

**Drug**

**Rep**

**Success**

By Alex Anderson

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**This guide is dedicated to my wife for her advice and encouragement, Fiona for her dedication, my family for their support and Dave for his creativeness.**

**We would also like to thank Janet for her talent as an Editor.**

**The sale starts when the prospect says —No.“**

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**In this book we mention several companies, resources and individuals who offer a variety of services. We don't guarantee anyone's work mentioned in this book. The author of this book was not compensated for recommending anyone's services. It is always important to research a company's history before you do business with them.**

—The Pharmaceutical sales guide with the potential to change to your life...“

In this **highly** needed Guide, a top pharmaceutical sales representative in his division shares his proven techniques regarding the field of pharmaceutical sales and how to succeed beyond your wildest dreams.

For the professional salesman, it's an invaluable resource for building your sales skills and obtaining the knowledge of what it takes to get into this amazing field.

For **college graduates**, this guide will give you **secret** interview techniques in order for you to land your first pharmaceutical sales position starting at \$40,000-\$50,000 per year salary, plus bonus, company car, cell phone, lap top computer and other fantastic benefits!

How to Get a Pharmaceutical Interview\* How to Answer Pharmaceutical Interview Questions \* How to Present Your Best Self, while Selling to Key Physicians\* How to Prepare for the 8-hour Interview\* How to get in the — Back Door“ of Pharmaceutical Sales\* New Interview Techniques You Must Know in order to land a Pharmaceutical Sales Position\* How to Succeed in Pharmaceutical Sales Once You Are In \* Learn all of this and more with ***Drug Rep Success!***

Alex is a seven-year sales veteran of a Top Pharmaceutical company. Alex was hired into pharmaceutical sales ONE month after college graduation. He is also a **Trained Pharmaceutical Interviewer** and has interviewed numerous pharmaceutical sales candidates. Alex won Top Salesman in his division twice. Promoted to Senior Representative after just 5 years, he is a seven-year award winner of the 100% club. Alex has helped to train numerous pharmaceutical representatives. He enjoys teaching this art form and wants to share his success with you!

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## Part I

### Getting Into the Castle Chapter 1

#### What It Takes To Get In

Think of the pharmaceutical sales industry as a castle with a large solid steel door. In order to get into the castle you must have a key. There are *no* short cuts. There is only a front door and a back door to our castle.

In order to get past the main gate, you must have a four-year bachelor degree. Today 99% of pharmaceutical companies REQUIRE a bachelor degree to be considered for pharmaceutical sales positions. There is no specific bachelor degree requirement; therefore, the degree can be in any field.

It is important to note that in some pharmaceutical companies, a Bachelor of Science degree is preferred. Obviously a science background will give you an edge when talking with physicians. A person with a science degree may have a better understanding of how the entire human body regulation system works and will be able to communicate this with a physician.

If you have or are about to get a four-year college degree, congratulations, you just made it through the gate and can see the door.

There are two types of persons who are reading this guide and two very different ways to get into the door of our Castle.

The two groups of people include those who have just graduated or are about to graduate and have some or no sales experience -**Type 1**, and those who have a bachelor degree and have worked in sales for the last few years -**Type 2**.

For Type 1 persons, congratulations, you are in the same boat that I was in seven years ago! I had no pharmaceutical sales experience, no connections into the field of pharmaceutical sales, and no postgraduation sales experience. I'm living proof that you can get into this field without family members, connections, or friends in the pharmaceutical industry.

However, you must have drive, determination, patience, persistence and dedication.

I must warn you that this is NOT an easy field to get into. Starting off, you must be willing to relocate, attend out of town meetings, work harder than ever, and prove yourself beyond all expectations.

I have always felt that in life there are no easy roads. If the road is easy, it's most likely not worth traveling.

If you plan on being in sales, SELL something. Make sure you like it and can excel in this field. Sell something while you're still in college. Let's be clear on this. Waiters, customer service reps, retail help, and cashiers are not sales people. True that they sell, but they're not sales people. Get a job with a title of SALES, or better yet OUTSIDE SALES, and keep *hard* copies of all your successes, as you WILL need these at your pharmaceutical

interviews. If at all possible, sell something technical such as computers, cell phones, gadgets or widgets. This type of sales will show a company that you can sell complicated types of items. Pharmaceuticals can be very complicated.

## Chapter 2

### See You at the Door

Every castle has front and back doors. The back door is for college students with little or no sales experience. Everyone tries the front door and only the best salesman, with outstanding sales successes, will enter the front door. I went through the back door twice, which might be an excellent option for you too.

Please note that the back door is for persons who are good at networking. Do you seem to always make friends with strangers? Do you enjoy listening to people? Do you make people laugh? Can you get along with a wide variety of different types of people? If you answered yes to most of these questions, this option may be for you, but it is NOT for everyone.

#### The Back Door

If you're the type that likes to meet people, investigate opportunities, and never gives up then the back door may be your best option. It worked for me œ twice!

During college I took a job as a Security Guard for Coca-Cola. After six months, I was working inside the Coca-Cola plant as a Lab Technician.

Coca-Cola is another large company where it is difficult to get your foot in the door. The money was great, especially for a college student, and so was the experience.

While I was a Security Guard, I got to know the managers, workers and supervisors inside the plant. I also knew that the new jobs were posted inside the lunchroom. As soon as an opening became available, I interviewed with my friends and landed the job. I was able to interview for the job before ANY outside candidate ever knew the position was available.

Three months before college graduation, I sent out several resumes to top pharmaceutical companies, and all of the replies were the same. The companies were looking for someone with pharmaceutical sales experience. What I learned from Coca-Cola was that EVERY large company has a **back door**.

#### My Back Door to Pharmaceuticals

I took the knowledge I learned at Coca-Cola and applied it to pharmaceuticals. I started on the **inside** of my pharmaceutical company as a Telemarketer. I sold pharmaceutical products over the phone for one year. I built strong relationships with management and made them aware that I was looking forward to being promoted to an Outside Pharmaceutical Representative. Every week I kept an eye open for outside sales positions and after one year of hard work and sales success, I was promoted to outside sales.

This road may seem difficult; however, working inside the company for the first year gave me a huge advantage over outside candidates (even candidates with 20 years of pharmaceutical experience). I knew the company, its products, and most importantly I built relationships with the people who interviewed me.

I have a good friend inside the company that started as a customer service representative three years ago. Today she is in inside sales and last year she was the TOP salesperson for the entire eastern region. Keep in mind this person is persistent, dedicated, driven, and has excellent communication skills. If she wanted, she could be an outside pharmaceutical sales representative. However, she is not willing to relocate and is very happy with her current position.

Once you get in through the back door, remember to network, network, and network. Be at work on time, show you're a hard worker, and be a team player. Keep documents pertaining to all of your successes. Most importantly follow the Seven Golden Rules in the following Chapter.

Break any of the rules in Chapter Three and you will NOT pass GO and will NEVER collect the \$200.

### **Chapter 3**

#### **Golden Rules**

##### **Seven Golden Rules to Follow for a Promotion in Corporate Environments**

- 1) Keep your hands to yourself. Remember this rule from Kindergarten? It still applies to BOTH sexes.
- 2) No political, sexual, racial or ethnic jokes or comments. Someone WILL be offended. They're not funny when you're in a lawsuit. (Humor is great, just keep it clean.)
- 3) Don't share your dirty laundry. Keep private information private.
- 4) Be friendly to everyone and don't spread rumors.
- 5) Drink very little outside of work around co-workers. There's a saying in corporate environments that goes - "The most expensive drink you can have is FREE." Free drinks at corporate parties are great, just have one or two and call it a night.
- 6) Keep phone calls at work at a professional level. Don't argue with spouses, significant others, children or friends while at work. Remember, you're not paranoid -big brother IS listening.
- 7) Don't break any of the above golden rules while at work.

You would be amazed at the amount of people I have seen alter their career paths by breaking just one of the above Golden Rules.

