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WIN YOUR SALES CAREER

The Right Profile and Path to take to
Breaking into Medical Device Sales

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The Medical device sales industry is a well-known career destination that hundreds of thousands of candidates are trying to break into every day. But, to get into the medical device sales industry, there's a certain path/profile that hiring managers and most successful med sales reps have taken not just to break into the industry, but find sustainable success and build a successful sales career.

Any medical device sales recruiter will recommend you take the traditional medical sales path to give yourself the best chance of breaking into the industry (college degree, entry level sales job, hardcore outside b2b sales job, no job-hopping on the resume, and a hardcore sales personality).

There's also a certain profile that hiring managers are looking for in potential candidates for medical sales. When I say specific profile, I want everyone reading this to think of the online dating industry for a minute. If you've ever used popular dating websites like match.com or eHarmony.com, you have tools you can use to filter out the type of dating partner you're seeking on those websites. If they don't meet YOUR criteria, then you filter out the bad eggs and find someone that does meet your criteria. Why is this important? It gives you a better chance at meeting someone, starting a relationship, getting married, being happy, etc.

The same thing is true in the medical device sales industry, there's a specific profile these managers are looking for from candidates that are interviewing for their respected sales positions, and if you don't fit the manager's profile/criteria, then most likely you won't get your chance at interviewing for a medical device sales job. In this chapter I'll break down the proper steps to take to get into the medical device industry and list the companies that can help you break into the industry so you have a clear direction on how to break into the medical device sales industry. These are the steps that are required to take the traditional path to break into the medical sales industry:

1. Graduate from a university with a 4 year bachelor's degree
2. Work at an entry level sales job to build your resume
3. Work at a hardcore outside B2b sales Job to build your resume, get professional sales training, and learn how to sell and close.
4. Don't be a Job-Hopper
5. Have a Professional Linked-IN Page.
6. Have a type A/hunter Personality
7. Break into medical sales as an associate sales rep or full line rep

1. Graduate from college with a 4 year bachelor's Degree – This is extremely important for any candidate interviewing in any sales industry, let alone medical device. Med device companies are cracking down and tightening up their requirements for candidates to have a chance at breaking into the industry and having your college degree is an important requirement. I've heard managers say that even if a candidate has hardcore sales experience but has no degree, they're reluctant to hire the candidate or most likely won't hire the candidate at all. Med device managers want reps that are well educated with 4 year college degrees. The 4 year degree is important because it shows that you have the ability to start something and complete something important at a young age.

2. Find an Entry level sales job – As you explore the world you'll see there are a lot of opportunities for employment, especially in sales. The medical device sales industry looks for candidates that have a good amount of experience and it starts with taking the right kind of entry level sales job. Now sometimes there are rare occasions where recent college graduates will get an entry level medical sales job, but it's important to remember that 9/10 times that won't be the case.

Usually if that happens it's because they either did an internship with that company as a student, or participated in a program where the medical device company was specifically looking for a recent college graduate and the expectations might be different for the graduate than they would be for an associate sales rep or full line territory rep. Some great entry level sales jobs out of college are Enterprise-Rent-A-Car, Avis-Budget (also a rental car company), and Gallo Wine Company. They typically hire college graduates and have entry level training programs that help build sales skills and your sales resume.

- 3. Find a Fortune 500 HARDCORE OUTSIDE B2B Sales Job** – When you're reading this step, please know this step is VITAL to breaking into the medical device sales industry. I capitalized the word VITAL because as a candidate, you need to know how important this step is to breaking into the medical sales industry or any hardcore sales industry for that matter. There are so many boxes these jobs check for candidates just by being an employee at one of them. Hardcore b2b sales jobs give you paid fortune 500 sales training, teach you the sales process and how to use it, build your resume, give you a chance to sell products/services and interact face-to-face with the decision makers, and more importantly hardcore B2B sales jobs help open doors up to the next step of your sales careers like the medical device industry.

To have a fortune 500 B2B sales company on your resume when you're interviewing for a medical device job will give you the candidate a much better chance at winning a medical sales job and breaking into the industry on your terms. Think about this aspect of it too – as consumers of retail products, we typically buy well-known brands that we trust right? Brands like Mercedes Benz, Apple, Samsung, Ralph-Lauren, Nike, Under Armour, Adidas, etc., have a history of getting the job done and making us feel like we made the right decision when we purchased one of their products. Hiring managers take the same approach when they're hiring candidates for these hardcore med device jobs.

