

Hays reports field sales experience sought by employers to ride out recession

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Hays, leading specialist recruitment company, has reported that the need for employers to fine-tune their sales teams is becoming ever greater during the current downturn. An experienced sales team that can hit targets and deliver much needed income streams will help organisations counter the adverse recessionary forces prevalent in the marketplace.

"There is a demand for field sales operatives at the moment across industry sectors for all levels of experience, particularly junior and middle range roles. Demand for senior appointments has been more affected by the downturn but there are still good opportunities for the right calibre of individual," said Kevin Dunbar, National Business Development Manager at Hays Sales, "Having a strong sales force in place, underpinned by an effective strategy, remains one of the best ways for organisations to trade out of this recession."

One area where the demand for sales experience has become apparent is in the public sector, with a particular focus on IT field sales. Continued investment by government in the upgrade of its IT development infrastructure has led to an increase in demand for experienced professionals.

Kevin continued, "Professionals with public sector account management experience, for example in the health and central government sectors, are in demand".

A track record of success is very important in an industry where achievements are highly visible and dependent on targets being met. The rewards for the right people also remain competitive and individuals can expect a company car, laptop, mobile, as well as other standard benefits, such as pensions and private healthcare.

"Uncapped commission is still being offered by some companies and this remains one of the key benefits offered," Kevin added.

One of the main issues facing employers is attracting a suitable calibre of applicant, as the sales discipline suffers from high levels of staff turnover. Ensuring that the recruitment process runs smoothly is imperative. Kevin explained, "Employers can sometimes recruit the wrong person for the role in the first place and this leads to increased attrition rates. This can be reduced by preparing detailed job and person specifications, carefully highlighting the competencies required, and establishing a thorough interview process."

Despite the difficulties faced by certain sectors of the economy, the demand for field sales remains resilient. "The individuals that are most in demand are those that are not simply managing existing clients but also achieve business development with new clients," Kevin concluded.

About Hays (<http://www.hays.com/>):

Hays Sales is part of Hays plc, the leading global specialist recruitment group and specialises in a wide

range of sales jobs (<http://www.hays.com/sales/>) from fundraising jobs (<http://www.hays.com/sales/Fundraising/>) to telesales jobs (<http://www.hays.com/sales/Telesales/>). It is market leader in the UK and Australia, and one of the market leaders in Continental Europe. As at 30 June 2008, the Group employed 8,872 staff operating from 393 offices in 27 countries across 17 specialisms.

For the year ended 30 June 2008:

- the Group had revenues of £2.5 billion, net fees of £786.8 million and operating profit before exceptional items of £253.8 million;
- the Group placed around 80,000 candidates into permanent jobs and around 300,000 people into temporary assignments;
- the temporary placement business represented 49% of net fees and the permanent placement business represented 51% of net fees.

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