

# Three Mega-Trends Transforming Sales Success

And How to Hire, Develop,  
and Promote Successful  
Salespeople

SHL.



# Adapting to a New World of Sales

Today many businesses are operating in a highly uncertain and complex environment, where the success of the sales function is critical to organizational growth.

Salespeople play a vital role in bridging the gap between customer needs and the product or service offered by an organization. However, as you adapt to the rapid transformation of the global market do your sellers have what it takes to be successful in today's world?

## Did you know?

Less than **20%** of the population are considered top talent on at least half of the critical competencies required for success in today's sales landscape.

Let's explore 3 mega-trends that are shaping the way we buy, sell and digitally interact – and what they mean for your sales function:

- 1 The Sales Landscape has Changed**  
Top performing sellers are navigating an increasingly digital sales environment.
- 2 Customer Behavior has Changed**  
Top performing sales professionals understand and account for new buyer behaviors.
- 3 The Profile of a Successful Salesperson has Changed**  
The sales behaviors that lead to success today are very different to those that led to success in the past.

## 1 The Sales Landscape Has Changed

# Introducing the Digital-First Sales Environment

Two significant changes in the external environment have transformed the sales landscape.

### How Has the Sales Landscape Changed?

#### A More Data-Driven Approach

Sales processes have moved from an art form to a science, underpinned by data and analytics. 75% of B2B sales leaders are adopting data and digital strategies to enhance sales processes around the globe.<sup>1</sup>



### What Does This Mean for Sales Professionals?

#### Technology Adoption is Essential

Salespeople today need to be comfortable adopting and utilizing innovative technologies proficiently. Combined with this, sellers must have a data-driven perspective when it comes to sales.

#### Digital Interactions are Preferred

The majority of B2B sales organizations have shifted from traditional selling to remote selling. And this is set to continue: by 2025 Gartner predicts that 80% of B2B sales interactions will occur in digital channels.<sup>2</sup>



#### Embrace Remote Selling

Sales has traditionally leaned heavily on in-person relationship building and sales meetings. However, those who will thrive today and in the future need to shift to demonstrate success in working and selling remotely.

## 2 Customer Behavior Has Changed

# Introducing New Buyer Expectations

When it comes to the buying experience, there are vastly different expectations from buyers today.

### The Buyer Experience

### What Does This Mean for Sales Professionals?

#### A More Personalized Approach

Buyers today expect a personalized purchasing experience and are willing to pay more for it.<sup>3</sup>



#### Offer Value-Driven Experiences

Sellers need to be able to partner closely with customers and establish trusted relationships that drive buyer value.

#### Self-service Has Become the Norm

57% of the purchase process now takes place before a sales professional interacts with a buyer. This can lead to information overload and complexity.<sup>4</sup>



#### Clear Communication is Key

Sellers who can simplify and effectively communicate complex information to buyers set themselves up for success.

#### Buyers Want a Partner

When sellers do interact directly with buyers, they can struggle to know what and who to trust amidst multiple, competing options and solutions.



#### Take a Collaborative Approach

Sales professionals today must foster a collaborative approach with customers and build confidence in the proposed solution.

### 3 The Profile of a Successful Salesperson Has Changed

## Introducing the New Star Seller

Alongside the market and buyer behavioral changes, SHL research<sup>5</sup> has found that although a number of traditional competencies are still important, there are new emerging competencies that differentiate high performers:

#### Emerging Competencies Predicting Success

##### Adaptability and Resilience

Remote working is bringing new expectations, sales analytics and operations are evolving, and the customer journey is being remapped. These are just a few of the changes that sellers are experiencing.



#### What Does This Mean for Sales Professionals?

##### Assess Your Sales Population

Sellers must demonstrate their ability to adapt to a rapidly changing industry and to withstand the pressure of a business sales role.

