

**BELLSOUTH**

**SALES PROFILE (SP)**

**STUDY GUIDE**

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BellSouth will consider requests for testing accommodations from individuals covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Documentation of the need for the accommodation may be required.

# BELLSOUTH SALES PROFILE (SP)

## CANDIDATE'S INFORMATION

The Sales Profile (SP) was developed by Aon Consulting, and is administered online at authorized test centers. There are 100 questions on the test, which should take approximately 45-60 minutes to complete. On this test, you will be asked three types of questions:

1. One type of question asks about your experiences at work or in school.
2. The second type of question asks you to use typical policies and procedures to solve problems.
  - Note that the policies described in these questions do not necessarily represent those of the organization to which you are applying.
3. The third type of question describes work situations and possible actions you could take.
  - First, you will be asked to indicate the action you would be **MOST** likely to take.
  - Then, the next question will describe the exact same work situation that you've just answered, **BUT** you will be asked to indicate the action you would be **LEAST** likely to take.

Here is an example of the third type of question:

**You are about to leave your desk for a break. You get a phone call from a customer asking for your help with a problem.**

**What would you be MOST likely to do?**

- Help the customer when I come back from break.
- Delay my break and help.
- Tell the customer that I can't help.
- Arrange another time when I can help the customer.
- Pretend that I did not understand the customer.
- Clear answer<sup>\*</sup>

Here is another example of the third type of question:

**You are about to leave your desk for a break. You get a phone call from a customer asking for your help with a problem.**

**What would you be LEAST likely to do?**

- Help the customer when I come back from break.
- Delay my break and help.
- Tell the customer that I can't help.
- Arrange another time when I can help the customer.
- Pretend that I did not understand the customer.
- Clear answer<sup>\*</sup>

<sup>\*</sup>If you do not wish to have an answer recorded for a given question, click on the "clear answer" button.

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**NOTE:**

In order to take the Sales Profile, you must be able to:

- Read and absorb written information from a computer screen;
- Use a computer keyboard and mouse for data entry

If you feel that you require some accommodation or assistance with these activities, or you do not feel well the day of testing, please notify the Test Administrator before beginning the Program. If you begin the Program and fail to complete it, you will be required to wait the appropriate retest interval as defined on the Non Management Job Title/Test Matrix.

Your performance during the Sales Profile will be evaluated on five factors, which are necessary to be effective in professional sales roles at BellSouth. The following information details the traits included in each of the five dimensions you are expected to exhibit on a regular basis.

**SALES PROFILE DIMENSIONS:**

<b>SALES ORIENTATION AND DRIVE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Takes action</i></li><li>• <i>Persistent</i></li><li>• <i>Exceeds expectations</i></li><li>• <i>Closes sales</i></li></ul>	<b>ADAPTABILITY AND INNOVATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Flexible</i></li><li>• <i>Resourceful</i></li><li>• <i>Creative</i></li></ul>	<b>PRACTICAL PROBLEM SOLVING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Investigative</i></li><li>• <i>Diagnostic</i></li><li>• <i>Logical</i></li></ul>
<b>RELIABILITY AND FOLLOW THROUGH</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Professional</i></li><li>• <i>Productive</i></li><li>• <i>Responsible</i></li></ul>	<b>INTERPERSONAL PRESENCE AND PERSUASION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Friendly</i></li><li>• <i>Polite</i></li><li>• <i>Sensitive</i></li><li>• <i>Persuasive</i></li></ul>	

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## **SALES PROFILE (SP)**

### **Developmental Suggestions by Competency**

#### **Competency: Sales Orientation and Drive**

##### **Training**

- Attend a course on being an effective salesperson offered through your local high school or community college.
- Attend a course on assertiveness training offered through your local high school or community college.

##### **Books**

1. Fisher, Roger & Ury, William (1981). Getting to yes: Negotiating agreement without giving in. New York: Penguin Books.
2. Nirenberg, Jesse S. (1989). How to sell your idea. New York: McGraw-Hill.
3. Bellman, Geoffrey M. (1992). Getting things done when you are not in charge. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.
4. Snyder, Elayne. Persuasive Business Speaking. (1990). New York. AMACOM.

##### **On the Job Activities**

- Seek assignments that give you an opportunity to lead a group or influence others.
- Don't back down quickly when challenged. Instead, restate your position clearly to ensure that others understand your perspective.
- Only make promises if you can keep them.
- Behave in a way that is consistent with what you say – “walk the talk.”
- Observe people in your organization who are highly influential, and try out the techniques that seem to work for them.
- Ask your supervisor or co-workers for feedback on how persuasive and influential you are. Ask them for suggestions on what you can do to be more influential.
- Take the initiative to go beyond what is expected.

##### **Personal Time Activities**

1. Be genuinely enthusiastic about the potential benefits others can attain through following your advice/suggestions.
2. Convince yourself that taking your advice/suggestions will actually benefit the person you are trying to influence. Be able to clearly envision how the person will realize these benefits.
3. Seek opportunities to strengthen your self-insight and then share who you are and what you believe and feel.
4. Volunteer for a position with a community group that requires you to influence or “sell” (e.g., a fund-raiser, soliciting advertisers, etc.).
5. Observe sales people you deal with during your daily activities. Note what they do to convince you to purchase.

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## SALES PROFILE (SP)

### Developmental Suggestions by Competency

#### **Competency: Reliability and Follow Through**

##### **Training**

- Attend a course on time management offered through your local high school or community college.