### **Chapter 4**

#### **Summary of Front and Back Door Options Into the Castle**

If you fit into the Type 1 category, in order to obtain employment in pharmaceutical sales you should:

- A) Go through the back door.
- B) After graduation, get at least three years of outside sales experience.
- C) Get a sales job with a small medical distributor or a small pharmaceutical company. Most likely you will need to show sales experience while in college to land one of these jobs.

For Type 2 persons with a college degree and documented, successful, outside sales experience, the front door may be an option.

In order for the front door to be an alternative, you should have at least 3 years of OUTSTANDING outside sales

success and know how to interview for this type of specialized sales position.

**Type I and Type II**, congratulations, you have now made it to the door.

It is now time to talk with the guardsman and let him or her know why you should be let into the castle. Please come in, your interview table awaits.

## Chapter 5

**Table for Two** Probably the hardest part about becoming a pharmaceutical rep is surviving the interview process. Have a minimum of four friends look over your resume before you go to the interview. I'm amazed at the amount of spelling errors I have found on resumes, and these resumes end up in the recycling bin. Your resume reflects the most important person in your life, YOU. If at all possible, keep it to one page and use bullet points instead of paragraphs.

Books on interviewing questions and resumes have been successfully written by many other authors. So, there is no need for me to rewrite what has already been written. Going on an interview without first reviewing interview and resume writing books is a sure way not to get a second interview. I highly recommend the Knock 'em Dead Interview Guide and Knock 'em Dead Resume Guide both written by Martin Yates. The actual questions I use to interview candidates are *VERY* similar to this guide. There are only so many ways to ask the same questions.

What are NOT in these interview guides is the specific areas of your past that we will be focused on during the pharmaceutical sales interview and how you should answer these questions. These areas are what you need to *focus* on and prepare for, prior to meeting pharmaceutical sales interviewers. This chapter will help you understand these specific areas and help you to prepare for your pharmaceutical sales interview.

I took a weeklong class on how to interview that can be summarized with the following three points:

- 1) All people are nice. Not all nice people are salesmen. This field is not for everyone. I have interviewed plenty of nice people that didn't have the experience or skills to be a pharmaceutical salesman.
- 2) A candidate's best predictor of future success lies in his or her past. All questions are based on your PAST experiences.
- 3) There are 3 parts to each candidate's answer. They are
  - a) the situation,
  - b) the candidate's response or reaction to the situation, and
  - c) the outcome of the candidate's response.

This is all we look for, nothing more, nothing less.

## EMPLOYMENT BACKGROUND

After I introduce myself and review your resume we will then discuss your employment Background. I will be asking you particular questions about each job and position that you held. The thing I will be looking for is discrepancies and potential disciplinary problems.

We will review each job individually; in this section keep your answers less than 2 minutes each. What were your responsibilities while working with ABC Copy Machine Incorporated?

**Candidate Response:** On a daily basis I was in charge of monitoring, maintaining and developing a customer base. I would develop new leads and turned those leads into sales for the corporation. I was also in charge of servicing accounts and making sure they remained happy customers.

**Interviewer Question:** What did you like most about this position?

**Candidate Response:** My favorite aspect to this job was the rapport that I built with my clients.

**Interviewer Question:** What did you like least about this position? (It's important to pick something here that most people don't like.)

**Candidate Response:** I would have to say filling out expense reports. This was very time consuming, however I knew how important this was to the company, so I always turned in my expense reports on time and as accurate as possible.

**Interviewer Question:** Why do you plan on leaving ABC copy machine at this time?

I really enjoy the company that I work for, the management, co-workers and customers are all outstanding people. However, I realize that if I'm given the opportunity to utilize my sales skills with my science degree, I can make a significant contribution to your corporation.

Here are 3 final —rules— to remember when you're answering an interview question:

- 1) **Never** give an example where you lost money for the company. I once had a candidate tell me she took ONE dollar out of a petty cash drawer and never told the manager. That was her last interview with me.
- 2) **Never** give an example where you speak negatively about a coworker, former boss or customer.
- 3) **Never** tell an interviewer that you were fired.

Here are ten *specific* interviewing areas with specific questions and answers to help you prepare for an interview. The specific areas are

**Flexibility, End Result Focus, Customer Attention, Teamwork, Creativity, Sound Business Decisions, Communication Skills, Integrity, Specialized Skills, and Business Sense.**

During the interview you will have four to five questions in each specific area. The interview will last at least 2 hours. Please try to keep your answers specific and under four minutes per question.

### **I. Flexibility**

#### **Can you successfully adapt to change?**

**Interviewer Question:** Tell me about a situation where you needed to change your behavior in order to achieve a goal.

**Candidate Response:** While I was working as a computer salesman, my company decided to switch and improve our entire computer software system. Needless to say everyone, including myself, originally thought the system we had was great and there was no reason to change. While we were in the process of learning the new system, the supervisors decided that I would be in charge of software training. This was my first training assignment. I understood the importance of embracing this change with a positive attitude and passing this attitude along to my fellow co-workers.

I realized that in order for me to train employees on this new software system, I would need to learn the software materials and understand them as good as, or better than, any other employee understood them. Every night I took home my computer and for two weeks I studied and learned our new system inside and out. By doing this, I

was able to successfully train and implement the new system into our business. During the training classes, I was able to successfully show my fellow employees the great improvements that were made to the old computer system and how these improvements would help them on a daily basis.

The new software system helped to increase our business profits by 10%\* that year, mainly because the new system was more efficient and faster than the old system.

**Situation:** Changing computer system. Everyone in business has to deal with this at some point.

**Reaction to Situation:** This candidate embraced this situation, learned the new system, and was able to teach it to others.

**Outcome of Situation:** Candidate learned the new system, utilized it, and helped to grow company profits by 10%.

\*Note: Never give a number or percent in your answer without a hard copy of some sort to back it up. If I was interviewing you and you presented this profit growth, I would ask you to show me documentation of the growth. It's not that I don't trust you, but I want to see how prepared you are for the interview and how you will react if a physician asks you to back up your story.

## II. End Result Focus

**We are looking for people who strive to achieve goals no matter what the obstacles. We only hire people who NEVER give up.**

### Interviewer Question:

Tell me about your most challenging sales experience while working at ABC Copy Machine. I was selling a copy machine to a new client and the client was using my competitor's product. During my first consultation with this new client, I found out that they were interested in saving time and money with a copy machine that was reliable.

On the next visit, I consulted the client on the differences between our copy machines and our competitor copy machines. I showed them how my machine could help save them time and money. I also showed them features and benefits of my product that reflected its reliability. After I went over these differences, the client decided to purchase one of my top-end machines and that's when the sale became tough!

The client signed a contract agreeing to purchase this machine and pay for it within 90 days. Needless to say, I was very happy about this new sale. I called in the order to my factory and found out that there was a voluntary safety recall on this particular machine and it was no longer available. The voluntary recall happened that morning while I was in the meeting with the customer. That night, I made up a plan of action to retain this customer.

The next day, I went back to the customer and explained the situation to them. I informed them about the voluntary safety recall that had taken place yesterday morning. I let the customer know that we would be sending them the next-best, high-end copy machine, and we would replace it with our top of the line copy machine as soon as we knew it was 100% repaired and safe for use. They appreciated my honesty and agreed to the new contract. To this day, they only use our copy machines.

Situation: Customer signed a contract and the product was not available.

Reaction to Situation: This candidate understood the situation, planned an action course, and presented the



problem and solution to the client.

Outcome of Situation: Candidate landed the sale and has a loyal customer!

Note: This example also shows excellent listening skills.

### **III. Customer Attention**

#### **How well do you handle customers?**

**Interview Question:** Tell me about the specific services that you provided to your customers while working at XYZ Copy Machine.

**Candidate Response:** Whenever I would sell a new copy machine, I would arrange a doughnut breakfast for the delivery date of the new machine to their office. During the breakfast, I would show and train the entire office staff on how this machine would save them time and make their day easier. I would go around the room and ask each person what type of copy jobs they performed. I made sure that I explained specific ways in which this new machine could help them with their copy jobs and make their lives more efficient.

