

# FAQ



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## What scales are measured in the Sales AP?

The scales measured in the Sales AP are:

Achievement Motivation	Using one's inner drive to apply the effort needed to attain strategic goals
Assertiveness	The open and direct expression of thoughts and beliefs
Competitiveness	The desire to perform better than others and surpass personal standards of performance
Composure	Staying calm under pressure and in difficult interactions
Sociability	Engaging with others and developing relationships effortlessly
Persuasion	Influencing others to change their thoughts or behaviors
Self-Confidence	An individual's level of belief in their abilities and judgments
Selling-Related Knowledge	The desire to understand different sales techniques and learn about their respective industry

## What is the research linking Sales AP competencies to work outcomes?

The Sales AP measures eight scales that have been shown to relate to success in sales roles based on past research. Following is the list of Sales AP scales and their predictive outcomes:

Individuals who are higher in:

- **Achievement motivation** have better overall job performance (Barrick, Stewart, & Piotrowski, 2002).
- **Assertiveness** are better able to influence potential clients, confidently address concerns, and ultimately ask for the sale, leading to higher sales performance (Vinchur et al., 1998; Warr, Bartram, & Martin, 2005).
- **Competitiveness** push themselves to set higher personal goals and achieved greater performance outcomes (Brown, Cron, & Slocum, 1998).
- **Composure** are able to persist, close, and develop repeat sales. In the workplace, sales professionals who are better able to regulate their emotions experience less conflict with customers and have better sales outcomes (Darrat, Mulki, & Swimberghe, 2017).
- **Sociability** are able to quickly build positive relationships with customers which leads to greater customer commitment (Spake & Megehee, 2009).
- **Persuasion** are able to positively influence a customer towards a purchase decision and to negotiate in a way that benefits both parties. The effective use of an influential sales style has been demonstrated to explain a significant amount of the variance in sales performance (Plouffe, Bolander & Cote, 2014).
- **Self-Confidence** are decisive and action-oriented which are correlated positively with performance ratings for sales professionals (Vinchur et al., 1998).
- **Selling-Related Knowledge** can size up sales situations, classify prospects, and select appropriate sales strategies for their clients (Leong, Busch, & John, 1989).

## What are the characteristics of the norm sample for Sales AP?

Each participant in the Sales AP is compared to a group of 1,530 individuals who have taken the assessment previously. This sample is evenly distributed by gender and across five age-ranges and was matched to the 2016 U.S. Census by race/ethnicity and geographic region. The participants in the comparison group had a variety of employment statuses and levels of education.

For more details on the demographic characteristics of the Sales AP norm sample, refer to Chapter 3 of the User Guide: Normed Sample, Table 3.1.

## Is the Sales AP valid and reliable?

Research conducted by MHS in the development of the Sales AP provide evidence that the assessment results are both valid and reliable. For a complete review of the research, refer to Chapter 5 of the Technical Manual: Standardization, Reliability, Validity and Fairness.

- **Validity:** The Sales AP has multiple sources of evidence that support its validity. The assessment has a factor structure that seems the most empirically and theoretically consistent compared to other plausible models. Additionally, the validity studies for the assessment demonstrated that sales professionals score higher than the general population. Those who have higher sales competencies as measured by the Sales AP have higher self-reported levels of job performance and average calls made in a day, supporting that the assessment relates to work outcomes. Furthermore, the scales of the assessment seem theoretically consistent, as they correspond closely to other measures that reflect similar content.
- **Reliability:** The reliability of the Sales AP was examined using internal consistency. The coefficient alpha values of the Sales AP had a median of .87, with a range of .85 to .92. These high values imply that the questions assessing each competency are connected and are measuring the same idea.

## Is the Sales AP considered to be fair and free of bias?

In order to ensure the fairness of the assessment, multiple analyses were run testing the measure across race/ethnicity and gender groups. The results of our analyses indicated that the assessment functioned similarly across demographic groups, providing evidence for its fairness and lack of bias.

For a full explanation of the fairness of the Sales AP, refer to the Sales AP Fairness section in Chapter 5 of the Sales AP Technical Manual.

## How is the Sales AP scored?

The Sales AP presents the respondent's results using standardized percentiles. Percentiles are an intuitive way to understand how a person's scores compare to others like them.

Each participant in the Sales AP is compared to a group of 1,530 individuals who have taken the assessment previously. This sample, against which Sales AP scores are compared, is representative of the U.S. general population. By comparing results to a reference group, we can assess where the respondent falls on a scale of Low, Mid, and High.

For instance, a score in the 75th percentile means that the respondent scored better than 75% of a group of people who have taken the assessment previously.

