

Sales Apprenticeship Program Information

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Introduction

The purpose of this booklet is to help you decide if the Sales Apprenticeship Program is right for you. We have anticipated some of your questions and have answered them as honestly as we can. Please read this booklet carefully and think about your career. You will probably have more questions, so be sure to ask them when you talk with us. Take the time to learn what we offer and what it can mean to you.

We have a simple proposition: give us two or three years of hard work and we will give you a start to a lucrative career as a sales professional -- both sides benefit. We benefit by having a good Field Service Technician and by developing a good Sales Representative for placement in one of our territories. You benefit by getting great job experience and a terrific start to a career that will put you in the position of earning a six-figure income in the next several years.

If you have the desire and the right set of skills, we are confident we can provide you with an excellent start.

Good luck.

Southwestern Industries, Inc.

Is a Career in Sales Right for You?

The Sales Apprenticeship Program will prepare you for a career in Industrial Sales, also known as Business-to-Business Sales.

If you have a bad opinion of the Sales Profession, you probably got that opinion by dealing with bad Sales Representatives. Sales jobs sometimes attract people who have neglected their careers and enter the field trying to make a lot of money, despite their lack of preparation. Unfortunately, it gives the whole profession a bad image.

Many people in the sales profession do not deserve that bad image because they are well educated and highly trained Sales Professionals. This is especially true in the field of Industrial Sales.

An Industrial Sales Representative works with customers who buy on behalf of their companies. A good Sales Representative helps his customers make good decisions by working with them over the course of weeks, maybe even years. He is an expert in his products and in communicating with people. He understands his customers' needs as they relate to the products he sells, often better than the customers do themselves. It takes years to learn to be a good Sales Representative. It is interesting, demanding work, and skill makes all the difference between success and failure.

Not everyone in the Industrial Sales field deserves to be called a professional, but what we have just described is the standard we have for Sales Representatives at Southwestern Industries.

Industrial Sales is one of those things that people either love to do or hate to do. People who are happy as Industrial Sales Representatives will tell you:

"I like to help people. Because of me, people made changes that made their lives better. We start as strangers and I turn them into customers and friends."

"I like the autonomy because being a Sales Representative is like having my own business."

"I like to out into the jungle on my own and hunt for my living – that is what I'm about. Getting the same check no matter what I do would make me feel like a domesticated animal."

"I love the opportunity to excel and to get paid a lot for it."

"I like the variety. Every day is different with different places, different people, and different challenges to overcome."

The above may sound appealing, but it isn't the whole story. For some people, Sales can be a miserable experience. When you talk to people who tried sales and found they didn't like it, they say things like:

"I can't stand the rejection. When someone says they aren't interested I take it personally and it makes me feel bad. It bothers me a lot when someone is rude, even if they don't know me."

"I don't like not knowing what I will get paid. I would rather make less money but know for sure what is coming."

"I don't like uncertainty. I would rather work in a familiar place surrounded by familiar people, doing a job I know well."

If what we've just described inspires you to find out more, we will be happy to help you learn about what it is like to be an Industrial Sales Representative with Southwestern Industries.

The Long View for Your Career

You should be concerned about joining a company that depends on manufacturing for its survival. That is reasonable given the amount of bad news coming from the manufacturing sector of our economy.

The Sales Apprenticeship Program will give you a start in a career in Industrial Sales, which is just another name for Business-to-Business Sales. Even if manufacturing goes away and Southwestern Industries ceases to exist, the skills you learn will still be in demand by other companies that need professional Sales Representatives. You will not depend on any one company or industry for work.

Even so, we should not write off American manufacturing or Southwestern Industries too quickly.

Reports of the death of manufacturing in America have been exaggerated. To listen to the media, you would believe that nothing is made here anymore. That is not true. Although our manufacturing employment is decreasing, America is still *by far* the world leader in industrial output and manufacturing. Even if China overtakes us in the next decade or two, America will still be a giant manufacturing economy. We don't have to be number one to be big.

The people of Southwestern Industries are optimistic about the future, and our performance gives us the right to be. Throughout the last recession in manufacturing – a recession that saw business decline by over 60% in some markets – we never failed to make a profit. Many of our competitors died while we made money. That is how we define a winner and Southwestern Industries is determined to continue to be one of the winners.

