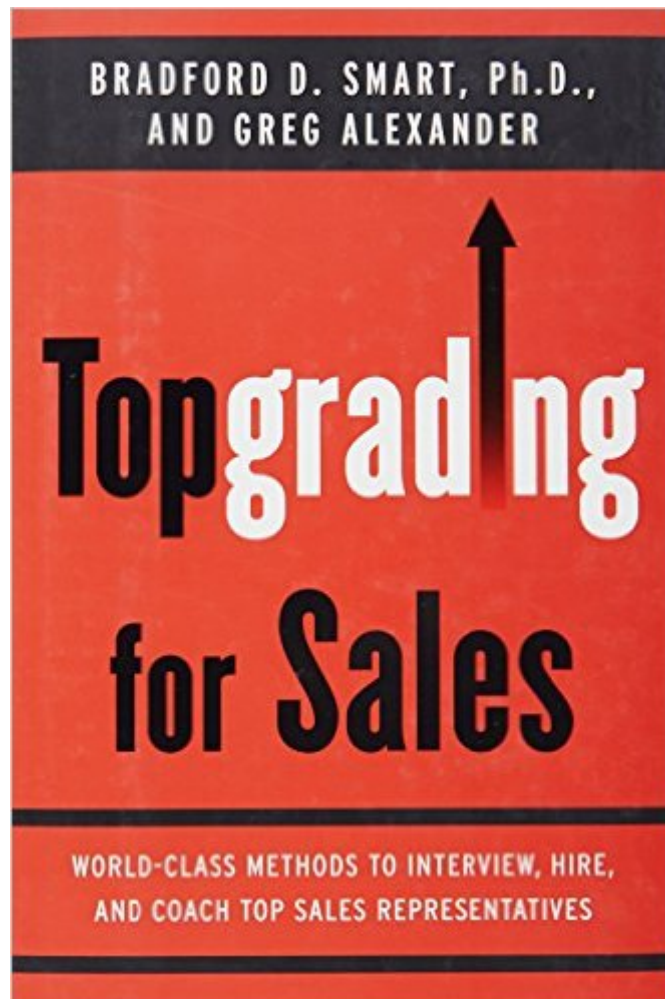


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# Topgrading For Sales: World-Class Methods To Interview, Hire, And Coach Top Sales Representatives



## Synopsis

A concise extension of the business classic *Topgrading*, targeted to sales managers Brad Smart's *Topgrading* has sold more than 150,000 copies since 1999, making it the definitive book for executives who want to hire, coach, and retain top talent. Now Smart has teamed up with Greg Alexander, who used *Topgrading* to radically improve his sales force at EMC. In *Topgrading for Sales*, they have boiled down the key *Topgrading* ideas to a pithy 112 pages while focusing on the unique needs of sales managers and sales directors. Great sales forces don't just depend on strategies? they depend on hiring the best possible reps. But surveys show that about half of all hires and promotions put an underqualified person in the wrong job. No wonder the average tenure for sales managers is only nineteen months. *Topgrading for Sales* takes the guesswork out of hiring by teaching readers how to interview systematically for A-level talent instead of relying on hunches and prejudices. It also shows how to coach B-level reps to turn them into A-players and how to weed out C-players before they do too much damage.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Following the advice of a reviewer I did not pay full price for this book, I paid \$2.92 plus shipping. The book is an easy read with its 54 pages and another 50+ pages of appendixes. *Topgrading* is a thorough and extensive selection system for hiring top performing people, in the case of this particular book, sales representatives. The problem is that you keep waiting for some real substance beyond the proposed premise of don't hire anybody unless they are the best. The system

is quite elaborate in the information you are asked to collect, but you are never given any method for evaluating or how to use this information. They just keep saying that people using their system have much fewer washouts and more high achievers. Reading it was like watching those late night 60-minute infomercials.

Don't pay full price for this book. It lacks real substance. It all about hiring quality people and assumes those hiring may or may not be the best judgment of character. If you are in sales, you may want to use this book to interview the organization that you may want to work for.

Easy, quick read  
Provides useful tools that can easily be implemented  
Would have appreciated advice on how to recruit A players in a competitive marketplace where there is a lack of quality candidates in various geographies

This book teaches the simple truth that if you hire better salespeople you will get more high quality sales. The authors teach you how to do that and how to coach them to be even better. You will learn how to analyze your sales team and what to do with what you learn. The authors show you how to recruit and hire the best salespeople and provide you with forms, checklists, and key techniques on how to accomplish your purposes. Coaching your salespeople is also very important and this book gives you a chapter on how to do that. The last chapter provides you with the way to get started with the topgrading process and four appendices that provide the means to scorecard your current sales reps, a career history form so you can understand what your salespeople and prospective salespeople have done, and forms for an interview checklist and reference checks. The last appendix lays out the numbers of how topgrading your sales team will make you more money. Very good.  
Reviewed by Craig Matteson, Ann Arbor, MI

For twenty years I have performed sales seminars and training around the world. The emphasis from most companies and sales reps in those companies tends to be on sales techniques. It's hard to be effective teaching sales techniques to the wrong person. Although I believe that salespeople are made not born, it's a lot easier to make a superstar salesperson if they have the right make up to begin with. It's hard to make hero's out of zero's. The information in Tograding for sales allows managers, executives and companies to recruit, interview, hire and coach the right salespeople in the right way. The information in this book will dramatically reduce your failure rate in hiring the wrong salesperson and will greatly enhance the success ratio when you do make a correct hiring

decision.[...]

This book points out the obvious - do your homework and due diligence and you will get better results. Hard to believe an entire consulting and methodology have been built around stating the obvious; but sales people are known for 'trusting their gut' so maybe they need to be reminded to use a little more science in interviews. Best value is for a job hunter who is interviewing with someone who has been through the program. The book will help you prepare and not be thrown off by the tactics.

If you are a manager hiring sales representatives this is a must read. It is a practical no nonsense method to identifying top talent. Do not shortcut the process or you will shortcut your results. My team started Topgrading over a year ago and we have drastically reduced turnover and mis-hires. We have been awaiting the Topgrading for sales as the information in this book is only serving to help us improve on what we were already doing.

If I had to pick any hiring manager whom I felt often made emotional or off-the-cuff decisions about hiring it would be sales managers. Turnover is highest among salespeople and having a system to ensure that the right hire is made is absolutely critical. In today's economy hiring the best salespeople may very well be the difference between profit or loss. As a business consultant who works ONLY with million-dollar earners I can tell you that talent selection is crucial. Topgrading for Sales not only provides a step-by-step approach to discovering who are the A-Players, it gives countless example and reems of data and evidence that supports the notion that this is as much a science as it is an art. If you want to win more sales from your competitors in an ethical and rewarding manner you better figure out how to get the best salespeople working on your team. Topgrading is an invauable resource in helping sales exectutives to accomplish this.

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