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10 Things That Require Zero Talent

There has been a social-media meme floating around called, “10 Things That Require Zero Talent.” I wish I knew who put it together so I could give them credit.

Here is the list, in case you’ve missed it:

1. Being on Time
2. Work Ethic
3. Effort
4. Body Language
5. Energy
6. Attitude
7. Passion
8. Being Coachable
9. Doing Extra
10. Being Prepared

When I first saw it I thought, the person who put this together may have read my first book, “Who Stopped the Sale?” as many of these points are emphasized throughout. Since then, I’ve thought about how simple and to the point it was, especially when it came to sales professionals.

If they practiced these 10 things every day, they would be more successful.

These are traits managers like to see. If managers don’t look for these characteristics when interviewing a job candidate, they are more likely to hire the wrong person.



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Being on Time

This alone should be a deal breaker. There are so many resources available today that help individuals plan routes and avoid construction and traffic, there is no real excuse for being late. If a job candidate is late for an interview, a manager should wonder if he or she will show up to work or appointments on time as an employee.

Work Ethic

Delve into candidates' work histories. Find out when they had their first job; starting early indicates a good work ethic. Find out what they did to prepare for the interview. The more preparation they put in before coming to the interview, the better their work ethic may be. You can also tell a lot about a candidate's work ethic by checking LinkedIn, Facebook and other social media outlets. Do you get a positive or negative impression from their posts? Are they disparaging their employer and complaining about their job or are they keeping it professional?

Effort

Salespeople who put in extraordinary effort, who are willing to work harder than expected to achieve results, are more successful. Ask candidates what they do when faced with a situation where someone has told them "No." What do they do when faced with seemingly unsurmountable challenges? Are they clear on their professional and personal goals and are they driven to achieving them?

Body Language

Take notice whether the candidate maintains eye contact, speaks in a low, steady voice, uses their hands for emphasis not from nerves, smiles and offers a strong handshake. Even if they are nervous at first, do they become more relaxed and confident as the interview goes on?



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Energy

Pay attention to the person's energy level. Are they positive or do they appear and act tired or bored? Do they have the energy to do the job, to be a team player and to be present for the customers? How a person contributes to their company is as important as what they contribute. A sales professional may have experience, knowledge and skill. But without positive energy, there's something lacking.

Passion

Sales professionals who are passionate about their jobs are committed to consistently achieving higher levels of performance.

Look for a desire for continual learning, improvement and challenge. Is the candidate willing to try new ideas and take risks that benefit an organization?

Being Coachable

This is the most important of the 10 items. If a person is coachable, you can take their positive attributes and make them into something even better. Does the candidate seem to have an answer for everything? Do they correct you or talk over you? Do they interrupt? If you offer a suggestion, do they listen or shrug it off? These are signs that an individual may not be coachable. If they aren't coachable, what you see is what you get.

Managers need to set goals with employees, coach, train, educate and mentor them continually. Even the best candidate will fail if a manager neglects responsibility for improving the skills employees bring to the job.

Doing Extra

Did they arrive for the interview early? What beyond their assigned job responsibilities has the candidate done in their previous roles? Do they serve on committees? As employees, do they go the extra mile for customers and help solve problems? Or do they come in, work their hours and leave?



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Being Prepared

Successful preparation requires the ability to pay attention, identify and solve problems. During the job interview, notice whether candidates listen carefully. Do they take accountability for the successes and challenges in their careers? Can they think quickly and solve problems? Do they come prepared and ask informed questions?

Attitude

If a candidate scores low in any of the other nine traits, chances are, they don't have a positive attitude and may not be the best addition to a team. During the interview, do they stay positive or do they shift to a negative attitude?

As you consider these items, consider how a job candidate will affect your customers, your team and your dealership needs. Employees are responsible for bringing their time and talent to work. Managers are responsible for making sure these don't go to waste.



Richard F. Libin has written two acclaimed books that help people of all walks of life improve their sales skills, because as he says, "everyone is a selling something." His most recent book, *Who Knew?* (Who-Knew.com), was published in early 2017. His first book, "Who Stopped the Sale?" (WhoStoppedTheSale.com), is now in its second edition. As president of APB-Automotive Profit Builders, Inc., a firm with more than 48 years experience working with both sales and service professionals, he helps his clientele, through personnel development and technology, to build customer satisfaction and maximize gross profits in their businesses. Mr. Libin can be reached at rllibin@apb.cc or 508-626-9200 or www.apb.cc.