They hire from B2B companies they trust because of the factors I listed above here. It's important to note that when you're going through this process to make sure the hardcore B2B sales job you decide to take is in outside sales, not inside sales. Phone sales is an art too, but medical device companies typically don't hire inside sales reps because there's no face-to-face interaction at an inside sales company. Here are some fortune 500 outside b2b jobs that can help give you a better chance of breaking into hardcore medical device sales. Keep in mind these are in no particular order so as a candidate you can join any of these and they will give yourself a good chance of breaking into the medical sales industry.

Keep in mind too it will help you break into the medical sales industry if you go to one of these companies and perform well and exceed expectations while you're there (presidents club, sales awards, promotions) because you can add these accomplishments (See chapter 3 for this section too) to your resume going forward:

ADP – Fortune 500 payroll/HR solutions

Paychex – Fortune 500 payroll/HR solutions

Cintas – Fortune 500 Uniform/facilities services

Unifirst – Fortune 500 Uniform/facilities services

Aramark – Fortune 500 Uniform/facilities services

Ricoh – Fortune 500 Copier/Printer sales

Xerox – Fortune 500 Copier/Printer sales

MRC Technologies – Copier/Printer Sales

Konica Minolta – Fortune 500 Copier/Printer sales

Toshiba Business Solutions – Fortune 500 Copier/ Printer/Office hardware sales

Staples B2B – Office supplies/equipment (This is not the retail company, this is a different division) AT&T Telecom – B2B telecom/hardware/software

Verizon Telecom – B2B telecom/hardware/software

Sprint Telecom – B2B telecom/hardware/software

- 4. Don't be a Job-Hopper!** – The average sales candidate stays at their job for 6-10 months then leaves to find a new job because they're usually not happy, not making money, or just want a new situation. That's not even enough time to give the job a real chance. Hiring managers from Medical device companies want candidates that have a history of progressing throughout their career and showing they can move up the corporate ladder, but they don't want people that are leaving after every 6 months to find something new.

Hiring managers want candidates that will stick out a job for minimum 2-3 years and grow within a company, get promoted, win some sales awards, hit some type of conference or presidents club and show that they're capable of growth and achieving success. Remember, when a medical device company brings you on as a sales rep, they're investing 6 figures in you to train you with the expectation that the ROI (Return on Investment) will be much bigger long-term and with hopes that you'll be a top-performing sales rep.

- 5. Have a Professional Linked-IN Page/Profile** – This rule applies to all social media, but especially linked-in. Usually one of the first things a hiring manager does after we send them a candidates resume is search for them on social media/ linked-in and see what their profile looks like, if it mirrors the candidates resume, and if the candidate has a professional linked-in page. I always encourage candidates to take this seriously because managers want people to join their team that are extremely professional. It's important to make your social media pages private while going through the interview process.

In the new era of interviewing and digital media, Linked-In is becoming the new resume and Linked-In recommendations are becoming the new forms of written recommendations that managers are looking at so it's important that you the professional sales candidate take this seriously and have a professional linked-in page from top to bottom. This means having a professional profile picture, the right contact info, a nice well-written summary about yourself/ what you've done throughout your professional career and what you're looking for,

having some linked-in recommendations (if you have written recommendations those are ok too) from people that appreciate your work like successful client stories, customers, co-workers that value you on their team and if you can have one from your manager.

- 6. Type-A Hardcore Sales Personality** – This quality goes back to chapter 4 when I talked about how to win the interview, but I wanted to bring it up again because it's important to winning a job, and it's related to the profile that these hiring managers from med device companies look for when they're hiring sales candidates for their team. The B2B sales training that you'll get from the companies listed above will help you deal with call points going forward like various types of doctors, hospitals, surgery centers, treatment centers, etc. Typically, most reps that break into medical sales learn how to build relationships with the decision makers but those hardcore hunting skills you learn from the B2B training will come into use for the rest of your sales career.