#### Did you know?

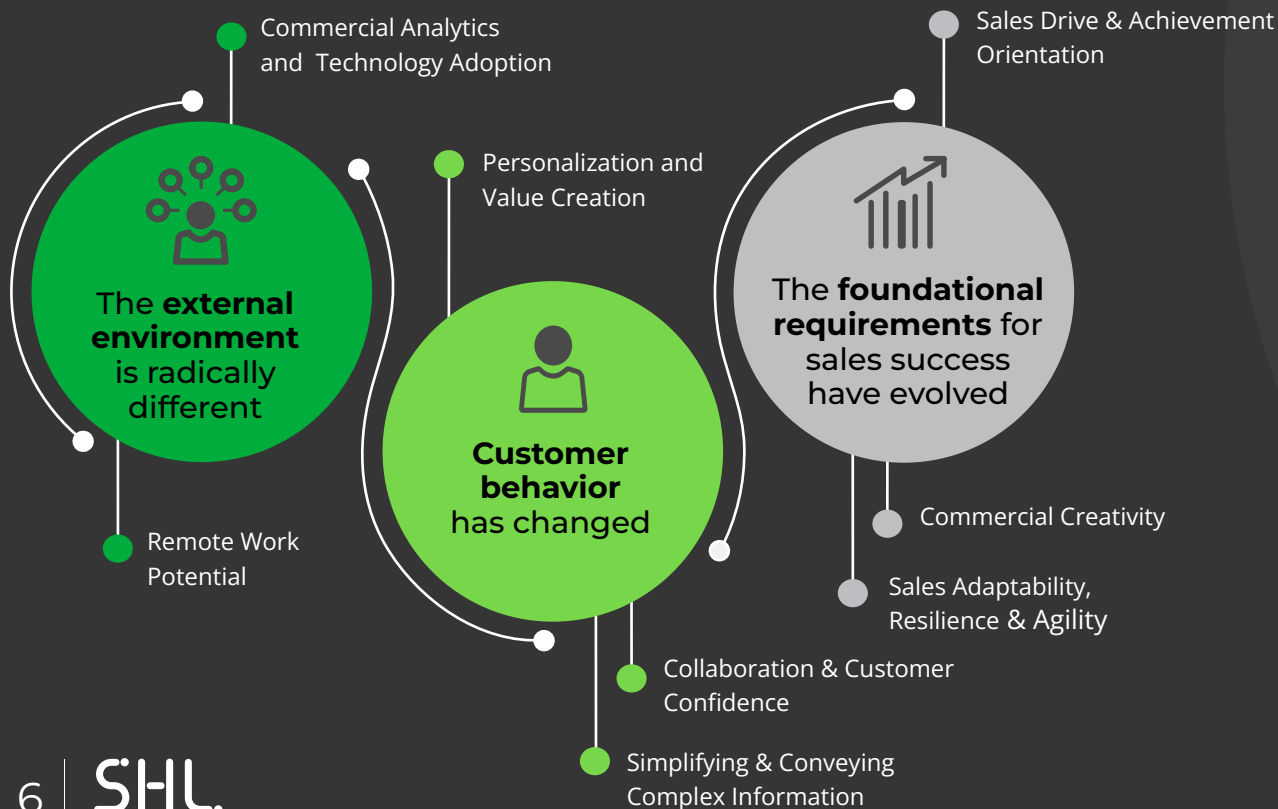
Resilience was the most impactful predictor of Year-on-Year quota achievement.<sup>5</sup>

## A New Model of What Good Looks Like

# SHL's Sales Transformation Model

Navigating the complex sales landscape can be challenging, but a researched and validated framework of what great sales talent looks like can provide much needed stability and growth.

These three mega-trends indicate that sales professionals today need a different behavioral profile compared to sales professionals of the past. SHL has taken these considerations and built a Sales Transformation Model - a framework measuring the behaviors needed for sales success in today's world.



### Did you know?

Those who score highly in these competencies are able to sell **2x** as much as those with low scores.

