



Predicting Top Performers

BUSINESS ISSUE

Making better predictions to improve the hiring process

SSQ is a growing company providing individual and group life and health insurance as well as savings and investment products throughout Canada. It also provides auto and home insurance in the province of Quebec. Up to 70% of the auto and home insurance business revenue is paid out in claims, requiring the remaining 30% to be spent wisely. People, processes, and intellectual capital are vital. Making small improvements in hiring and performance can have a big payoff. One of the **issues impeding profit at SSQ was time to hire** (for key positions) as well as the high cost of turnover. When the HR management team met to discuss this, one of the key roles that was identified was “sales advisor” for the auto and home insurance sector. This is a role that generates significant revenue and one that **represents a high cost when employees leave**.

Each year, as many as 500 people apply for each of the 70-80 sales advisor positions that are available to support growth and turnover. Once hired, a sales advisor spends 90 days in training at a cost of \$20,000 to the company. SSQ felt there were gains to be made in the selection process as well as **opportunities to better predict high functioning and longer tenured candidates**.

SSQ wanted to:

- Improve the hiring process
- Hire more top performers
- Improve retention rate

SOLUTION

SSQ’s HR management decided to collaborate with SuccessFinder to build a specific high performer benchmark for the sales advisor role. The model was built with a large data set of high performers and low performers. The result was a personalized profile that was specific to this role and that would be used to predict sales advisor success. The pilot lasted 18 months. Following their training, and after 12 months in their role, the new hires from the past year were evaluated to see if the SuccessFinder benchmark recommendations had played out accurately in actual on-the-job performance.

The Pilot Test Results

Based on 80 people, who were part of the benchmark, the **results were compelling**. A score of 55 or above was a recommended “hire” based on the benchmark traits identified. Any candidate who scored below 30 was a recommended “do not hire”.

Of the recommended hires, **93% met or exceeded performance on the job**. For performers below this bar who were hired, over half proved to not meet expectations in actual on-the-job performance. These strong predictive results impressed SSQ management and the project was approved for expansion.

“Sales and financial services advisors play a critical role, and **SuccessFinder** has given us a tried and tested way to predict who the high performers will be in these fields. **It’s having a material impact on our bottom line.**”

– Martin Robert
Senior Director HR Partner & External Communication

About SSQ Financial Group

SSQ Financial Group is one of Canada’s leading financial institutions with:

- Over 3 million customers
- 2,000 employees
- \$11 billion in assets under management

In addition to offering quality financial services, we stand out for our excellent customer service and our commitment to offer the best possible client experience.



BUSINESS RESULTS

The SuccessFinder tool is helping SSQ meet its business objectives. The company is improving the efficiency of its mass hiring process, making offers more quickly, and “saving” candidates, who may not have interviewed well, because of strong SuccessFinder results. Turnover has decreased due to better fit candidates and sales are up because there are higher performers in this role who are also staying longer at the company.

- **Faster**, more effective hiring
- **Lower** turnover
- **Increased** sales

SSQ is looking to expand the use of SuccessFinder to include financial advisors and call centre managers in the next phase of the behavioral assessment rollout. In addition, they are looking to help managers with an onboarding handbook based on a new hires’ SuccessFinder profile. For example, if the new hire has strong communication and interpersonal skills, but lacks closing skills, this would be an area the manager might choose to coach around. The team feels like this would provide a real benefit to managers by equipping them to give specific and impactful coaching.

Finally, the predictive results have proven to be so strong that the executive team is considering the implementation of SuccessFinder for top managers across the organization as they look to hire and promote executives who embody the cultural values that are so important to the growth of the company.

Next initiatives for SSQ and SuccessFinder:

- Expansion of SuccessFinder benchmark profiles to other pivotal roles
- Coaching and Onboarding
- Career Guidance
- Cultural Fit
- Manager & Executive Succession

SUCCESSFINDER PREDICTS “RED FLAG” CANDIDATES TOO

As part of analyzing the test pilot data, the team noticed a side finding that proved quite interesting. There was a set of candidates that were let go by the company during the first few months of employment because of cultural misfit. The [profiles of these candidates were analyzed](#) and there were 6 behavioral traits that were strong in all of them. This provided a [“red flag” profile that gave managers additional insight](#) into evaluating candidates not only against the role, but the cultural factors specific to SSQ.