We know that you are making decisions that will have consequences to your career for the next forty years. We believe that sales is one of those core skills that are in demand by every kind of business, and that makes it one of the more secure choices you could make. There is no doubt that the field will change and you will have to keep up with the changes, but it is not likely for the Sales Profession to become obsolete.

Why this Program Works

Many of the world's most successful companies start their Sales Representatives or Management Trainees in a job that helps them learn the fundamentals of the business. For example, Frito Lay has its new Sales Representatives drive the route truck and stock chips on store shelves. It may be that the person you saw stocking bags of Cheetos at the local mini-mart was last year's MBA Valedictorian.

Many of the people who have become successful Sales Representatives in our industry started out as Field Service Technicians.

As a Field Service Technician, you will learn about the products, customers, and industry. You will learn how to function as a member of a team, and you will be required to perform well so that we make a profit from your work. It is not easy to be a good Field Service Technician, but it is easier than being a good Sales Representative. By learning to be a good Field Service Technician first, you will earn the confidence that comes with overcoming tough challenges.

Your first serious job will determine a lot about the course of your career. If you make the right choice, you will be able to draw from that first experience for the rest of your professional life. Because it combines hard work and good training, the job of Field Service Technician is one of the best choices you could make. Combined with the training you will receive as part of the Sales Apprenticeship Program, it is sure to get you off to a good start.

What a Field Service Technician does

The Field Service Technician (FST) is a valuable part our competitive advantage. He works together with the Service Department, the local Sales Representatives and the Regional Manager to support customers in his home territory.

A typical day for an FST may include the following activities:

- Driving to and from customer's machine shops
- Regular Maintenance on SWI products
- Troubleshooting and diagnostics of product problems
- Installation of retrofit CNCs or measurement instruments
- Installation of new machine tools
- Office work such as Service Reports and Inventory Reports

The work is physically as well as mentally challenging. The job requires lifting, pushing, pulling, carrying heavy toolboxes and parts, stretching, walking, climbing, and the occasional busted knuckles from a wrench slipping. It is important to have good eye-hand coordination and to be in good physical condition. The FST works in metal-cutting machine shops. The machines he works on can be oily and dirty so it is common for the FST to get as dirty as an auto mechanic.

Most FSTs like their jobs. There is variety and the freedom of setting your own schedule. As an FST, you get to see how manufacturers work. If that kind of thing interests you, it is a lot of fun. (If it doesn't, you should consider putting down this booklet and looking elsewhere.)

As in anything worthwhile, there can be pressure in this type of job. Sometimes a job doesn't go smoothly, and the customer will let you know how he feels. As an FST, you must keep cool and represent us well – no matter how uncomfortable you are. Those tough situations provide valuable experience if you hope to make your living by changing the opinions of your customers.

FSTs are trained through a combination of field workdays, training classes at the home office, and self-study.

Selling Experience

The selling experience begins early in the career of the Sales Apprentice, progressing from easy to more difficult sales challenges.

Scheduling SMA Work

As an FST, you will be responsible for contacting customers when their Scheduled Maintenance Agreement (SMA) comes due in order to schedule the service work. The selling skills required are basic since the customers were "sold" on the program in the recent past. You must be prepared to resell the features of the program and to make a firm arrangement for the service call. This is a great way to start to learn the challenges of selling.

Selling SMA Contracts

In the course of performing service work and installations, you have the opportunity to distinguish yourself by signing up new customers for the SMA program. Selling this service is a concept sale that is more difficult than simple scheduling.

Selling Service Parts

Many of the service parts we sell to customers are optional – their product could run without them, but they will run better with them. You will begin to sell these optional parts within a few months of starting as an FST. Commission is paid on service parts sales.

Selling Trav-A-Dials

The Trav-A-Dial is a precision measuring device that has application to many machines. It is often a matter of offering the product where it could be used, but sometimes more persuasive techniques are required. Commission is paid on Trav-A-Dial sales.

Selling DROs

The TRAK DRO is a true niche product and is highly differentiated from competitive offerings. Selling TRAK DROs can be a significant challenge, requiring probing, and needs satisfaction techniques.

Other Sales Duties

SWI Sales Representatives don't spend all their time selling. They also support customers in other ways. As you become proficient with our products, you will be given the opportunity to learn and practice these important jobs. They include demonstrating products, working trade shows, inspecting machines for possible retrofitting, and training users on the operation of the products.

