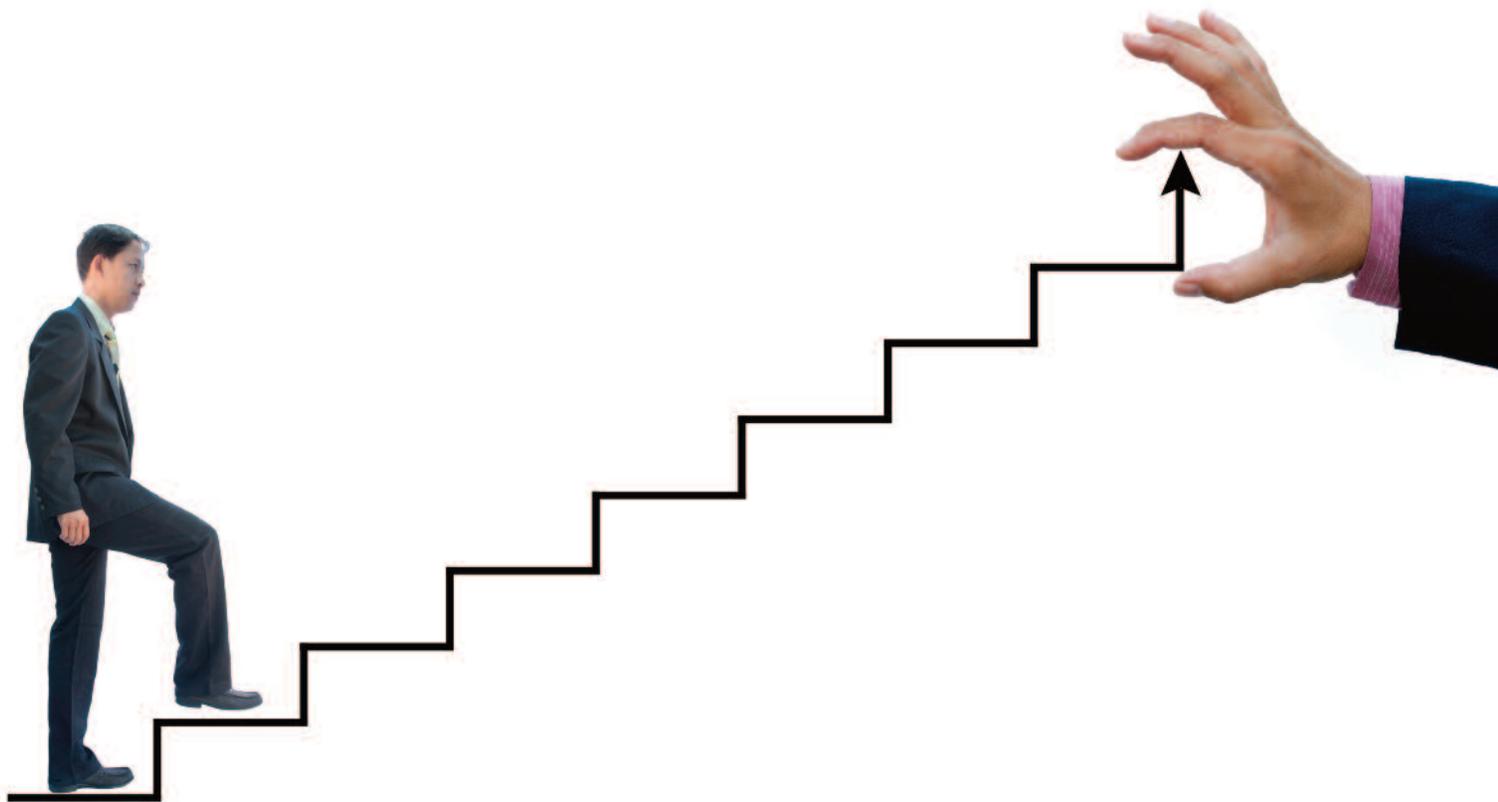


User Guide

Getting the most out of
your Sales Skills Audit

SSA
SALES SKILLS AUDIT
LIMITED



An Important Starting Point!

