Being Sold To - Sales Enablement Podcast

Those are just a handful of the articles, podcasts, and events around how sales teams can adapt their approach for the modern buyer. We encourage you to seek out more content to prepare yourself for this inevitable shift.

Want more info on how we accomplish this at demandDrive? Maybe a look behind the curtain at our own onboarding process, core values, and training methodology?

Get in touch with our team for a more in-depth conversation.

Contact Us