

The hunt for sales talent

 By [Peter Gilbert](#)

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As market forces increase the importance of sales effectiveness, the importance of consistently hiring genuine sales talent becomes more and more evident. Simply poaching sales talent from competitors, or even other industries, is frequently ineffective and certainly unsustainable.

If sales is to emerge as a profession, unearthing a pool of young sales talent will be key. The simple matrix below is a useful model for categorizing potential candidates.

Dead Beats	Low skills + knowledge, low talent + drive
	These are the people who mostly responded to your ads. The peak of their sales career is the interview. Thereafter they sink like a stone.
Journeyman	High skills + knowledge, Low talent + drive
	This group work to live. They do not live to work. Any hint of attaining quota and they become more involved in gardening and golf.
Stars	High skills + knowledge, high talent + drive
	We all want these, but there is only one Ernie Els and one Tiger Woods.
Strivers	Low skills + knowledge, high talent + drive
	These are the young people who are told, "Sorry but you have no experience."

Having the appetite and the ability to identify the sales stars of the future is no longer an "if" but a "when". Look in the right places, use the right tools and processes, and you will find that the most awesome talent exists out there.

Many of these young people have never even considered a career in sales, but when you find them they are wondrous to behold. Above all they have attitude – that indefinable "something", a self belief and a willingness to back themselves in a career where you write your own cheques.

ABOUT PETER GILBERT

A sales veteran with over 30 years of experience, Peter Gilbert is MD of HR Chally SA (www.challysa.co.za), an international sales consulting company specialising in talent management and recruitment. He is passionate about sales as a profession and the identification of real sales talent who can really sell! Email him at peter@challysa.co.za

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