The Printing Sales DNA Project was initiated and completed during the 1st Quarter of 2015.

Its purpose was to identify and quantify the most important skills, attitudes and personality traits for a successful printing salesperson.
The study was open to owners, managers and salespeople in all segments of the printing industry.

More than half of our respondents also sell promotional products.

The study was promoted through a wide range of industry publications, associations and franchises, and via social media.
Respondents were asked to rate the importance of a group of 20 "success factors."

536 usable responses were received, from a wide spectrum of personnel, and a wide range of printing and promotional products companies.

Here are the “success factors”…

Energy: The willingness to work hard, getting as much done as possible every day.

Creativity: The ability to work smart, coming up with solutions to problems, obstacles and objections.

Empathy: The ability to accurately and objectively perceive another person’s feelings.

Sociability: An outgoing/extroverted personality; being a “people person.”
Ego Drive: The inner need to get people to say “Yes.” People with high ego drive get great satisfaction from convincing others to agree with them; in this case, to agree to talk/meet with them and ultimately buy from them.

Dollar Drive: People with high dollar drive are motivated by money. They work hard and smart to maximize their earnings opportunity.

Resilience: The ability to handle and bounce back from rejection.

Improvement Attitude: Eagerness to learn and willingness to be trained and/or managed, because better skills and management should produce better results.

Courage: The willingness to ask provocative questions and to challenge objections. (NOTE: Creativity is the ability to come up with a response to an objection. Courage is the willingness to execute that response; essentially to tell people why they should agree with you rather than disagree.

Presentation Skills: The ability to describe the printing company’s capabilities and value proposition.

Convincing Skills: The ability to handle obstacles and objections and close the sale.

TMOP Skills: Time Management, Organization and Prioritization.

Technical Product Knowledge: General knowledge of printing processes and specific knowledge of the company’s products and capabilities.

Applications Product Knowledge: An understanding of how the printing is used in the customer’s business and the ability to consult/advise on ways to make the printing work better.

Hunter Skills: An organized approach to prospecting for new business.

Hunter Attitude: A commitment to prospecting for new business.
Questioning Skills: The ability to lead a sales conversation with questions, both to uncover opportunity and to keep the customer engaged.

Listening Skills: The ability to hear and understand what the other person is saying.

Negotiation Skills: The ability to negotiate effectively, resulting in a win-win scenario, not simply a price concession.

Team Skills and Attitude: The willingness and ability to work well within the team which includes both the sales side and the production side of the business.

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Resilience
Improvement Attitude
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Technical Product Knowledge
Applications Product Knowledge
Hunter Skills
Hunter Attitude
Questioning Skills
Listening Skills
Negotiation Skills
Team Skills and Attitude

"Success Factor" Ratings:
Average Of All Respondents
Comparison Of All Respondents To Dave Fellman

Key Attributes

- Intelligence
- A competitive nature
- An appreciation of the finer things in life

Key Attributes

- Ego Drive
- Resilience
- Courage
- Empathy
- Hunter/Earner Attitude
How do you identify these Key Attributes in a candidate for your next sales position?
- Interview process
- Reference checking
- Psychological testing

How does all of this compare with your experience?
- What have you learned from successful salespeople?
- What have you learned from salespeople that didn’t work out?

Where do you look?
- Career Builder, Monster, Indeed, etc.
- Craigslist?
- Networking