Before I left the breakfast, I made another breakfast appointment for two weeks later. On the wall next to the copy machine, was my piece of paper entitled, —Questions for the copy machine consultant.“ I encouraged people to write down their questions and to call me anytime.

On my follow-up visit, I would go over the list of questions on the wall and answer the questions or concerns of each person in the office. Once I made sure everyone understood and liked the machine, I would go to the machine and make sure it was working properly.

I would contact this account every four weeks and maintained the machine with cleanings, bulbs and parts whenever needed.

By doing this on a consistent basis, I was able to maintain and build my business by 33% over just two years.

#### **Interviewer Notes:**

Situation: Follow-up after a sale to provide educational service.

Reaction to Situation: Candidate has excellent follow-up with customers.

Outcome of Situation: Candidate built business by offering excellent customer service

### **IV. Teamwork**

#### **Are you a team player?**

**Interview Question:** What type of people within ABC Copy Machine do you need to work with in order to be successful?

My success stems from the people that I work with. On a daily basis I meet with our office secretary and go over messages, faxes, invoices and expenses that need to be addressed. The secretary is very organized and together we do an excellent job in making sure that our correspondence, invoices and expense reports are 100% accurate and well-maintained. This seems to help the finance department and makes the expense

approval process more efficient.

My direct manager has been very supportive when I have needed management exceptions, copy machine price adjustments, and manager contract signatures for the successful close of a deal. Without this support I could not have closed half of the deals that I closed.

I have learned numerous selling techniques from my co-workers, which has been a huge part of my success over the years. On a weekly basis several co-workers and myself meet for breakfast and discuss issues and solutions to business opportunities. This seemed to work out great for all of us.

**Interviewer Notes:** Situation: Works with secretary on a daily basis, management when necessary, and co-workers on a weekly basis.

Reaction to Situation: Customer enjoys building relationships with people above and below his position.

Outcome of Situation: Candidate was able to succeed in sales, based on his ability to be a team player. Candidate understands his relationship within the organization.

## **V. Creative Thinking**

### **Can you create NEW solutions?**

**Interview Question:** What have you done while at ABC Copy Machine that would be considered creative?

**Candidate Response:** While working at ABC Copy Machine, I've made up a checklist of potential problem and repair areas for a copy machine. I use this checklist to go over the entire machine on each and every visit to a client's office. Not only has this help me find potential problems, it gives me specific reasons to be back in an office on a monthly basis.

This activity enables me to provide customer service and build relationships with all of the office staff. This machine check takes about 20 minutes. During the check, at least 5 people come up to me and ask questions about the copy machine or just to build rapport. This check was not a policy for sales representatives. However, after my division manager witnessed me doing this, he decided to make it a policy for all sales reps.

**Interviewer Notes:** Situation: Created a checklist to review machines on a regular basis.

Reaction to Situation: Candidate was able to build relationships and customer service by utilizing the new checklist.

Note: Make sure you can present an actual copy of the checklist that you created.

## **VI. Sound Business Decisions**

### **Do you make sound business decisions by looking at all people involved and considering long and short-term impacts?**

**Interviewer Question:** Tell me about a stressful situation that you experienced over the last year at ABC Copy Machine and what you did to work with this situation.

**Candidate Response:** I would say the most stressful situation that happened at work occurred about six months ago. I was calling on a hospital client and found out that they had decided to switch to my competitor's machine. I decided to make an appointment with the main decision maker and review the reasons they wanted to switch from my product. This account was a very large customer of ABC Copy Machine and the company

would suffer a huge financial loss if they decided not to do business with us any longer.

Prior to the meeting, I talked with the office manager and found out that my competitor's machine was less expensive to use. Each copy from my competitor's product cost four cents and my machine cost six cents per copy. When making thousands of copies per year, this difference can be significant.

I made up a computer spreadsheet, which showed the differences between my machine and my competitor's machine. The spreadsheet analyzed the time savings advantage of using my machine and also the reliability factor of each machine. When I figured in the time cost savings and repair costs, it turned out that my machine would actually be less expensive.

I was able to break down a nurse's salary and show that each second of a nurse's time cost the hospital ten cents. So although my competitor's product looked less expensive up front, in actuality it would have cost the hospital \$5,500 more per copy machine if they made the switch.

At the meeting I showed this spreadsheet to the main buyer at the hospital. Not only did they sign a new contract with me, but they also ordered 3 more machines at that meeting.

Note: Every salesman loses a sale at some point in his career. How you deal with it determines whether or not we should hire you.

#### **Interviewer Notes:**

Situation: Candidate's business was in jeopardy.

Reaction to Situation: Candidate investigated the situation and came up with a plan on how to save the business.

Outcome of Situation: Candidate was able to maintain and grow business with hospital client.

## **VII. Communication Skills**

### **Can you express yourself effectively and are you a good listener?**

Give me a specific example of a presentation you made while at ABC Copy Machine's home office.

**Candidate Response:** Once a month I would volunteer to give a sales presentation to a group of new sales representatives reviewing the Z-series copy machine. The presentation was about selling the Z-series copy machine to a potential client.

I would introduce myself to the class and review what to do the night before making the first sales call. At night, I reviewed my client profiles to determine what needs and wants the client had for a particular copy machine. Reviewed what the previous account representative did in regards to an account, you can really learn from past successes or failures of other people. Informed the class that before I started my day I would know where I was going and to whom I would be talking. Prepared my presentation to fit the client's needs and developed goals for this particular customer account. There were always at least two goals on my mind prior to making a sales call. I would involve the class in a discussion and ask what type of goals they would make for their first call, and would write them down on a dry erase board.

After we discussed the specific sales goals on the board, we would talk about ways in which we could achieve these specific goals. At the end of the presentation, I would go around the room and answer any and all questions about selling the Z-series copy machine. I really enjoyed doing this particular presentation for new representatives. Funny thing is I would actually learn more about the products by teaching these classes. It

really was a Win-Win situation.

Situation: Candidate volunteered to teach new representatives.

Reaction to Situation: Candidate listens to what his audience wants and builds his presentation based upon these issues.

Outcome of Situation: Candidate and the audience learn about the Z-series machines and the company will sell more products.

### **VIII. Integrity Are you always honest?**

**Interviewer Question:** Tell me about a time where you had to bend the rules at ABC Copy Machine in order to make a customer happy.

**Candidate Response:** There was one time when I had a customer who wanted everything for free. They wanted a free warranty, toner, and even free paper. Well it was against company policy to give away our merchandise, so I came up with an idea and presented it to my manager.

If this client was willing to buy ten high-end Z copy machines, I would supply them with paper and an extended warranty for each machine at no additional cost. We never had this client's business before and my manager and his boss agreed that a \$6000 profit would be better than nothing. I presented this —free“ offer to the customer and they accepted. Although the rules were bent, I would never have gone behind my manager's back to achieve this sale.

Note: Never give an example of a situation in which you lost the company even one cent by breaking or bending a rule.

### **IX. Specialized Skills**

**How well can you express your advanced knowledge or sales abilities in layman terms?**

**Interviewer Question:** Tell me about a time when you had to explain a technical issue to a person outside of your industry?

**Candidate Response:** I was traveling on a plane and I was sitting next to a gentleman who ran a small grocery store. We started talking about what we do for a living and I explained to him that I sold copy machines. Turns out this storeowner would use a copy center for all of his copy needs. I took out a piece of paper and showed him how much he was spending per copy by using a copy center. We figured out that if he had his own copy machine he would save \$300/year.

We talked about how he would utilize the copy machine in his store. I explained to him that for his purposes there was no need to purchase the top of the line copy machine. This gentleman needed a simple machine that could copy double-sided documents, auto staple, and was low maintenance. After the flight was over, we shared business cards. This gentleman was out of my territory, however I contacted one of my teammates, made her aware of the situation and she closed the sale.

I called the storeowner a few weeks after he purchased the copy machine just to say thanks. The storeowner was amazed how well the machine fit his needs and the amount of time he was able to save.