### Did you know?

*Sales Drive and Achievement Orientation* is one of the most difficult competencies to find top talent for. Only **12.6%** of the population are high performers in this area.



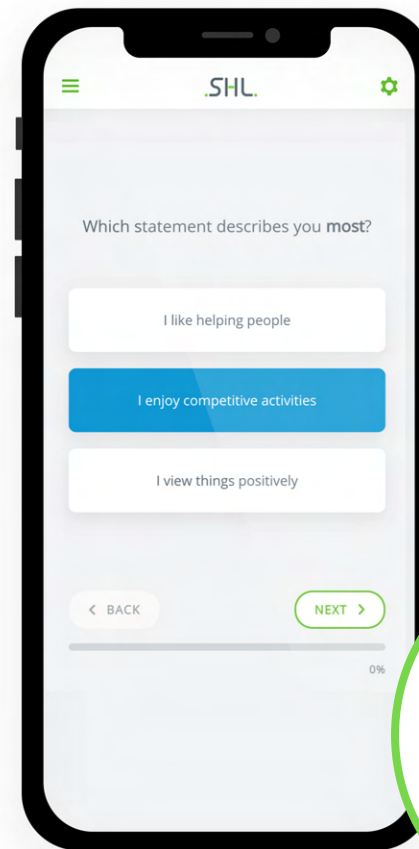
## A New Model of What Good Looks Like

# How to Hire, Develop, and Promote Successful Salespeople

The Sales Transformation Model can be measured using one assessment that can uncover role fit and future performance. Use the data collected from this assessment to hire, develop and promote sales professionals with the behavioral profile to be successful today.

## Hire Your Next Top Performers

1. Invite candidates to complete an online assessment.
2. Generate a report to review how candidates compare against the model.
3. Alongside additional candidate information, feel confident making selection decisions based on the validated SHL Sales Transformation Model and bring great sales professionals into your team!



### Did you know?

High scoring sellers were **66%** more likely to achieve top performance ratings.

# Develop Your Sales Function

1. Invite your salespeople to complete the online assessment.
2. Generate a development report for each candidate.
3. Use the personalized development tips to support individual development in line with the areas related to sales success today.



## Did you know?

If your sellers already completed the assessment as part of the hiring process, you don't need to assess them again - simply repurpose the existing data and view it through a new lens.



# Promote From Within

The requirements of sales leaders can be different to those of a sales professional, so promoting on sales performance alone can be a recipe for disaster. In fact, only 10% of SHL's global database are top talent when it comes to sales leadership.<sup>5</sup>

To identify internal talent with the behaviors suitable for sales leadership, SHL has created a separate leadership model in relation to sales transformation to support you in making objective, validated decisions.

This model measures the factors already identified as being critical to sales success today. However, it also includes additional insights into sales leadership, which are relevant whether you are recruiting internally, externally or developing sales leaders.