##### **Books**

1. Alessandra, Tony & O'Connor Michael J. (1994). People smarts. San Diego: Pfeiffer & Company.
2. Fletcher, Jerr L. Patterns of high performance. (1993). San Francisco. Berrett-Koehler.
3. Covey, Stephen R., The seven habits of highly effective people. (1989). New York. Simon & Shuster.

##### **On the Job Activities**

- Seek assignments that give you an opportunity to work with persons who have a reputation for being admired by others. Watch what they do and listen to what they say while interacting with others.
- Determine how customers perceive your actions. If their perceptions are not what you desire, determine how you can act differently.
- Adopt a can-do-attitude and approach to challenges.
- Work to eliminate the need to seek unnecessary permission or approval.
- Refrain from telling the customer that “it can’t be done”. Focus on how you can make it happen.
- Instead of choosing the first solution that presents itself, consider alternative solutions to a problem. Weigh the consequences of alternative solutions before making a decision.

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## SALES PROFILE (SP) Developmental Suggestions by Competency

### Competency: *Adaptability and Innovation*

#### **Training**

- Attend a course on problem solving offered through your local high school or community college.
- Attend a course on creativity and innovation offered through your local high school or community college.

#### **Books**

1. Carol Kinsey Goman (1993). Adapting to change: Making it work for you. Crisp Publication.
2. Frank Rivers (1997). *The way of the owl: Succeeding with integrity in a conflicted world*. Harper SanFrancisco.

#### **On the Job Activities**

- Welcome obstacles into your everyday activities and think of different, or creative ways to get around them.
- Create a list of all the needs various products can fill for your customers, and refer to that list as needed when selling products.
- For each product or service associated with your present position, determine the most important pieces of information to convey about that product/service. Ensure that each time you describe that service you convey that information. Make “cheat sheets” on specific products, listing the information that is critical to provide. Refer to these “cheat sheets” to ensure you have provided the important details.

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## SALES PROFILE (SP)

### Developmental Suggestions by Competency

#### Competency: *Interpersonal Presence and Persuasion*

##### **Training**

- Attend a course on oral communication offered through your local high school or community college.
- Attend a course on identifying common barriers to communication offered through your local high school or community college.

##### **Books**

1. Bedrosian, M. M. (1987). Speak like a pro in business and public speaking. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
2. Garner, Alan (1991). Conversationally speaking: Tested new ways to increase your personal and social effectiveness. New York: McGraw-Hill.
3. McKay, Matthew, Davis, Martha, & Fanning, Patrick (1983). Messages: The communication skills book. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Press.
4. Woodhall, Marian K. (1993). How to think on your feet. New York: Warner Books.

##### **On the Job Activities**

- When trying to orally communicate an idea, think through the main idea you are trying to express, then state the idea in a clear, concise statement.
- Seek opportunities for presentations or interactions in which oral communication skills are important – ask for feedback on your performance.
- Before speaking to others about a topic, take a moment to list possible points that may come up during the conversation and decide how you will respond to each.
- If you tend to be soft-spoken, work on speaking in a more forceful and confident tone.
- Rehearse presentations in front of a mirror or on video. Work at varying your volume and pace for emphasis.

##### **Personal Time Activities**

1. Eliminate speech habits that may annoy others, such as talking too slowly, too rapidly, or too hesitantly. Also work to eliminate slang phrases.
2. Have a friend count the number of times you say “uh,” “um,” and “you know,” in a conversation and make a conscious effort to lower this number.
3. Pursue speaking opportunities with community groups, service organizations, and church/school-related groups.
4. Join Toastmasters, the world’s largest organization devoted to communication excellence.
5. Record a presenter such as a television newscaster, a political leader, or a motivational speaker. Review and critique them later for clarity, organization, grammar, voice quality and enthusiasm.

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## **SALES PROFILE (SP)**

### **Developmental Suggestions by Competency**

#### **Competency: Practical Problem Solving**

##### **Training**

- Attend a course on problem solving offered through your local high school or community college.
- Attend a course on creativity and innovation offered through your local high school or community college.

##### **Books**

4. Sanders, Alan (1994). Customers for life. San Diego: Pfeiffer & Company.
5. Von Oech, Roger (1993). A whack on the side of the head. New York: Warner Books.

##### **On the Job Activities**

- Gain confidence in dealing with unstructured, unpredictable situations. For example, seek out opportunities like participation on task forces or ask to handle calls in several different areas of the company.
- Solve routine problems using several different means – relying on different resources or support networks to get results.
- Carefully examine situations for potential opportunities and make detailed plans for seizing opportunities that arise – planning for several different turns that the situation could take.
- Determine how the products/services associated with your present position are helpful to your customers: (1) What needs do they fulfill? (2) How do the different situations of your customer/clients affect their needs? (3) How can your products/services fulfill these needs?
- Volunteer to serve on task forces or teams that require you to make decisions and explain those decisions to others.

##### **Personal Time Activities**

1. Volunteer for decision-making positions in community groups – positions that will require you to draw on your skills to solve problems not encountered in your work.

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# PREPARATION SUGGESTIONS

In order to prepare for this assessment, the following suggestions are provided which, if followed, may enable you to perform well on the assessment:

- **Be Yourself**

Answer questions the way you feel you would answer them naturally.

- **Read carefully**

Read the questions carefully so that you understand what is being asked of you, so that you can respond accurately.

- **Work Quickly**

During the assessment, work quickly without sacrificing accuracy and thoroughness.

**Good luck!**