**Interviewer notes:** Situation: Candidate was on a plane with a potential prospect.

Response: In layman terms candidate was able to show the features and benefits of his copy machine. Avoided —jargon“ and was able to communicate his product in a methodical way.

Outcome of Situation: Storeowner purchased a copy machine from one of his teammates (great team work and follow up!).

## **X. Business Sense**

### **Candidate's ability to understand the multi levels of a business**

**Interviewer Question:** While you were selling copy machines how did you handle accounts that had multiple decision makers?

**Candidate Response:** I recently called on Mercy hospital, which has several different decision makers. The office manager, whom actually uses the machine, wanted to know how the machine would help simplify her life. The business administrator was interested in the cost effectiveness of my machines and the maintenance department was interested in the reliability factor of my. Once a month each of the decision makers would meet and discuss potential purchases. I asked the hospital administrator if I could bring in my copy machine and demonstrate how it worked. They agreed to the meeting, I brought in my copy machine presented data that showed the machines reliability, showed the office manager how this machine could save her time and at the end of my presentation I showed them how my machine could save them money. Two weeks later the hospital purchased eight machines!

**Interviewer's Comment:** That's a fantastic example, do you have any documentation to back up this sale.

**Candidate Response:** Actually, I brought with me the purchase order for the 8 copy machines.

**Interviewer notes:** Situation: Multi level sale environment.

Response: Set up a meeting to see all decision makers at one time.

Outcome of Situation: Addressed needs of customer and closed the sale. Candidate was able to provide documentation of this particular success.

**Break question-** The interviewer needs time to review his or her notes and make sure they have a good understanding of what you have accomplished in your past

**Interviewer Question:**

Why should I hire you?

I will give you the answer that I gave eight years ago during my pharmaceutical interview.

—You can interview one million candidates for this position. However, you will never find another candidate with as much determination, drive and dedication than I have for this job.“

Note: If the interviewer asks you to think about your response, wait at least 2 minutes before giving an answer. If the interviewer asks you to wait until they organize their notes, do NOT make a peep before they tell you they are ready (listening skills are often tested with this question, so please listen to the directions).

### **Chapter 6 Final Note Before Leaving The Castle**

Give specific examples from your work history to reflect all of the above areas. Practice aloud before the

interview. Practice with your friends, spouse, boyfriends, girlfriends, etc.... Practice will give you confidence, which will positively impact your interview.

Have at least five questions prepared to ask the interviewer about the position or the company. Most importantly, don't forget to CLOSE. You're applying for a sales job and SALESMEN CLOSE the interview (you're selling yourself). Closing questions could be:

- . • When would you like to set up our next interview?
- . • Is there any reason why you wouldn't hire me?
- . • Great, when do I start?

**Ok you're almost done, 3 more quick things to remember:**

1) Get a business card from each person that interviews you.  
2) Within 24 hours after the interview, send thank you cards to each person that interviewed you. Be creative and, if at all possible, mention something that was said during the interview. This will show your listening skills.

3) You should have the following items prepared for an interviewer to examine. I WILL ask to see them.

- . • Day planner will show organization and prioritization skills.
- . • Four copies of your resume will show preparation skills.
- . • Leave behind Two Brag Books. Make sure to include COPIES of success stories (Emails, notes from a past boss, contest results, awards, etc.), actual sales numbers and actual sales rankings amongst you and your peers.

After reading this chapter you have been given an insider view on what will be asked of you and how you should respond during an interview. Now comes the hard work.

1) You need to think of specific examples from each interview topic.

2) You need to write down your specific examples on paper; this will make your answers flow out when you need them during the interview.

3) You need to Practice, Practice and Practice each of your answers.

- . • Tape record yourself giving the answers
- . • Do a practice interview with friends, family members, neighbors, anyone. Give them the questions from this book and you answer them. Ask for feedback from the —interviewer“.
- . • Practice answering your interview questions in front of a mirror.

When you meet with the interviewer shake their hand (make sure to apply an equal amount of grip pressure, no limp hand shakes allowed), SMILE, and feel confident that you are ready and able to handle any question. Take a deep breath and relax (you're prepared!) and enjoy the show.

## **Chapter 7**

### **Tour of the Castle**

You have now made it farther than most candidates; for you got past the door, impressed the guards, and have been invited to tour the castle. In the pharmaceutical business we call this a —Ride Along“. You will be spending an entire day with a pharmaceutical sales representative and observing what he or she does on a daily basis.

In order to prepare for your ride along, I will first review what an average day in the life of a pharmaceutical sales representative encompasses and then we will review how YOU need to prepare for a successful ride along!

### **Average Day as a Pharmaceutical Sales Representative**

I usually start my day at 7:00 a.m. I review my routing or plans for the day and decide what needs to be done based on a priority list that I create.

At about 8:00 a.m., I eat a healthy breakfast, get dressed and leave my home office by 8:30 a.m. Each day is different, but I average seeing eight doctors per day, while visiting at least six offices (three in the morning and three in the afternoon).

Before each call, I review my computer notes from the previous visit, decide what needs to be done, and set goals to accomplish future steps that will bring in a sale.

At the end of each call, I review my successes and failures and enter notes into my computer to reflect each. I developed a plan for the next call in the same office. I see my physicians every 4-6 weeks and have something new to say on each call.

When the sun goes down, I head home. I download my computer notes to the home office, answer email questions, finish paper work and expense reports, review my call success, determine my sales quota attainment, prepare a list of calls for the next day, set goals for myself, answer my voicemails, and then relax.

I love every minute of it, except the paperwork.

### **How to Prepare for —The Ride Along—**

Once you get past the initial interviews most likely you will go on a —ride along— with a drug representative. This drug representative will most likely be a top representative (someone who has been in the business and has had success in the business for at least two years). By the way, this top drug rep is also most likely a trained interviewer. This experienced representative will be sending along a report to the district manager reporting how you reacted, questioned, and built rapport with the representative and office staff.

Don't be fooled, as this is an interview. In fact, it's a daylong interview, yes, an eight-hour interview. Build rapport with this representative, ask questions, sell yourself and most importantly relax, have fun, and enjoy the experience.

Now that you have an idea of what to expect, here is what YOU MUST do to be prepared for your ride along.

- . • Do your homework prior to the ride along and be familiar with the products that you will be selling.
- . • Maintain a professional look, as business dress is required.
- . • Turn off your cell phone, as this can be seen as rude.
- . • Have a conversation with a physician or nurse during the ride along when appropriate. This will show your communication skills.
- . • Let the representative know that you can do the job and you are excited about this opportunity.
- . • Show the representative examples of your past success in sales by bringing along your sales success binder for lunch conversation.
- . • Ask the representative for their business card and send them a thank you note within 24 hours after the ride along.
- . • Close the sale at the end of the ride along. Closing could be as simple as asking the representative, —When do I start?“ or —When is my next interview?“.
- . • Have several questions prepared for the representative.

**Focus your questions on the following areas:**

- . • **Rapport:** What has made the representative successful in their position? People love to talk about why they are successful.
- . • **The Position:** How successful has the territory that you will be taking over been in the past? What is the territory size?
- . • **Products:** Ask specific questions about the products.
- . • **Sales Training:** How long is training?
- . • **Advanced training courses:** Does the company offer any continuing education sales classes?
- . • **Benefits:** Not Money

There are only 3 basic things NOT to do during a ride along. 1) Don't smoke. 2) Don't change the radio station while in the car. 3) Don't talk about your past, failed interviews.

### **Interviewer notes to district manager after the ride along**

Once the ride along is over, within 24 hrs a report is due from the representative to the district manager. The report will include the following areas.

#### **Level of Interest**

Did the candidate ask questions about the position, products, benefits and competition?  
Was the candidate professional and courteous during the office visit?

#### **Knowledge of Company and Products**

Did the candidate have a good understanding of the company and products in which he or she would be selling?

#### **Homework**

Did the candidate talk with physicians or nurses prior to the ride along to gain a customer perspective on the organization?

#### **Appearance**

Was the candidate dressed appropriately?