## What are the minimum and maximum scores on the assessment?

The Sales AP scores are in percentiles, ranging from 1 (lowest) to 99 (highest).

- If a respondent scores between 1 to 24, their score will be classified in the Low range meaning they are in the bottom 25% of the comparison group.
- If a respondent scores between 25 to 74, their score will be classified in the Mid range meaning they are in the middle 50% of the comparison group.
- If a respondent scores between 75 to 99, their score will be classified in the High range meaning they are in the top 25% of the comparison group.

## Can you score too high on the Sales AP scales?

Our analysis indicates that sales professionals with higher scores in the Sales AP competencies tend to report having better sales performance overall. Although there are no indicators for scores that are too high in the Sales AP scales, it is a good practice to investigate very high scores to identify potential overuse. For example, a participant who is very high in Self-Confidence may not consider other people's perspectives when making decisions.

## What if someone scores low on all of the scales?

A low score on all the Sales AP scales may indicate the respondent's unsuitability for a sales role. However, it is a good practice to investigate this assumption further by gathering more information on the conditions in which the participant took the assessment. These follow-up questions would be helpful:

- Did you have enough time to take the assessment, or were you in a hurry to finish it?
- Were you able to take the assessment in a relaxed setting?
- Did you read through each question fully before answering?

In addition, it's recommended to gather insights from multiple sources (e.g., observations, behavioral and situational interviews, academic records or other assessments, and resume) to get a clearer picture of the candidate's sales competencies.

## What level (e.g., individual contributors, managers, etc.) is the Sales AP appropriate for?

The Sales AP is best suited for the hiring and development of individual contributors.

## What facilitator/coaching resources are available for the Sales AP?

There are three primary resources available to help you build your knowledge of the Sales AP.

- **Training Modules:** Two self-paced e-learning modules provide a high-level overview of the Sales AP competencies, scoring, report features and interpretation, as well as features, benefits and applications.
- **User Guide:** A comprehensive User Guide provides all the information you need to understand and administer the Sales AP. It includes an overview of the assessment, guidelines for use, a step-by-step interpretation guide for the Interview Guide and Development Report as well as information needed to administer the assessment.
- **Technical Manual:** The Sales AP Technical Manual provides detailed information related to the theory, development and content, as well as the standardization, reliability, validity and fairness of the assessment.

## Should I use the Interview Guide or Development Report?

The Sales AP was designed with different reports that are suited for different purposes.

The Sales AP Interview Guide contains a set of features that provide sales-specific insights that will help you make informed hiring decisions. This report can be used across the employee lifecycle, including interviewing, succession planning, and promotion.

The Sales AP Development Report provides insight into the competencies that contribute to sales performance and is intended for use in coaching and development contexts.

## What are the custom options for the Interview Guide?

The Sales AP Interview Guide includes several features that can be turned on and off or changed.

- On the cover page, the job title, organization name, and logo can be customized when generating reports.
- The Interview Questions section of the report can be turned on or off.
- Up to five custom interview questions can be added when generating reports and will be included at the end of the report.

### What are the custom options for the Development Report?

The Sales AP Development Report includes several features that can be turned on and off or changed.

- On the cover page, the job title, organization name, and logo can be customized when generating reports.
- The Response Style page at the end of the assessment can be turned on or off. It is recommended that this page not be shared with the participant, and, if the report was printed with the page included, it should be manually removed.

### What Response Style Indicators are included in the report?

The Response Style section of the Sales AP reports provides insight into factors that can indicate a lack of attention and positive impression management. Three indicators are displayed:

- 1. Time to Completion:** This indicator provides the total time the participant took to complete the assessment, and flags participants who do the assessment in an unusually short or long time. In general, the Sales AP should take between 10 to 15 minutes to complete.
- 2. Positive Impression:** Several items in the Sales AP assessment were designed to detect participants who may be giving an exaggerated positive impression of themselves. They may have inflated their responses on purpose, or for other reasons, such as self-deception, lack of personal insight, criticism avoidance, unwillingness to face one's limitations, or misunderstanding the assessment's purpose.
- 3. Inconsistency:** Several pairs of highly related items are used to detect possible inattention to the questions. This alert will be triggered when the participant responds differently to items measuring similar content.

### In what languages is the Sales AP available?

The Sales AP assessment and reports are currently only available in English.

### Is there a Sales AP group report?

There is currently no group report available for the Sales AP.

**If you would like to create a custom solution for your organization, call MHS Customer Service at 1-800-456-3003 or email [customerservice@mhs.com](mailto:customerservice@mhs.com).**