First of all - congratulations! You are on your way to improving your team's core sales skills, focusing training where training is needed, and gaining extreme productivity when it comes to hiring more sales executives.

Secondly, it is important to fully understand what type of assessment tool the SSA is. We benchmark **Skills**, something that is readily accessible within each individual to assess, benchmark and, most importantly, are quick and easy to improve through straightforward training.

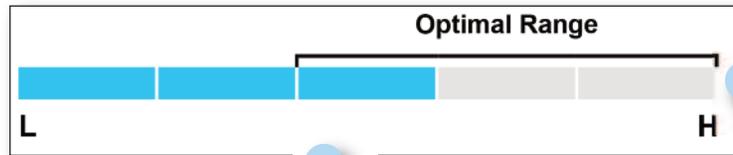
We do not assess **Personality** (very difficult to change) or **Behaviour** (can be slow and costly to change with varying degrees of sustainability).

Nor is this a test of **Cultural Fit** for your organisation. A SSA report delivers to you an unbiased, clinical report of each individual's core sales skills from which you can both assess a potential candidate's current skills level and/or set a development plan for an existing executive.



Getting Started

Each Core Skills assessment generates a 16 page report that starts at **Level One** - a summary of your candidate's performance for each of the 5 core skills assessed as compared to the SSA international benchmark.



This represents the average skill level compared to the SSA benchmark

Optimal Range. Candidates will ideally fall within this bracket for each skill area. The higher the better

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:: Summary of Patrick Hall's Skills

1. Business Skills

These are the skills required to establish personal and company credibility, especially with the customer, but also with suppliers, partners and stakeholders for the purpose of realizing benefits from the relationship.

2. Customer Contact

These are the skills required to effectively engage the customer in conversation and start the process of qualification, with the objective of gaining an understanding of the customer's needs.

3. Engaging the Customer

These skills are about generating initial interest from the customer in your application, product or service, and starting the process of creating rapport.

4. Information and Activity Management

This section covers the skills required to work effectively and in an organised manner, with clear plans and reports, with the purpose of facilitating the achievement of goals and targets.

5. Negotiating and Closing

This section covers the skills required to establish the value to the customer of the benefits, often involving simple financial metrics and close the deal.

Here you can see that our example candidate 'Patrick Hall' overall scores very well. To the left we compare the 5 core skill groups and to the right we run a Strength and Limitation analysis on 19 essential selling competencies.

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:: Summary of Patrick Hall's Skills

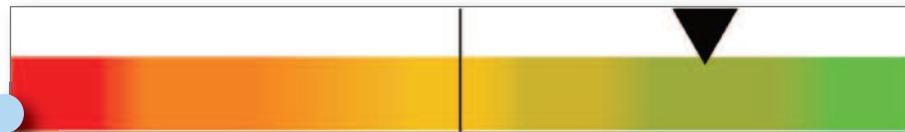
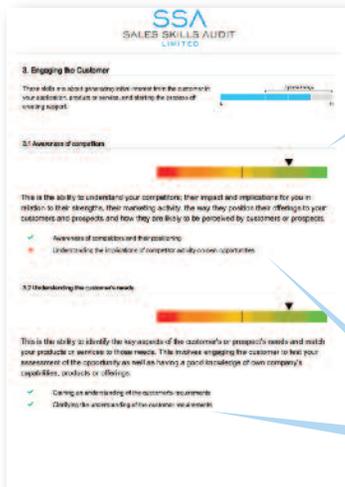
Skill	Key Limitation	Likely Limitation	Moderate	Likely Strength	Key Strength
1. Business Skills					
1.1 Self-management and professionalism			Yellow		
1.2 Exercising judgement and making decisions		Orange			
1.3 Problem solving				Green	
1.4 Resilience and follow-through			Yellow		
2. Customer Contact					
2.1 Spotting opportunities		Orange			
2.2 Communicating	Red				
2.3 Using probing questions			Yellow		
2.4 Advising the customer			Yellow		
3. Engaging the Customer					
3.1 Awareness of competitors				Green	
3.2 Understanding the customer's needs				Green	
3.3 Matching customer needs to products or services				Green	
3.4 Keeping abreast of new products and services		Orange			
3.5 Testing and challenging assumptions			Yellow		
4. Information and Activity Management					
4.1 Paperwork management		Orange			
4.2 Achieving goals, objectives and targets				Green	
4.3 Planning and managing activities		Orange			
5. Negotiating and Closing					
5.1 Influencing customer expectations				Green	
5.2 Negotiating				Green	
5.3 Objection handling			Yellow		

The Slider & Impact Key

The report then walks you through each of the 5 Core Skills assessed at two further levels of detail.