#### **Recommendation**

Should this candidate be moved forward to the next step in the interview process?

## **Chapter 8**

### **—Easy as Pie"**

As a candidate and I were walking into a physician's office, I was talking about getting the office on a Pharmaceutical Internet Ordering System. The physician's office could order products via the Internet directly from my company. The candidate asked me if it would be difficult and I responded that setting up an account on the Internet ordering system was as —Easy as Pie."



After the sales call, we went back to the car. The candidate had listened to what I had said and started a conversation with me. It went something like this.

**Candidate:** I wonder where the expression "Easy as Pie" actually came from.

**Alex:** Good question, where do you think it came from?

It could be that the expression came from a pie maker who made pies everyday for a living and could do it with his or her eyes closed. Or, maybe it was from the mathematical equation for Pi, since you just plug numbers into an equation and get an answer, which makes the equation easy.

**Alex:** Maybe it came from a guy whose wife baked pies and he just ate them. Eating pie is easy. Baking pies is hard.

That was it. We then talked about several other topics and throughout the day had fun conversations.

The next day I received a FED EX package. When I opened the box, inside was a Fresh Baked Pie with a note. The note read; "Alex, thanks for a great ride along. Your decision should be as "Easy as Pie" -Sue."

Sue, the candidate, knew the products and she was aware of my competition's products. She spoke with several physicians prior to the ride along, and we hired her the next week. Sue had NO pharmaceutical sales experience (her sales experience was in advertising). Her degree was not science based.

Sue's enthusiasm, drive, creativity, listening skills, and determination shined during and AFTER the interview.

Follow-up will always separate you from your competition, both in sales and interviews. Have fun on your ride along and enjoy the tour!

## Chapter 9

### Becoming a Knight!

Congratulations, you have been invited back to the Castle to work and develop your outstanding sales skills. You will become a Knight in shining armor. Your job as a Knight is to protect and expand the business of your Castle.

A Castle is only as good as its income, protection and leadership. In order for leadership to succeed, they must successfully focus their efforts into training and developing their Knights. A Knight is the most respected attribute to any Castle.

**Intense Training** Think of college finals for two months straight and than multiply that by two and you'll have an idea of what training to be a pharmaceutical rep encompasses.

This is not to scare you. It is to prepare you for what is to come.

Once hired you will most likely start a home study program. This will involve you reading chapters or entire books on the physiological. During those two weeks you will study, study and study the products. You will learn the product compositions and how the products work in the human body. Everyday your knowledge will be tested by trainers, and the trainers will report your progress to your district manager.

This training will mark the beginning of your new career. Take it VERY seriously. Focus and study hard. You will know these products as good as, or even better than any physician will.

After your two weeks of in-class training, you will be flown back home to your territory. You will work your territory for a month or two and then fly back to the home office for a couple more weeks of sales training. You will then learn how to successfully sell the products.

In most instances, while training at the Castle (corporate headquarters) your food, lodging, and dry cleaning expenses along with phone calls home are all reimbursed by the company.

**Start-up training costs the company a minimum of \$20,000 per person.**

Pharmaceutical training is continuous throughout your entire career. You will take classes offered by the company and read numerous manuals on selling. You will be expected to participate and discuss product presentations in team meetings. These meetings will enhance your presentation skills in front of physicians.

It takes at least six months to learn the products, geographics of your territory, how to run your new computer programs, and feel comfortable in an office speaking with a physician.

A good Knight will embrace this training and develop their skills.

## **Chapter 10**

### **Does A Knight Really Eat Like A King?**

Okay, pharmaceutical sales benefits are truly amazing. No other profession that I know of has the perks that are associated with being a drug rep. I'm going to tell you about my company's benefits, since I can't vouch for every company. Some are slightly better and some are slightly worse. My company pays at a Top Level, which means that only 25% of pharmaceutical companies pay better than my company and 75% pay less. As a pharmaceutical rep you will work very hard to increase your salary and your territory.

Most of the large pharmaceutical companies offer a brand new company car for business usage. The company pays for car insurance, gas, oil changes, car washes and any type of mechanical wear and tear. At my company, I get a brand NEW car every 50,000 miles. This benefit is worth about \$13,000 per year. Some pharmaceutical companies only offer a car stipend or monthly payment towards your car plus extra for gas mileage.

Some of the other benefits offered at pharmaceutical companies include the following: The company I work for starts pharmaceutical reps out with a \$47,000 base salary plus bonuses per year. After several years, an above average salesman will make around \$100,000 per year, which includes bonuses.

- 1) **Medical, Dental and Vision plans** -Best of the best plans, you're covered from head to toes.
- 2) **Laptop computer**-Used for company purposes to enter call notes and expenses.
- 3) **Cell Phone** -I get 1,000 minutes per month to talk with customers and negotiate the big deals.
- 4) **Lodging** -When you travel you will stay at four to five star hotels, eat very well, and can expense hotel movies if you stay for more than 2 days.
- 5) **401K**-Company matches can go as high as \$2.22 on the dollar.
- 6) **Pension** -At the company I work for, I receive a guaranteed

pension after just 5 years.

- 7) **FREEDOM**-I'm not stuck in some stuffy office. I see my district manager about once every 2-3 months for about two days.
- 8) **Trips** -You can actually win trips for you and your family. I have been on a numerous Cruises, and I have also won a free weekend trip to the Marriott in Chicago.
- 9) **The BIG Question** -How much money does a pharmaceutical rep/medical rep make?

In the pharmaceutical/medical supply industry there are added benefits called —Kickers“ or —Bounty's“.

Kickers and Bounty's are any type of financial, gift giving or gift check gain that is unexpected and not incorporated into your compensation package. Kickers come in several different forms. Below are two specific examples.

**Kicker type one:** You receive a certain amount of money per dose of a particular product that you sell. Usually this kicker will last between 1-3 months.

Ex: Sell 1000 doses of product X at one dollar/dose and you will receive an extra \$1000.00 in your bank account.

**Kicker type two:** You receive compensation for each customer that orders your product via the Internet. The Internet is becoming a much less expense way for companies to do business.

Sales Contests are also very motivating and considered a great —benefit“. I have won, American Express gift checks, Gift Certificates, and all-inclusive paid Trips around the country. Most pharmaceutical companies realize that contests are a great way to motivate a salesman. Needless to say I consider this to be a fun benefit.

Usually a pharmaceutical company will use a contest in order to sell high volumes of product or increase market share of a product over a relatively short period of time.

Most large pharmaceutical companies will promote their top sales representatives to District Managers, Trainers, Marketing Management, Executive Account Management, and about 25 other types of higher positions.

I love sales, have always loved sales, and thus plan on staying in my position for a long time. Most large pharmaceutical companies also offer a promotional sales ladder for the salesman. After 5 years I was promoted to Senior Sales Representative. The next step is to become a Top Branch Sales Representative. This promotion requires at least 10 years of excellent sales in your territory.

With pharmaceuticals, a Knight is definitely treated like a KING!

## Chapter 11

### Protecting the Castle

When does a king really need his Knights? **WAR...**

A good Knight is aware that war will always be around the corner. The Knight will expect war, remain calm during the war, and most importantly focus their efforts and fight like hell during the war. During War is when the

Knight EARNs his/her keep. War is what makes the great Knights shine more brightly than the not so good Knights.

For the last seven years as a pharmaceutical/medical sales representative, I have gone to war at least once every six months. War in this business can come in the form of a new product launch (both yours and your competitors), an FDA (Food and Drug Administration) product recall, and media hype about your product (both good and bad). Each of these can be both dangerous and even deadly to your business.

Every war is different, yet my reaction is always the same. In order to win the war you MUST follow these three basic rules.

- 1) Develop a strategy to protect or grow your business around your KEY customers.
- 3) Work VERY hard for a short period of time. Work twenty-four hours, seven days a week, until you are sure that your message is understood and your business is protected. This short burst of extra work will pay off big-time in the long run.

