SALESDRIVE LLC
NEVER HIRE A BAD SALESPERSON AGAIN

# Sales Hiring Assessment Comparison Guide

Use the tool that answers the hiring question you actually have.

| Hiring tool | What it actually measures | What it does NOT tell you | Best use in a sales hiring process |
|---|---|---|---|
| **General personality test (e.g., DISC, MBTI)** | Broad behavioral tendencies<br>Communication and interaction style<br>Temperament or work preferences | Whether the candidate will build pipeline<br>Persistence through repeated rejection<br>Job-specific sales production | Team communication<br>Onboarding and coaching<br>Secondary insight after hiring potential is established |
| **Cognitive aptitude test** | Reasoning and problem-solving<br>Learning speed<br>Capacity to process complexity | Motivation to prospect<br>Competitiveness or resilience<br>Whether ability will translate into sustained effort | Roles with technical complexity<br>Estimating ramp and learning demands<br>Complementing - not replacing - sales-specific evidence |
| **Sales skills test or simulation** | Current learned selling skills<br>Discovery, objection handling, negotiation<br>Performance in a role-play or scenario | Whether the candidate will consistently use those skills<br>Internal motivation when supervision drops<br>Long-term persistence | Benchmarking current capability<br>Identifying training needs<br>Confirming role readiness |
| **Sales-specific assessment (e.g., The DriveTest®)** | Non-teachable traits tied to sustained production<br>Need for Achievement, Competitiveness and Optimism<br>Raw potential for demanding sales work | Product knowledge or industry expertise<br>Culture fit<br>A final hire/no-hire decision by itself | Pre-interview screening<br>Prioritizing high-potential candidates<br>Guiding a deeper behavioral interview |
| **Structured behavioral interview** | Evidence of past behavior<br>Context, examples and patterns<br>Fit with the role and organization | A fully objective trait score<br>Protection from rehearsed answers w/o strong probing<br>Reliable prediction when the interview is unstructured | Validating assessment results<br>Testing claims with specific examples<br>Making the final decision with multiple data points |

**The key mistake:** not aligning your tools to your hiring needs.

| | Recommended sales hiring sequence |
|---|---|
| 1 | **Define the role:** Clarify whether the job requires hunting, account growth, technical complexity or relationship management. |
| 2 | **Assess sales potential early:** Use a sales-specific assessment before interview enthusiasm distorts judgment. |
| 3 | **Probe past behavior:** Require specific examples of achievement, competition, rejection and initiative. |
| 4 | **Verify skills and experience:** Use simulations, references and role-specific evidence to confirm readiness. |
| 5 | **Use style insights appropriately:** Apply personality information to onboarding, communication and coaching - not as the primary production screen. |

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# How to Evaluate a Sales Hiring Assessment

Do not buy a report full of labels. Make the provider prove what the assessment is designed to predict.

## Seven questions to ask every assessment provider

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | **What exact hiring question does the assessment answer?** The answer should be specific - not "better hires" or "culture fit." |
| 2 | **What psychological constructs or skills are being measured?** Make the provider distinguish personality, cognitive ability, learned skill and sales motivation. |
| 3 | **Was it validated against actual sales performance?** Internal consistency is not the same as proving a relationship to revenue or production. |
| 4 | **How does the design reduce candidate faking?** Obvious "good" answers create impression management, especially in a hiring context. |
| 5 | **Is it appropriate for this exact sales role?** Hunter, farmer, account management, customer service and complex technical sales do not impose identical demands. |
| 6 | **What does the report explicitly NOT measure?** A credible provider states limitations instead of letting one score become the entire hiring decision. |
| 7 | **How should the results change the interview?** The output should produce better questions, stronger probing and a disciplined next step. |

**The One-Sentence Vendor Test**

**"This assessment predicts _____ because it measures _____ and was validated against _____."**

If a provider cannot complete that sentence clearly, do not use the tool to make a sales hiring decision.

Key distinctions:

| STYLE | ABILITY | SKILL | DRIVE |
|---|---|---|---|
| How someone prefers to communicate and work | How well someone can reason, learn or solve problems | What someone has learned to do today | Whether someone is internally motivated to sustain production |

Related SalesDrive resources:

• Full article • DriveTest® product tour • The Drive Interview® • Pricing and ROI calculator **Next step:** Get a free DriveTest®

**Source note:** Framework adapted from Dr. Chris Croner's "Why Personality Tests Often Fail at Sales Hiring (And What to Use Instead)." Assessment categories vary by vendor; review each provider's technical documentation and stated limitations.