Level Two, you have the **Slider** that graphically shows you where your candidate sits for each skill component that makes up a single Core Skill module. The 'yellow centre line' represents the 50th percentile. This is where the majority of all previous sales executives sit. However, our data is dynamic so always reflects the current reading of sales competitiveness.

Level Three, the **Impact Key** delivers greater detail on the elements within this skills set and looks at how their current levels may affect your business



Each individual skill is first reported by the **Slider** which gives you a fast and accurate way to review competency levels according to the SSA international benchmark

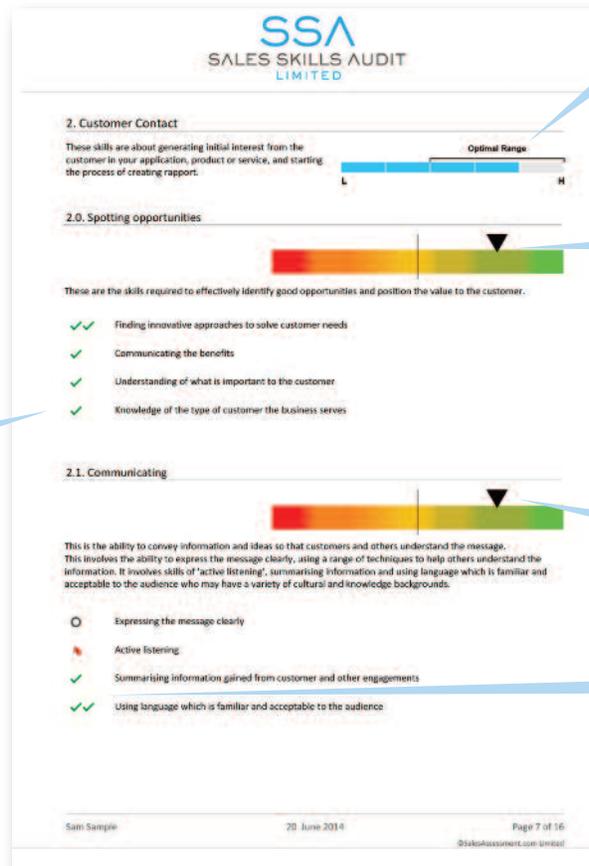
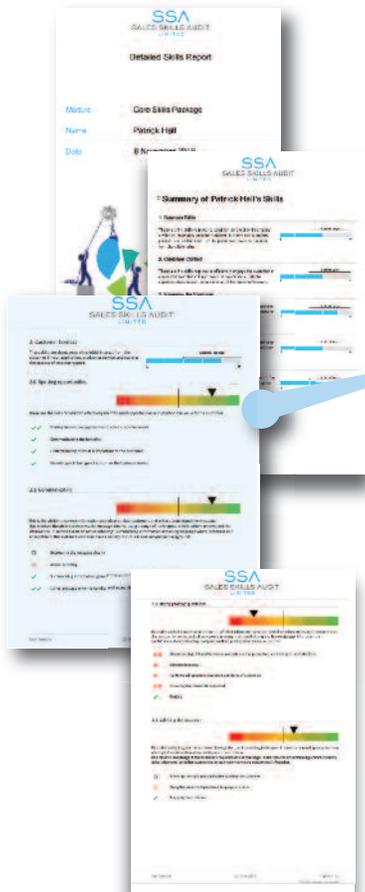
**	Key limitation	Strongly likely to have a negative impact
*	Likely limitation	Likely to have a negative impact
○	Moderate	Likely to have neither a positive nor a negative impact
✓	Likely strength	Likely to have a positive impact
✓✓	Key strength	Strongly likely to have a positive impact
🚩	Indicates that one or more questions were not answered in the area shown next to the flag.	