When I first started working for the company, I would hate participating in a war. Now, I realize that war is actually my best job security. That's right, without war, I would not be in this great career, nor would I be writing this book for you.

Think about it, if it wasn't for war would a king really need its Knights?

War gives you the opportunity to prove your skills as a salesman.

War is why you receive such great benefits, salary, bonuses, trips, awards, and prestige. While you are at war, remember that this is why they hired you. If you're a fighter, a brave warrior at heart, than these battles will only bring you closer to victory and success!

## Chapter 12 Finding Your Castle

How does a Knight find a position in a Castle?

Two Ways:

- 1) The Castle places a notice in the town square, or
- 2) The King has a *consultant* that he or she trusts to bring them only the best potential Knights.

If you were given a list of pharmaceutical company addresses, phone numbers and email sites, you would send in over 2,000 resumes. Wow, that's a whole lot of trees you could have saved!

**Focus your search on pharmaceutical companies that are actually hiring. Check out recruiters, newspaper classified ads, and Internet job postings.**

Recruiters are consultants that bring in prepared, trained, and experienced sales reps. Recruiters will prepare you for the interview and give you tips on what the interviewing company is looking for in their Knights. Recruiters will guide you through the entire interview process. They will work with you to get you the job, because they get paid if you succeed!

Recruiter services are typically at no cost to you. The hiring company pays most recruiters for providing recruiting services.

I have listed several top pharmaceutical recruiters with their requirements and website addresses. If you feel as though you match their requirements, send them a resume and let them know you read this book.

I will also post pharmaceutical sales positions from around the country, along with links to recruiters at [www.drugrepsuccess.com](http://www.drugrepsuccess.com).

## Chapter 13

### Top Pharmaceutical Recruiters and Services

We thought it would be important to find out exactly what recruiters in the pharmaceutical industry look for and require in a candidate. Below is a list of several recruiters and hiring services. Some were kind enough to provide responses to questions for you to get an idea of the qualities that they desire. We would like to personally thank each recruiter and pharmaceutical service that is listed in this guide.

Recruiters are experts at weeding out resumes that don't fit their —King's— minimal requirements. Most recruiters receive hundreds, if not thousands, of resumes a week. BEFORE you send them a resume make sure you meet the minimal requirements for the recruiter, as you will see, each one is different.

**Bioview.com** Bioview offers sales jobs for all of the major pharmaceutical, biotechnology, and medical device companies. Beyond employment opportunities, the site also offers numerous career resources and up-to-the-minute news and in-depth biotechnology company information.

**Question:** How many years of sales experience must a candidate possess to be considered for a medical/pharmaceutical sales position?

**Reply:** It depends on the company. Some will hire people with any kind of sales experience, some want pharmaceutical sales and some will hire entry-level people with a science background.

**Question:** To where and in what format should a candidate send a resume?

**Reply:** They should apply on the relevant career sites and submit their resume in a text format.

**Question:** Do candidates need a college degree to get into pharmaceutical /medical sales?

**Reply:** Yes

**Question:** Is there a preferred bachelor degree for getting into pharmaceutical sales?

A science or medical discipline is preferred.

**Question:** What area of the country do you hire for?

**Reply:** We post jobs for all areas of the country.

#### **Corporate Connections International (medicalsalesrecruiter.net)**

Corporate Connections is an executive search firm specializing in the recruitment of medical sales and management professionals.

Their goal is to partner with clients to build and maintain long-term mutually beneficial relationships.

**Question:** How many years of sales experience must a candidate possess to be considered for a medical/pharmaceutical sales position?

**Reply:** We only handle medical positions and the average is 2 years+ of successful outside sales experience with a leading b2b company (Lanier, Pitney, ADP, etc.)

To where and in what format should candidates send their resumes?

**Reply:** Email is preferred.

**Question:** Do candidates need a college degree to get into pharmaceutical/medical sales?

**Reply:** Yes

**Question:** Is there a preferred bachelor degree for getting into medical/pharmaceutical sales?

**Reply:** Four-year degree with a solid GPA

**Question:** What area of the country do you hire for?

**Reply:** USA This company is a top-notch, nationwide medical recruiting company. They offer several FREE services to qualifying candidates. Please look below and find out if you meet their requirements. If you do, go ahead and send them a resume!

**Free services offered by Global Edge Recruiting, LLC 1) Resume Services** -Help you in preparing a resume

that will get

the employer's attention! **2) Free Resume Critiques** -Review your resume free of charge. **3) Interview**

**Coaching** -Offer important interviewing tips during

the interview process. **4) Recruiter Networking** -Network with other recruiters on your behalf by sharing your resume with them.

**Question:** How many years of sales experience must a candidate possess to be considered for a medical/pharmaceutical sales position?

**Reply:** One to three years

**Question:** What type of sales experience should the candidate have?

Business-to-business sales experience is best.

**Question:** To where and in what format should the candidate send a resume?

**Reply:** Email resumes in MS Word format to [jobs@globaledgerecruiting.com](mailto:jobs@globaledgerecruiting.com)

**Question:** Do candidates need a college degree to get into pharmaceutical medical sales?

**Reply:** Yes

**Question:** Is there a preferred bachelor degree for getting into pharmaceutical/medical sales?

**Reply:** Marketing or Life Sciences

**Question:** What area of the country do you hire for?

Nationwide recruiting for the pharmaceutical, biotech, medical device and medical sales industries.

### **Helixjobs.com**

An independent National Medical recruiter, Helix has been in the business for decades and works with numerous fortune 500 companies. There is NO fee to the candidate when you go through Helixjobs.com. Below are the questions and replies from this recruiter.

**Question:** How many years of sales experience must a candidate possess to be considered for a medical/pharmaceutical sales position?

**Reply:** Three years

**Question:** What type of sales experience should the candidate have?

**Reply:** Related sales experience in a particular geographic area.

**Question:** To where and in what format should the candidate send a resume?

helix@comcast.net. Word, RTF, or plain text (preferred in that order).

**Question:** Do candidates need a college degree to get into pharmaceutical/medical sales?

**Reply:** No

**Question:** Is there a preferred bachelor degree for getting into pharmaceutical sales?

**Reply:** Science is usually preferred.

**Question:** What area of the country do you hire for?

**Reply:** The United States

### **Pharmaceuticalsalesrecruiters.com**

Provides executive search services for the pharmaceutical, medical, and biotech industries. Below are the Questions I asked the manager of

### **Pharmaceuticalsalesrecruiters.com.**

**Question:** How many years of sales experience must a candidate possess to be considered for a medical/pharmaceutical sales position?

**Reply:** One-year minimum. We have worked with less but the average is 1-3 years.

**Question:** What type of sales experience should the candidate have?

**Reply:** Typically some sort of pharmaceutical experience is better than non-pharmaceutical, but copier sales or anyone who has performed well in "outside" sales, not inside sales, and has stayed at a job for a while. Job jumping is probably the largest killer for candidates to get jobs.

**Question:** To where and in what format should a candidate send a resume?

**Reply:** MS WORD to info@pharmaceuticalsalesrecruiters.com

Do candidates need a college degree to get into pharmaceutical/medical sales?

**Reply:** 99.9% of pharmaceutical require a degree. We have had success placing non-degreed candidates, but those candidates had sales experience in medical supply sales. I want to stress that the most important sales experience is outside sales.

**Question:** Is there a preferred bachelor degree for getting into pharmaceutical sales?

**Reply:** Some specialty companies do want life science degrees such as biology or chemistry, but many want a degree and strong GPA.

**Question:** What area of the country do you hire for?

**Reply:** All over the United States.

**PharmiWeb.com** They offer thousands of careers and jobs in the pharmaceutical sector. They develop your career in medical sales, marketing, research and development, discovery, clinical trials, manufacturing or any key PharmiWeb also has a list of things they are looking for in their candidates:

**Question:** How many years of sales experience must a candidate possess to be considered for a medical/pharmaceutical sales position?