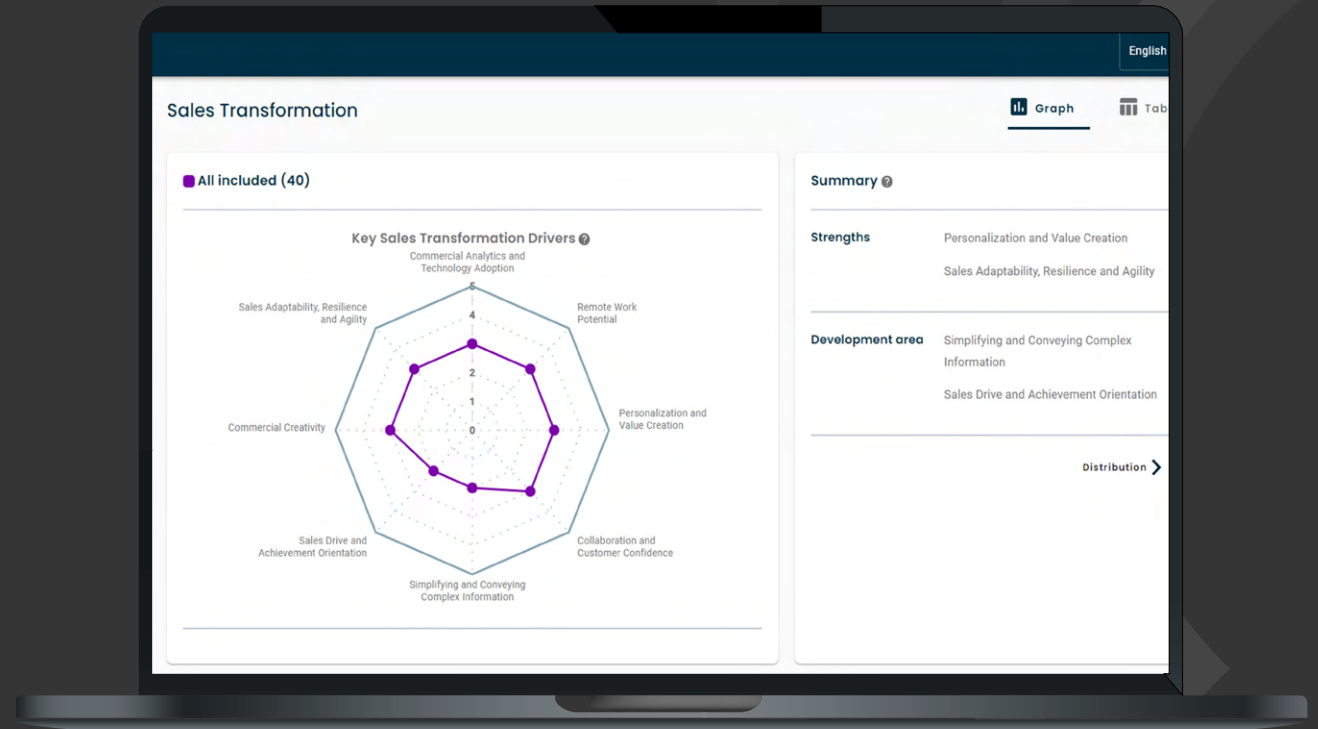


A Model of What Good Looks Like

# A Strategic, Data-led Approach to Transforming Sales Teams

With SHL's Sales Transformation Solution you can:

- Get a visual overview of your sales talent at an individual or group level through dashboards. Use these to answer critical talent questions like "What traits are common among my top performers?", "How do I get more sellers to reach targets?" and "Who is most likely to succeed in the digital sales landscape?"



- Deploy assessments to make data-driven decisions and increase your hiring hit rate. Get detailed competency level scores as well as an overall score to quickly stack rank candidates.
- Offer personalized development against the competencies that lead to success in the today's sales landscape.
- Compare the behavioral strengths of your teams internally and externally. Use SHL's 45 billion data points to facilitate benchmarking against other sales organizations.
- Improve diversity by reducing bias from your decision making.

[Book a Demo](#)

### Did you know?

Despite no gender differences in sales competencies, less than **34%** of the population were women.<sup>5</sup>

So why are there not more women in sales and why are we missing out on this huge talent pool?

What does diversity look like in your sales function?

<sup>1</sup> McKinsey, 2020, These Eight Charts Show How COVID-19 Has Changed B2B Sales Forever

<sup>2</sup> Gartner, 2020, Future of Sales 2025: Why B2B Sales Needs a Digital-First Approach

<sup>3</sup> SuperOffice, 2021, Key Customer Experience Statistics You Need To Know

<sup>4</sup> Roland Berger, 2016, The Digital Future of B2B Sales

<sup>5</sup> SHL, 2022, OPQ32r Sales Transformation Technical Supplement



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SHL brings powerful and transparent AI technology, data science, and objectivity to help companies attract, develop, and grow the workforce they need to succeed in the digital era.

We empower talent strategies to unlock the full potential of your greatest asset—people.