The **Impact Key** is level three analysis giving you more detailed data if you wish to drill a little deeper into the possible impact of their performance caused by a particular skills element strength or weakness.

Mr Patrick Hall

Let's have a quick review of a few pages from Patrick Hall's **Core Skills** report.

Customer Contact Skills



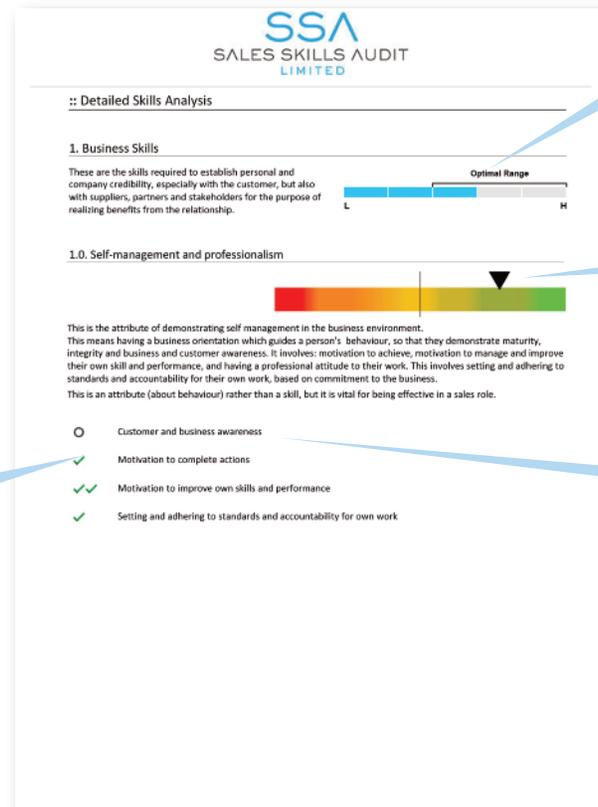
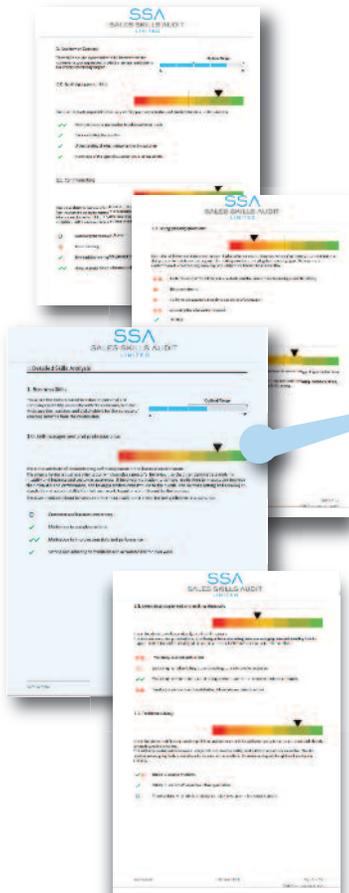
Overall Patrick's **Customer Contact** skills are strong.

The **Slider** demonstrates where Patrick falls within the international average.

Here, Patrick is above average in **Spotting Opportunities**.

Also, note the green ticks below in the **Impact Key** that detail where his precise strengths lie.

Business Skills



Overall Patrick's **Business Skills** are slightly above average for the SSA benchmark.

Patrick starts strongly with his ability in **Self-management and professionalism**.

The **Impact Key** endorses this strength with double green ticks for **Motivation to improve own skills and performance**.

Business Skills continued

Here Patrick reveals a possible problem with **Exercising judgement and making decisions**. A good line manager should be able to assist him with this.

The **Impact Key** reports two red stars, warning of a possible negative impact if not addressed, plus one flag where Patrick failed to respond to one or more statement relevant to that skill element.

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1.1. Exercising judgement and making decisions

This is the ability to make sound judgements and decisions. This involves questioning implications, prioritising criteria, evaluating risks, evaluating options and deciding how to respond. Part of the skill is deciding when and how to seek further information or to refer to others.

