

## ENTREPRENEUR MEETS HIS DREAM SALES MANAGER

*(Warning; not a happy or pretty ending to this tale, but some of you will get a gift at the end of this column)*

Steve was a successful telecommunications entrepreneur who met a Mark at resort. They got along fabulously. Mark was a dynamic, entertaining salesman who could carry a conversation on any topic. The two of them played golf. They went boating. They ate meals together. They were as inseparable as old college buddies.

At the end of a week of hanging out, Steve offered his new-found friend the National Sales Manager job. He knew nothing about Mark. But Steve felt Mark was so sharp he could handle both his company's salesforce and his clients. Mark received a company credit card, keys to the office and an expense account.

Mark and Steve were working on a very large corporate prospect when they found themselves sitting in the boardroom of this major corporation. Seven weeks of hard work – proposals, meetings and phone calls were about to pay off in big numbers for the boys.

The door to the boardroom swung open and a man in a suit pushed pass the secretary.

“Are you Mark \_\_\_\_?” the stranger asked.

“Sure, what’s your name?” replied the National Sales Manager. He extended his hand toward the man.

The guy in the suit grabbed Mark’s sleeve and jerked him out of the leather chair. He slammed him face-down on the boardroom table. He twisted Mark’s right arm around his back. He helped Mark’s left arm meet his left and joined them with stainless steel handcuffs.

In law enforcement lingo Mark was “cuffed and stuffed.”

The National Sales Manager was wanted on an outstanding drug warrant. There were other criminal activity warrants on his head, including physical abuse of a wife, a girlfriend and \$27,000 in missing child support.

Steve’s company did not land the telecommunications business of that large client. In fact, when word of what happened hit the local community, business began to dry up as contracts didn’t close and existing clients fled. Steve’s decision to hire his vacation buddy put the entrepreneur out of business within a year.

POSTMORTEM: Qualifying and disqualifying are critical elements for dealing with prospects. And they are important inside a company as well. This outstanding story should have managers and entrepreneurs running to talk to companies that screen and assess

employees, specifically salespeople. Steve paid for his hiring stupidity with his baby – his business that was meant to feed his family. Those horrible moments in that boardroom amounted to the most traumatic business experience of his life. Instant Ulcer – no need to add water! Get help to identify the perfect fit as a hire for your company. This will save you tons of time interviewing the wrong candidates. It'll save the agony of training the wrong people. It'll save the duplicated effort of interviewing and hiring – again and again – once bad hires leave or are fired. Follow proven hiring procedures for all employees – top of the ladder on down. Qualify the best and disqualify the rest. You'll be glad you learned this lesson from someone else's mistake.

I was told Steve's sales horror story while doing research for a keynote speech for an international conference. The private investigators I interviewed were sharing tales of clients whose hiring nightmares were fairly dramatic, and in Steve's case, traumatic as well.

As I write this column the sun is rising and another day begins with companies choosing to ignore the phenomenal problem-solving capabilities of pre-hiring assessments. Would you have paid \$200 to prevent the loss of a key employee, the embarrassment attached to it

and the fall into a pit of despair over the death of your company?

Dumb question, of course, but is it any dumber than a decision to overlook the true value of these tools?

I remember when I had a great excuse for not using assessments. It was the '90s and with 15 reps working in my office, I was always replacing old, while interviewing new salespeople.

I had just hired two women for phone sales. They trained for a week, then began their first day pounding the phones.

The first one left for lunch, and never returned.

The second one was equally unsuited. Around 3pm of that first day dialing another employee came into my office. She sat next to the newbie and was impressed with the quantity of her calls, until she started to hear the same soft words coming out of the new gal's headset.

My rookie rep was so terrified of calling people that she was *dialing her home answering machine* and pretending to speak to gatekeepers while not getting through to prospects.

It was time to re-think my hiring strategy.

The only assessment company around was a firm in North Suburban Chicago. I called their sales manager, figuring I'd make a

connection at that level, as well as to test some tests on a few candidates.

He took my call and began to yell at me, “What are you selling? I don’t have time for this.”

“I was buying, until this moment,” were the words he heard from me, then a click and a dial tone.

So I went another ten years before I paid attention to evaluations as part of my hiring process.

Fast forward to the future – today.

Now, there are plenty of assessments you can use, but only one that makes sense.

Most companies that are trying to help you with pre-hiring problems are measuring personality traits.

You would be wiser to measure emotional intelligence.

Without going into a great deal of detail on the psychology involved here, you simply need to know this; a person’s personality assessment will tell you if he or she is outgoing, energetic and more (hey, that’s what I want for a sales rep!). Revealing their “EQ” (like measuring IQ – intelligence, only emotion) will tell you all you need to

know about their judgment. That means how will this person handle conflict, deal with adversity, communicate clearly and empathetically?

I'm a big fan of sales brains who utilize mental flexibility and adaptability. I'm a bigger fan of a sales rep who stays positive, even when chaos and conflict loom large. Does that sound an ideal person to hire for your team?

Mike Poskey, the vice president of the only tool that measures emotional intelligence shared some great statistics with me on companies that use the ZERORISK Hiring System ([www.ZERORISKHR.com](http://www.ZERORISKHR.com)). Some of these include...

- A study of 44 Fortune 500 companies revealed that high EQ sales reps produced 18% more than those with lower EQ.
- A Texas-based company used the ZERORISK Hiring System to increase sales rep retention by 67% AND added \$32 million to their bottom line, by avoiding turnover costs (thereby saving money) as well as increasing revenues.

- A study of computer programmers showed that the top 10% in emotional intelligence developed software three times faster than those with lower measurements.

I took the ZERORISK assessment myself and was amazed at what it revealed to me, about me. It was uncanny in its accuracy.

This is a tool that can make you money while saving you the heartache and headaches of dealing with bad reps. Why not check it out today? Visit [www.ZERORISKHR.com](http://www.ZERORISKHR.com) and because I love to give away free stuff when I speak (many of you have *The Sales Comic Book* and *Revenge of the Reps* video game already), you can contact Mike Poskey there and he'll give you one free \$125 assessment for your company. So wander over to that website today!