

SMART BUSINESS

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Insider secrets for success in first post-grad sales jobs

Written by John McGee

There is good news for 2015 college graduates who have not yet landed a job. The number of permanent, full-time job opportunities for recent grads has increased more than 20 percent in the last year, according to [Simply Hired](#). Overall, the field with the most permanent, full-time openings for new grads is sales (32,800, or 14 percent of openings). While landing that first “real” job is an exciting moment, grads still need to remember that overall job openings are still down and competition is fierce — so making a good impression out of the gate is extremely important.

For graduates entering the sales profession, whether their focus will be on inside sales or outside sales, there are key skills that can help affect success.

Sell yourself first

Sales reps need to keep in mind that they are not just selling a product. Before a customer makes a decision about a product or service they analyze the person selling it. A kind, helpful sales rep that is knowledgeable about the product he or she is selling will always appeal more to a potential customer.

Respond faster

The early bird does get the worm. Find ways to respond to incoming inquiries faster and take advantage of technology. If a customer is difficult to reach by phone, try using text messaging or social media.

Become an expert

Investing the time to create a personal blog, [LinkedIn](#) page or other online presence where you can present yourself as an expert in your field will help potential customers recognize you as a trustworthy source of information and someone they want to do business with.

Read the news

By staying on top of current trends in your industry you will be able to identify sales opportunities faster and incorporate those trends into your sales outreach.

Customize everything

Whether you are buying a car or enterprise software for a business, every customer likes to feel special and valuable. By taking a few minutes to customize an email or letter to a customer, you will catch their attention during a busy day and improve the likeliness that they will reply to you.

As president of [OptifiNow](#), John McGee leads the company's vision, strategy and growth. He founded OptifiNow to solve a common problem of enterprise customers – the shared struggle of managing national and global sales teams with brand and legal compliant messaging.