



## Summary

IBM has one of the most successful sales organizations in the world. Recruiting sales talents to maintain and develop this position is therefore a critical activity for IBM. Working in partnership with Dr. Roetheli Consulting GmbH, IBM Switzerland has developed a sales-specific graduate assessment system. In October 2007 this system has selected the best sales talents for IBM Switzerland in a fair, objective and efficient way.

## The background

IBM measures itself by how well it helps clients solve their biggest and most pressing problems. IBM's clients include many different kinds of enterprises, from sole proprietorships to the world's largest organizations, governments and companies representing every major industry and endeavor. Besides the dedication to every client's success IBM salespersons are driven by innovation that matters, trust and personal responsibility.

## The challenge

Hiring the "right" sales talents is crucial for maintaining a highly successful sales organization. In Switzerland every year a considerable number of graduates are recruited for IBM's Graduate Sales School. IBM knows the required competencies of a successful consultative salesperson. However, as not every graduate acquires the needed competencies with the same ease, IBM wanted to hire talents with the best prerequisites for success.

## The solution

To address this need, Chris Roetheli developed a comprehensive process to identify the personality profile of the successful salesperson in Switzerland. The resulting profile showed two personality dimensions, which proved to be especially crucial to success. An online assessment was designed in which these two dimensions were used as a first filter in the selection process.

Successful applicants were then invited to an in-house assessment in which their general mental ability and their integrity were appraised. The candidates who passed this second filter went through a structured interview which was recorded and appraised by an expert. The candidates with the lowest results were declined (third filter).

The results of the structured interview, the general mental ability test and the extent of the personality fit were combined into a single value for each candidate. The candidates with the highest scores were offered the job after meeting with their future managers.

## The results

*Stephan Kunz*, IBM Development & Integration Manager IMT CEMAAS, commented: "We chose Dr. Roetheli for many reasons. His profound expertise in personnel selection is based on his experience in management, research and consulting. He does not sell his own assessment tests, he combines instruments to a selection process that gives you the best predictive validity for the money. And last but not least, with his method he supports IBM objectives not just assessing new hires by observation but selecting them on profound profiling on the right competencies and capabilities."

*Hanspeter Haupt*, Consulting Education Specialist in IBM Switzerland, said: "The preparation, execution and evaluation of the structured interviews, all coordinated by Chris Roetheli, was very efficient and effective. The structured interview turned out to be a very valuable step in the selection process."

*Hans-Jürg Roth*, Manager of Human Resources IBM Switzerland commented: "Dr. Roetheli helped us to improve the quality of our new hires, he also enhanced the fairness, objectivity and efficiency of the selection process. The new system reduces the first-contact-to-hire cycle dramatically; this will strengthen IBM's position in the competition for the best talents even more."