Progressive Sales Training

Sales training exercises will coincide with your progressive selling responsibilities. These activities are organized in semesters.

First Semester

Scheduled Maintenance Agreement (SMA) Training

Early as an FST, you will learn how to perform the SMA work. Very soon thereafter, your Regional Manager will work with you on the skills needed to call to schedule your own SMA work.

Second Semester

Your second semester begins approximately six months after you start work. You will have mastered the basics of being an FST, so you will be promoted from Trainee to FST.

Parts Sales Training

Your Regional Manager will work with you in one-on-one sessions, training meetings, and field workdays to help you learn techniques for selling parts. Once you are promoted to FST, you will be paid commission on parts sales.

Sales Training Modules

In this semester, you will begin to work on your own to complete the self-study Sales Training Modules with the support from your Regional Manager and the company Trainer. There are dozens of modules organized around particular subjects.

Third Semester

Your third semester begins around your first anniversary of your sales training.

Participation in Sales Meetings

You will participate in regional sales meetings where you will be exposed to sales subjects. This is also a great opportunity to learn how to conduct yourself in a sales meeting.

Sales Training Modules

Your work with sales training modules will continue.

Fourth through Sixth Semester

Wheelie Selling Skills

After you complete your third semester, you will participate in sales training seminars that are taught by our own sales Trainer. These are intense classes that force the participants to learn and use new communication skills. The course is based on the renowned Professional Selling Skill (also known as PSS) seminars developed by Xerox.

We have purchased the license for the techniques and adapted the materials to our own products. Classes will include experienced Sales Representatives as well as apprentices. You will participate in an initial three-day course and a follow-up course a few months later.

Demo Skills

You will learn how to demonstrate SWI products through training sessions with your Regional Manager and other Sales Representatives in your region.

Sales Training Modules

In these last semesters, work on the Sales Training Modules becomes focused on completion in order to prepare you for promotion.

Which Regions Will You Consider?

In order for you to be a candidate for the Sales Apprenticeship Program you must be willing to move to accept a promotion at the end of the program.

Below is a list of regions which are either direct sales territories or distributor territories. This is a list of cities that represent the larger area that constitutes the region. Please be ready to talk to us about which regions you would consider living in. The more regions, the better candidate you are for the Sales Apprenticeship Program.

At this point, you are only committing to being flexible. The important thing is that you are willing to apply your new skills in a different place than you live now. That willingness will make your success come easier by helping us to match our need at that time with the skills you have developed in the Sales Apprenticeship Program.

Direct Sales Territories

Los Angeles
Dallas
Chicago
Milwaukee
Cincinnati
Toledo
Detroit
Grand Rapids
Indianapolis
Cleveland
Baltimore
Philadelphia
Newark
Hartford
Boston

Distributor Territories

San Francisco
San Diego
Portland
Seattle
Phoenix
Salt Lake City
Denver
Minneapolis
Des Moines
Kansas City
St. Louis
Atlanta
Pittsburgh
Houston
San Antonio
Memphis
Nashville
Miami
Orlando
Rochester
Tulsa
Charlotte
Richmond
Albuquerque

Your Options at the End of the Sales Apprenticeship Program

Once you complete the program you will have the following choices:

Promotion to Sales Representative for SWI.

This is our favorite choice: you start a new career as a Sales Representative for Southwestern Industries in one of our own sales territories. Success will not be instant, but you will get a raise with your promotion, and you will be in the position to get paid what you earn as you develop your territory. It is not unrealistic for you to be earning a six-figure income within a few years.

Join an SWI Distributor as a Sales Representative

Instead of working for us, you could join one of our distributors. Your expertise and training will make you a prime candidate and we'll be happy to make introductions for you.

Begin your own business as a Manufacturers Rep for SWI

Having your own business may appeal to you. This is the toughest way to go, and it probably means you'll work longer before you start to get a payoff, but it may work out to your satisfaction in the long run.

Take your beefed-up resume out into the market and see what happens

The worst that could happen as a result of this program is a great resume. You will be able to boast of two or three years of the kind of gritty, formative experience that prospective employers love to see. You will be starting over with someone new, but you will be an excellent candidate in the fields of Industrial or Business-to-Business Sales.