

FACTOR A: WARMTH & THE SALES PROCESS

FACTOR A REPRESENTS THE DESIRE TO MOVE TOWARD OTHERS IN ORDER TO SEE EMOTIONAL CLOSENESS AND CONNECTIONS

People with high scores are motivated by a basic drive to help others develop close emotional connections.

High scorers:

- Are interested in, attentive and responsive to others
- Enjoy interaction with people
- Show their emotions openly
- Like taking care of other people's needs
- Enjoy listening to people talk about their personal feelings
- Enjoy jobs where they can work closely with other people

For extremely high scorers, relationships are central to their identity and they rely on their friendships as a means of feeling adequate.

Low scorers:

- Describe themselves as objective and formal
- May distance themselves too much from people
- May be concerned with or have discomfort about interacting with others
- May be seen as cold or aloof by their co-workers

In considering a low-scoring candidate, it is essential for the hiring manager to determine how much interaction is truly required and whether or not the job requires a lot of interpersonal contact.

How Warmth Relates to the Sales Process

The degree of Warmth (Factor A) indicates how a person engages personally with others and builds friendships. With this factor, it is important to emphasize the qualifier personally rather than socially, which is identified with Factor H.

In essence, Factor A defines the extent to which a person values having friends and being friendly. If you are in the business of relationship selling where there is a need for sustaining relationships, a higher score on A, or warmth, is beneficial. If your type of selling is built on solid account development and account management strategies, or frequent contact geared toward providing service or acting in a support role, then a person scoring higher on warmth may be better suited to the job.

The downside: extremely high scorers are likely to be uncomfortable when there is a need to take a more aggressive stance or move to close a deal. The higher A person has trouble differentiating between business and friendship when there is a need to take a firm stance.

Development and Coaching

Now that we have the salesperson in place, what are some of their developmental considerations and how do you coach them if they are having problems? High scorers on Factor A relate easily to other people and generally feel warm and friendly toward them. This makes it very easy to engage them in the coaching process. They are more apt to join in because they value a working alliance and tend to develop emotional bonds easier; therefore, coaching can take on a more meaningful relationship.

Low scorers, by contrast, often dislike discussions around feelings and it may be more difficult to develop a good relationship with them. People who score lower on Factor A show a higher level of interest and attention toward tasks, objects and activities rather than people. They are less inclined to spend time listening to people talk about their feelings or discussing their own emotions with others.

Whether you are interviewing or coaching, as you begin to explore an individual's approach to warmth you might ask whose company is most or least satisfying to you? You might also ask, what does the person value most when in the company of others? Or perhaps what makes them feel close to other people?

With individuals who score lower on Factor A it is essential to stay attuned to the fact that they are more comfortable talking about specifics or things of a more factual nature than they are talking about their feelings or emotions. As you work with the coaching and development needs of people who score high on Factor A, you may have to spend more time bringing them to the facts as they tend to become more focused on the people side than the actual task side.

When you are interviewing a potential salesperson or coaching a salesperson, the advantage to high scores on warmth is that they engage with people well and tend to build relationships well. Interaction is easy. The downside is they may have trouble distancing themselves from the customer/relationship when an uncomfortable decision needs to be made. Therefore, learning how to coach them to distance themselves in a client relationship in order to make the tough decisions may be a challenge. Another point to consider when selecting or coaching salespeople is that people who need a lot of interaction with others are less comfortable spending time alone, especially if they are on the road by themselves for extended periods of time.

Low scorers have a strong capacity to be objective even in emotional situations. They tend to pursue their own independent ideas, activities and opinions despite strong pressure to conform. People who are high on warmth value being appreciated. Having a congenial work environment can be important to them and may affect their level of work satisfaction and performance. People who score low on warmth are more comfortable working independently and are not especially concerned about having a congenial work environment.

Extremely low scorers may have a limited ability to form and maintain close relationships and may be uncomfortable in situations requiring a great deal of closeness with other people. High scorers may want to be on good terms with everyone, even to the extent of going out of their way to please casual acquaintances. With extremely high scorers, they may prioritize other people's feelings above all other concerns and thus may have trouble as a salesperson or a supervisor in setting limits, or fear disappointing others.

For the sales manager, managing a high A person can be a challenge because they are constantly in need of feedback and attention. Their desire to engage and be heard tends to be extreme at times. Another drawback to people with extremely high warmth scores is they do not like to work alone and need the company of others. I worked with an individual who did training for the Midwest region; she admitted she was burned out with traveling and spending countless days on the road. Her A was 9. She hated her time alone night after night on the road staying in a hotel room. By contrast another person I worked with was an international sales manager and loved to be on the road. His A was a 4. Not needing constant interaction with others, he enjoyed his thinking and planning time. Being on the road by himself for weeks was not a problem.

The developmental need of the *high* A person is learning to distance him/herself personally. The developmental need of the *low* A person is to spend more time cultivating relationships and learn to engage personally. With a high A profile, it should be determined if there are other traits to help the person's closing ability. The element of concern is that they are likely to never close unless other factors are present like assertiveness (E+) and suspiciousness (L+).

High scorers approach the sales process hoping that the client will buy because they like him/her and because the client values the relationship. As you well know, that usually is not enough. The sales manager who has to manage the high A person needs to recognize that this sales type needs constant reassurance.

Identifying your type of selling is as essential as understanding the dynamics that encompass your sales strategy when recruiting and developing an effective sales force.

For more information, please contact The Executive Group

Assessment@theeg.com

219.477.6378

80 East US Hwy 6

Valparaiso, IN 46383