**Reply:** At least two

**Question:** What type of sales experience should the candidate have?

**Reply:** Preferably in established business, not retail. Door-to-door experience also helps.

**Question:** To where and in what format should the candidates send their resumes?

**Reply:** Speculatively to Human Resource departments, recruiters and in response to ads, always in word document format.

Do candidates need a college degree to get into pharmaceutical/medical sales?

**Reply:** Yes, unless they have an equivalent qualification in a medical discipline.

**Question:** Is there a preferred bachelor degree for getting into medical/pharmaceutical sales?

**Reply:** Any life sciences, or medical and science degrees would be considered.



**Question:** What area of the country do you hire for?

**Reply:** Website operating through Europe and increasingly in US.

### **Rxrecruiters.com**

They specialize in niche placement of Pharmacists and other health care professionals into pharmaceutical sales.

How many years of sales experience must a candidate possess to be considered for a medical/pharmaceutical sales position?

**Reply:** Two years minimum

**Question:** What type of sales experience should the candidate have?

**Reply:** Pharmaceutical or medical

**Question:** To where and in what format should a candidate send a resume?

**Reply:** Send to resumes@rxrecruiters.com Most formats (Word, WordPerfect, Text, etc.) are accepted.

**Question:** Do candidates need a college degree to get into pharmaceutical/medical sales?

**Reply:** Usually yes. Experience with documented success will often substitute for a college degree.

Is there a preferred bachelor degree for getting into pharmaceutical sales?

**Reply:** No there is not.

**Question:** What area of the country do you hire for?

**Reply:** Entire United States.

### **Sales Source -(salessource.net)**

Sales Source is dedicated to providing the finest quality recruiting services. Their staff of recruiting specialists has an average of over 10 years of successful recruiting experience. They recruit in all areas of sales and have a special emphasis in Medical, Pharmaceutical, Hi-Tech/DP and Business-to-Business.

**Question:** How many years of sales experience must a candidate possess to be considered for a medical/pharmaceutical sales position?

**Reply:** Typically an employer will want between 3-7 years of tangible sales experience. While overall experience is important, it is also important to have a documented success record. Employers prefer candidates that haven't bounced from company to company.

What type of sales experience should the candidate have?

**Reply:** We have found in our 27 years in business that business-to-business sales are consistently the best experience to have. Consumer products would be next. Employers also look for candidates that have had strong company sales training and prefer candidates that come from well-known companies.

**Question:** To where and in what format should candidates send their resumes?

**Reply:** Resumes should be sent as attachments in MS Word format. It is a good idea to name the document

with your first and last name rather than simply resume. Sending a resume blind to Human Resource Departments or simply mass emailing to job postings is generally not the most effective method, because your resume can get lost in the myriad of resumes that these people receive. The best method is to either contact a recruiting firm that specializes in the industry you're targeting or to the hiring manager.

**Question:** Do candidates need a college degree to get into pharmaceutical/medical sales?

Absolutely mandatory.

**Question:** Is there a preferred bachelor degree for getting into medical/pharmaceutical sales?

**Reply:** Medical product manufacturers prefer a business degree, while pharmaceuticals prefer a life science degree of some sort.

**Question:** What area of the country do you hire for?

**Reply:** Sales Source is a national medical/pharmaceutical sales recruiting company. We have over 300 affiliate offices located throughout the United States.

## Chapter 14

### Your First Day!

Congratulations you landed the job and it's your first day in the territory. On your first day as a new representative you will most likely ride along with an experienced pharmaceutical/medical representative. Here are some pointers for your first day in the field.

- . • Don't try to make a sale. Sounds crazy for a salesman to say this, but this is not the time to make your first sale. You have not earned your sale. You know nothing about the concerns or needs of any office; therefore you are not prepared to make a sale.
- . • Do introduce yourself to the secretary, nurses, and physicians. Give away business cards and let the office know they can contact you if they have any questions. People always want to help the —new“ guy or girl in the office. Make sure you tell everyone that you're —new“. I was a —new“ sales rep for the first year in my territory.
- . • Find out what the office rules are for a pharmaceutical/medical salesman. Yes each office has different rules.

Smile and relax, this is the time to build rapport and show the office that you are a consultant and NOT a pushy salesman.

## Part II

## The Pharmaceutical Sale Chapter 15

### Gone Fishing

If you ask any top pharmaceutical salesman how they learned to be a top sales representative, most will tell you

examples of what they have learned from other top sales representatives. They are not copies of other representatives, but are pieces and parts of other representatives' styles, which have been incorporated into their OWN style.

For the rest of this book, I will encourage you to steal from me. Steal my ideas and make them yours within your own style.

If you were to ask me, —What has made you successful?“, I would share with you my experiences and hopefully you could take them, build on them, and make them yours.

Fishing is probably the best way to describe how to sell pharmaceuticals, gadgets, or products.

Fishing is about patience. Most fishermen are up by 5:00 a.m. and excited to catch a BIG fish. I'm not saying wake up at 5:00 a.m., but don't plan on selling anything while sleeping in.

A good fisherman never rushes to the lake.

Never rush into an account. Review your call notes about the last call to this account and develop a game plan. Make sure you have the right gear (clinical studies, sales aides, and correct pricing). You should take at least five minutes to determine a couple of goals and figure out what you're going to say before you say it. Goals don't always have to be —THE SALE“. A goal can be anything that puts you closer to the sale. For example, sometimes my goal is just to get past the secretary and into the back office. If I leave the office and have seen the back, I have accomplished a goal!

Celebrate every met goal and pat yourself on the back.

A professional fisherman practices casting fishing line over and over again. Every Sunday evening, I practice my presentation in a mirror. Before I call on an account, I practice my presentation inside the car. It is okay to talk out loud in your car, just don't talk out loud in the office or they might think you're there for an appointment!

A good fisherman remains calm even during stormy weather. When you have an upset or confused customer, STAY calm, concentrate on breathing SLOWLY, and remember that all will work out in the end. Don't raise your voice and NEVER show anger in front of a customer. Never say anything bad about your customer in your follow up call notes or to other salespeople.

A good fisherman knows where to go to catch the BIG fish. Call on the right customers with the right frequency. Nobody wants to see you everyday. Space out your calls and make a grand entrance. Remember the 80/20 Rule. Eighty percent of your business will come from twenty percent of your customers.

A good fisherman uses the right bait to catch the right type of fish. Know what your customer wants before you pitch them your product. Ask a simple question such as; —What's important to you when it comes to your product type?“ After you ask this question, remember to remain silent until you receive a full answer. Silence is a salesman's best friend. As the saying goes, —You have two ears and only one mouth, GOD is trying to tell you something“.

Most importantly, remember that a good fisherman NEVER goes home without catching some type of fish or learning a new technique. Never give up, your fish (customer) will bite and when they do, make sure you reel them in. A fish will nibble on the bait, a customer will ask for a price. Either way, reel them in and don't let them off the hook until they're in the boat. The sale is NEVER over until your product is on their shelf. One of the biggest mistakes new salesmen make is thinking they have a sale before the product is sold. That's like bragging about winning the lottery just because you bought a ticket.

When you return to the dock, or home, ask yourself if you accomplished your goals. You won't catch fish everyday, but everyday should place you closer to catching the big one. Even a simple smile from a hard to see

physician can be considered a success and one step closer to a sale.

Happy Fishing!

## Chapter 16

### My First BIG Small Sale

It was my first week out of training when I met with a small, two-physician office that was not using ANY of my products.

Excited, enthusiastic and brimming with confidence, I walked up to the front counter, smiled, and introduced myself to the main ordering nurse.

The ordering nurse said to me, "This is how it works here. You see me, hand me a business card, and ask if I need anything. If I need something, I will tell you. If not, leave. You can only see the physician if I make an appointment for you to do so. The last rep from your company was a jerk". The glass window was then closed in my face.

My enthusiasm was replaced with terror. I thanked her for her time and left. I went back to my car and typed call notes into my computer. Needless to say, my confidence level shrank about six feet.

Two weeks later I went back to the same office. The same ordering nurse gave me the same four lines and I left the office 2 minutes later. She obviously did not remember me from the first call.