Managers want to hire candidates that are gung-ho, driven, motivated, have shown previous success, and have that "IT" factor that they can bring with them to an organization. If you're not Type-A that doesn't mean you're going to eliminate yourself from getting a medical job either, but it does help having that type of hardcore sales personality or mentality when you're interviewing, and those B2B sales companies help your personality adjust for the next step of your sales career.

- 7. Breaking Into the Med Device Company** – It's important to note to find a med company that fits your personality. There are so many different types of medical device employers out there but a good amount of them make you sacrifice for a few years on the job. For example, if you take a job at a Fortune 500 medical device company like Stryker in one of their trauma divisions, you might be required to work on-call hours at 1-4AM or on weekends for the first 6-18 months of the job. If you're a candidate that's serious about medical sales you have to do your homework and find out what company fits your personality.

Do you want to sell capital equipment or disposables? Do you want to work on-call for the first year or do you want to work at a smaller company and work an 8-5 schedule Monday-Friday? Would you ever consider selling a medical service? Would you consider working for a start-up medical company? These are questions to ask yourself when you're going through the interview process because as sales reps we're constantly building our resume and aiming towards the future with future opportunities.

Now, once you break into the medical device sales industry, there's a few options you have as a rep. Typically what you'll find is most reps from the hardcore b2b sales companies break in as ASR's (Associate Sales Reps) unless they're performing at such a high level and making a solid 6 figures and wind up taking a job as a full line rep, but in order to do that you have to really be a top performing outside B2B sales rep. Also, it's important to remember if you start off as a full line medical device sales rep or full line territory rep with a higher base salary and higher compensation package, there's more pressure on you to sell/deliver results right away, the money is higher but with more money, comes more responsibilities.

If you start off as an associate sales rep you can learn the game and observe everything first hand, work under a senior territory manager (make sure to use them as mentors too so they can help get you prepared for what's next), understand the wording to talk to doctors and not feel overwhelmed when you break into the medical device industry, then progress naturally throughout your medical sales career.

- 8. Finding the Medical Device Job Before "THE Job"** – This factor can certainly come into play throughout your medical device sales career, especially when you're just starting your medical device sales career. In the medical device sales industry, the top 10-20 companies to sell for usually have a line of candidates wrapped around the building waiting to get their shot to work for them. When I was a sales candidate I was fortunate enough to interview at a few top 20 medical companies simultaneously.

One of the sales managers I interviewed with told me I had “tremendous potential to be a high 6 figure rep in the industry”, but he was worried that I wasn’t ready to handle the workload, pressure, and responsibility of a full line territory rep position. So he recommended that I look into an associate sales position so I could “get my feet wet” for a few years and understand the responsibilities of a medical device rep and then be ready for that job in my future.

If you’re a candidate interviewing for a top 20-40 medical company and you don’t get a job there after the first try during the interview process, don’t get discouraged. The best recommendation I got and that I can share with you is to find a medical company that can help you break into the industry and find success so when that right medical sales job comes knocking on your door, you’ll be ready to handle all the responsibilities that come along with the job.

Action Items – The Right Path and Profile of a Medical Device Sales Rep

1. What type of sales are you in now?
2. Do you have B2B sales training? If not, look into those companies, that will give you a better chance of breaking into medical sales
3. Are you a job hopper? If you are, challenge yourself to stay at your job for at least 18 months – years so you can build your resume and look solid on paper
4. Do you have a hardcore sales personality? Remember managers are going to be looking for candidates with that “hunter mentality” as they look to build their team. It’s important to have that trait in your personality because there is hunting in medical device sales.

Conclusion

All the above-given details and the step by step guide to becoming a medical device sales rep or breaking into medical device sales will help you kickstart your journey. While the landscape of the healthcare industry is continuously changing, there is no shortage of opportunities for you because of technological developments. And you will only realize how much money you can make as a medical device sales rep once you have stepped in. Start today!

About David Bagga Company



We are leading provider of Sales Talent in the Medical Device and B2B Industries. We help our clients build Winning sales teams by attracting the best Sales Talent in the country. We specialize in bringing our customers top performing Sales candidates that will make a difference in driving growth and outperforming the competition.

Our Clients range from blue-chip companies to leading edge small, medium and startup enterprises.