

Transitioning into Sales: A Guide for Beginners

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The evolving job market has prompted countless professionals to consider transitioning into sales in recent years. While it's true that a career in sales can be challenging, and even stressful at times, the right role can offer a number of benefits, from access to new skills, to a high potential income.

What's more, unlike other lucrative roles, a career in sales doesn't necessarily require any college degrees or certifications. All you really need is the right mindset, a commitment to constant learning, and the right level of drive to thrive in sales.

The good news is that transitioning into sales doesn't have to be as complicated as it seems. You may already have some of the core transferable skills you need to excel in this industry.

Here's everything you need to know if you're planning on pursuing a sales role.

Sales Transferable Skills: The Abilities Sales Professionals Need

Most sales professionals develop the majority of their 'hard skills' on the job. While you're working in sales, you'll discover how to [master cold calling](#), pitching and prospecting.

However, you can give yourself an edge in the job market by cultivating a few sales transferrable skills before you start applying for new roles. Certain soft skills, developed through everyday experiences and traditional jobs are ideal for a sales professional, such as:

- **Communication:** Soft skills are everything in sales, and few are more valuable than the ability to communicate well with colleagues and prospects alike. If you can paint detailed pictures with words, deliver eloquent presentations and actively listen to others to build rapport, then you'll have a good chance at excelling in a sales role.
- **Empathy and building relationships:** Customer service skills, and the ability to connect with others are extremely important in most sales jobs. Employers are constantly looking for team members with a high level of emotional intelligence, and an ability to cultivate trust in prospects. Prioritizing empathy will help you with your career transition.
- **Resilience:** As mentioned above, having the right mindset is often important in the sales job market. In sales, you'll need to be able to overcome objections, handle rejections, and deal with stressful, and demanding situations. Work on building your resilience and endurance, and your ability to work in sales successfully will increase.
- **Problem solving:** Most of the best sales professionals don't sell products or services, they sell solutions. This means professionals in sales need to know how to recognize pain points, get to the bottom of a problem's root cause, and offer creative resolutions. You may already have strong problem-solving skills

developed in previous roles to help you.

- **Organization:** Many industries require sales professionals to be meticulously focused on meeting deadlines, and staying organized. If you can arrange your calendar effectively, ensure you're making the most of your time, and show significant attention to detail, you might find it easier to successfully apply for sales jobs.

Transitioning into Sales: Tips for Success

Developing the right transferrable sales can make transitioning into sales a lot easier. However, there are still certain steps you'll need to take to improve your chances of success. Before you start applying for roles, follow these tips to ease your career transition.

1. Define your ideal sales career

The first step in transitioning into sales is figuring out what you want to do as a sales professional. There are many different types of sales roles. Some focus heavily on prospecting and validating leads, while others concentrate on building connections with clients.

Your current skillset, and your passions may help you to define what kind of role will suit you best. For instance, if you're going into sales from marketing, exploring a career in [social selling](#), or looking for a position where you can use your existing 'pitching' skills may be a good idea.

1. Start building your network

Networking is one of the most important parts of sales, whether you're already working in a sales role, or looking for a new job. The bigger your network is, the more you'll be able to build a positive personal brand, connect with potential employers, and find new clients.

If you're serious about transitioning into sales, start working on your network straight away. Join industry forums and groups on channels like LinkedIn. Attend networking events in your region, or explore job fairs and training opportunities.

1. Start working on your sales skills

While the transferrable skills mentioned above will help you transition into your new career, it pays to invest in a sales-focused skill set too. You don't have to wait until you find a job before you invest in your own sales training. You can read books, join webinars online, or take a sales course.

Building familiarity with the fundamentals of sales will help you thrive in your new role a lot faster. Learn everything you can about lead generation and pipeline management, sales intelligence, competition analysis, and prospecting. You can even practice techniques like [cold calling and emailing](#), when reaching out to potential employers about job opportunities.

1. Update your Resume

Any significant career transition requires a resume update. If you're transitioning into sales from a different landscape, you'll need to think about the core skills and experiences you highlight on your resume. Drawing attention to a history in complementary landscapes like marketing or customer service could be a good way to improve your chances of success.

Highlighting credentials related to business development could also give you a boost if you want to work in a higher-level sales position. At the very least, your resume should draw attention to the skill set your employer will be looking for, focusing on both your hard skills, and your soft skills, like communication, collaboration, and problem solving.

1. Create a strategic plan for the transition

Finally, it's worth having a clear view of how you're going to start transitioning into sales. For instance, if you have absolutely no experience, you might want to start in a related career, like customer service, to develop your skills before you apply for a sales role.

If you want to work in a specific industry, like technology sales, you might get an entry-level job in a tech company to begin with. Once you've built some 'sales experience', you can begin to search for entry-level or part-time roles, before taking the plunge.

Example of a Transition: Going into Sales from Marketing

The exact process of transitioning into sales can vary depending on your previous job roles and career history. Some roles are already more aligned with sales than others, and can provide you with a number of skills to help you thrive in specific sales roles.

For instance, a professional who works in marketing can develop a variety of useful skills on the job. While you're working on marketing campaigns, you'll develop an analytical mindset, thanks to the focus on data-driven advertising in today's world.

You're also likely to have excellent communication skills, strong creative abilities, and a good understanding of customer needs. To boost your chances of success when transitioning from marketing to sales, you can start working on the development of new skills.

For instance, learning about outbound and inbound marketing strategies can help you to sell more effectively. Experimenting with persuasion and negotiation techniques can ensure you can build stronger relationships with customers. You might even be able to ask your employer whether you can shadow a member of your sales team, to gather insights from them.

Transitioning into a Sales role

Transitioning into sales can seem like a challenging process, but there's a good chance you already have a lot of the skills you need to thrive in a sales-oriented role. Honing your soft skills, investing in training opportunities, and taking advantage of your network can help you to rapidly move into a more lucrative

sales position in no time.

Ready to get started with your transition into sales? Start building valuable skills at the [Hard Skill Exchange](#) today.??

HSE Team