On the next visit, I prepared myself with cookies. Grandma always said the way to a person's heart was through the stomach. The ordering nurse took the cookies, closed the glass window, and didn't even bother to say thanks. Grandma must have never met this ordering nurse.

This is the point that determines great sales reps from sales reps. The easy thing to do is to never go back. This customer wasn't going to make my numbers (they were just a small, two-physician practice). Not everyone is going to like me, and this customer is just one of the ones that will NEVER like me. Thoughts like this will go over and over in your head. You can listen to them or not listen to them. The choice is yours.

After four more calls, the ordering nurse realized I wasn't going away.

I set up a luncheon and LISTENED to what was important to the office staff, physicians, and the main ordering nurse.

The physicians wanted a good price for a good product. No problem, I had plenty of both. The office staff wanted someone to help with the inventory. No problem, I could do that.

The ordering nurse wanted someone to talk to about family, friends, weekends, and holidays. In other words she wanted RAPPORT.

Four months later, the office was using all of my products, and the main ordering nurse was now one of my best and loyal clients.

This office has now used my products exclusively for over 5 years. Here is a secret to my success. Focus on the needs and wants of your customers. In other words, just listen and take notes when your customer talks. Never interrupt and always ask them questions about what they want.

Consider yourself a consultant for an office instead of a salesman. By consulting and NOT selling, you will earn *respect*. Consultants are interested in what's best for the office, salesmen are only interested in getting the sale.

By never pushing for a sale and forcing a commitment for a sale, you will earn *trust*. The —hard sell“ approach will set you back three steps in the trust category. How would you like to buy a hamburger and then be asked for a commitment to buy seven more hamburgers over the next week? It's obvious and annoying to all parties involved.

By showing physicians, nurses and office staff that your product is NOT perfect, and explaining the imperfections, you will help build *integrity* with the office.

By showing a physician the good and the bad, you remain a consultant. Who would you rather have tell the doctors about the imperfections of your product, (Yes, EVERY product has these), your competitors or you? Either way, the physicians will eventually find out and wonder why YOU didn't tell them about these issues.

Respect, trust and integrity are the secrets to my success. Please don't tell anyone these secrets, or I may not win top salesman next year!

## **Chapter 17**

### **Heart of a Teacher, Mind of a Salesman**

Think of a product that you use on a daily basis and have been using for at least one year.

Don't read on until you are sure you have this product in your mind.

This product is special. You have used it for at least one year and every day of your life you continue to give it your loyalty beyond it's competition. This product has a specific name and is the only name that you would ever use. Why?

Someone or some type of advertisement told you a secret about this product. It works better, faster, safer, or harder than any other product on the market. You were taught the secret, believed the secret, and bought the product, over and over, again and again.

You learned about this special secret and then you were sold on the product.

This is another secret to my success. Before I sell you my product, I will teach you something specific and special about my product. My teaching will be based on what is important to you and integrity. You will want my product because it's different than any other product on the market. I never tell physicians that my product is better or the best. Every sales rep under the sun claims his or her product is "better" or "the best." These descriptive words only make your product sound like any other product.

When I present my product to a customer, I never sell on price. Would you still be using your special product, just because it's cheaper? Most likely, you wouldn't. Price is NOT special, as every product has a price and price will change over time. Eventually your price will be more than someone else's product and if you sold on price alone, your customer WILL switch to the cheaper product.

My customers know something specific about my product that makes it special for them or their patients. They have been told WIFM, or what's in it for them, and the presentation was KISSED, or I kept it simple. Did you buy your special product based on a 30-page theme? Most likely, NO. You bought your product based on ONE or TWO SIMPLE specific reasons and this sold you for at least one full year.

In order to successfully sell pharmaceuticals, you must have the heart of a teacher and the mind of a salesman, in that order.

## **Chapter 18**

## **Basic Training**

Part of my job is to make sales calls to military bases. In my territory there are two large military bases.

When I walked into the base, I introduced myself to the Military Admissions Center and gave them a business card. As a rule, I always introduce myself with a business card and a small gift, usually pens. It always amazes me how much people love receiving pens, it's like giving away gold. The admissions officer pointed me on my way, and I headed off to the Pharmacy.

At the Pharmacy I needed to find out who the main purchaser was for my types of products. I found this person and explored what was important to this person in regards to my types of products. We had a long discussion regarding the features and benefits of my products, while incorporating their specific wants and needs. This person realized that their patients and the hospital would have an advantage by using my products and decided that we should set up a meeting with all the top physicians at the military base, including the Colonel.

During my meeting with the physicians, we went around the table and talked about what was important to them when referencing my type of product. Sound familiar? They told me their wants, needs and concerns. I discussed how my products would fit their wants and needs. I addressed each concern they had presented one at a time. One of the doctors was concerned that his nurses would be confused over the new products. So, I offered to teach a one-hour training class for the nurses and physicians to make sure the transition to my products would be a smooth one.

Two weeks later I followed up with the main director of ordering and the actual person that processes the order to make sure I had answered all of their questions and addressed any concerns. By the time I walked in, they had already ordered my product and it was sitting in their storage facility.

This all happened while I was sitting in my car, before I had ever set foot on a military base.

Funny thing is, six months after I had this conversation in my head, both military bases switched to all of my products. The really funny thing is that 90% of my plan actually played out EXACTLY as mentioned above.

Both times before I won Top Salesman in my division, I had already won Top Salesman in my division in my head. Before I won my sales awards, I envisioned myself accepting the award and giving a brief, yet thoughtful, and thankful speech. Before I make my quotas, I know how and when I will reach my sales quotas.

My last and final secret, and then you're on your own.

People will always tell you to make "realistic" goals. Realistic to me will always be different than realistic to you. Your realistic goals will be based on visions of yourself prior to the event happening. In other words, your "realistic" goals have no limits. You are in control of the limits that are placed on your goals and only you can envision what, where and how your goals will be exceeded.

## **Chapter 19**

### **Terminologies To Help You Survive Pharmaceutical/Medical sale terms**

**Pharmaceutical Sales:** As a pharmaceutical salesman you indirectly sell your product to a physician. You

never actually see or touch the product. Your job is to have a physician feel confident and comfortable in writing a script (Prescription) for your particular product.

**Medical Sales:** As a Medical salesman you are selling a product direct. Most likely you will actually give pricing information and schedule a ship date for your product. Medical salesman not only sell to physicians they also sell to ordering nurses and office managers.

**Detailing:** Giving details or information about your product to a physician or health care provider.

**Territory:** The geographical area that you will be covering.

**Ride Along:** Spending a day in the field with a district manager or senior representative.

**Routing/Call Plan/Call Cycle:** The actual sales calls that you will be making on a weekly, monthly or daily basis. This information will tell you how frequently you will be calling on certain offices in your territory.

**District Manager:** This is your direct boss.

**Regional Manager/Director:** This is your district managers' boss.

**Role Playing:** During corporate meetings you will practice your selling techniques with other co-workers. They pretend to be a physician and you pretend you're the sales rep making the call of your life! This is one of my favorite activities at sales meetings. It's a great way to learn new sales techniques and perfect your own presentation skills.

### Summary

This guide has hopefully given you a realistic way of looking at the pharmaceutical sales industry. The rewards are great; however, so is the sacrifice that must be endured in order to exceed your goals and enter this profession. You have been given the keys to my castle. The door is open and now it is up to you to either enter my door or look for another castle (career). As I mentioned previously, this position is not for everyone.

If you do decide that this career is for you, NEVER give up! Friends, family members, neighbors and teachers told me that I would never be able to break into the pharmaceutical sales field. I had NO connections in this field. You will be told the same. Drive, determination, dedication, focus, listening skills, integrity and follow-up will always overcome any obstacle in life. I look forward to some day meeting up with you in the doctor's waiting room. Alex Anderson has trained, interviewed and mentored numerous pharmaceutical and medical sales representatives over his seven-year career.

Mr. Anderson is an award-winning, top gun representative.

If you any questions, comments, or suggestions regarding this book,

please share them with me.

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