★★ Prioritising activities and actions
 ⚠ Evaluating risk when taking action or making commitments to customers
 ✓✓ Evaluating possible options and deciding how to respond to a customer problem or enquiry
 ⚠ Deciding when and how to seek further information or refer to others

1.2. Problem solving

This is the ability to define and analyse problems and priorities and the ability to evaluate the issues raised and identify or create possible solutions. This skill requires individual analytical, diagnostic and creative ability, and ability to use others' expertise. The skill involves isolating key facts to penetrate to the root of the problem. This requires logical thought, and also lateral thinking.

✓⚠ Ability to analyse problems
 ✓ Ability to use other's expertise when appropriate
 ○ Thinking through problems logically and using new approaches when required

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2.100. Decision Making

Engaging the Customer



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3.2. Matching customer needs to products or services

This is the ability to understand the customer's or prospect's needs or objectives and match them to the company's offerings.

- ✓ Knowledge of company's products and services
- ✓ Matching the need to products and services
- ✓ Analyzing the customer's need or problem

3.3. Keeping abreast of new products and services

This involves assimilating and understanding new trends, products etc. in order to evaluate and interpret them for use with customers. This requires a ready assimilation and understanding of new concepts and products as well as a probing and challenging approach to new ideas, linked to an ability to interpret these new concepts or products into increased benefits for customers.

- ★ ★ A ready assimilation of new products, features and technology
- ✓ ✓ Understanding the benefits to the customer of new features and products

3.4. Testing and challenging assumptions

This is the ability to test and challenge assumptions in your dealings with customers and others, involving identifying assumptions in anything, testing their implications and challenging their validity.

- ✓ Understanding the implications of a customer assumption on an opportunity
- Probing and questioning identified assumptions with the customer to gain clarity

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In **Engaging the Customer** assessment, Patrick rates well in **Matching customer needs to products or services**.

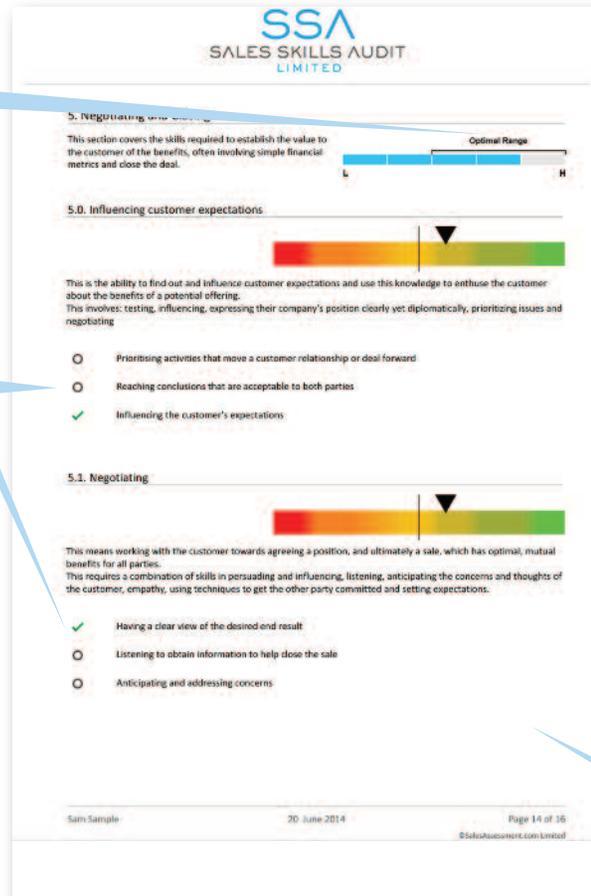
Patrick is below average in **Keeping abreast of new products or services**. A refresher in the importance of keeping up to speed with his company's products would serve well.

Note the **Impact Key** below. This reveals the reason, a lack of **A ready assimilation of new products, features and technology**.

Negotiating and Closing

Patrick rates above average in his understanding of **Negotiation & Closing**.

However, drill a little deeper and you can see the **Impact Key** shows there is room for improving this important skill set. The black circle suggests he is likely to have neither a positive or negative impact with this skill level so clearly a negotiation & closing skills course would be money well spent on Patrick.



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