SalesRecruit Partners

MARKET REPORT
FY 2027 EDITION

AUSTRALIA AND APAC

Sales Talent Intelligence Report

Salary benchmarks, leadership stage fit and the market evidence behind your next sales hire.

Salary benchmarks
76 roles across eight sectors

Leadership hiring
A five stage framework

Market intelligence
Referenced, current to October 2026

ABOUT THIS REPORT

Every growth plan has a sales hire in it

This report brings together current salary benchmarks for 76 sales roles, a framework for matching sales leaders to the stage of your business, and the market evidence behind both.

It is written for CEOs, founders, sales leaders and HR partners in Australian businesses hiring B2B salespeople and sales leaders. Salary ranges are our market view from placement and offer data and live searches, cross checked against published 2026 sources.

Third party figures are referenced and listed on page 28. Where a study is global or weighted to the United States, we say so. The aim is simple: help you hire the people who will grow your revenue.

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READER GUIDE

Start where your decision is

Different readers will get the most from different sections. Here is where we would start.

CEOs and founders

Read the executive briefing and the priorities in Part Five. If you are about to hire your first or second sales leader, read Stages 1 and 2 in Part Three before you brief anyone.

Chief revenue officers

Start with the five forces and the critical role index in Part One, then use the leadership stage matrix to test your current structure against the stage the business is really at.

Sales directors and GMs

Use the sector benchmarks to check your packages, the pay movement analysis to see where you are exposed, and the RevOps stages to judge what your team needs next.

HR and talent leaders

Use the sector tables for remuneration reviews and the hiring difficulty ratings to plan timelines. The definitions and methodology are on page 27.

About the salary data. All salary figures are AUD base salary, excluding superannuation, commission, bonuses and car allowances, as at October 2026. Ranges run from smaller and regional employers to enterprise employers in Sydney and Melbourne. City and APAC differences are on page 16.

EXECUTIVE BRIEFING

Five market truths for FY 2027

The market looks easier than it is. Fewer people are changing jobs, more people are applying for each role, and the sellers who drive growth are harder to reach than at any point in a decade.

Good people have stopped moving

Job mobility fell to 7.2% in the year to February 2026, the lowest in the ABS series. Only a quarter of people who left a job did so for a better one or for a change, down from a third in 2023.[1]

Revenue still comes from a few sellers

Across 530 B2B companies, 17% of reps generated 81% of revenue.[5] Fewer than half of account executives reached their annual target in 2026.[6]

Pay compression is thinning leadership pipelines

In our benchmarks, a National Account Manager on a major grocery account sits within 5% of a State Sales Manager, and an enterprise AE at full target can out earn the Sales Manager above them.

Stage mismatch is the most avoidable leadership failure

Each growth stage needs a different kind of sales leader. Briefing by title rather than stage is the most common reason a capable leader fails.

The roles beside the seller shape the seller's output

Reps spend 60% of their time on work other than selling.[8] RevOps, enablement and partnerships decide how much of the week goes to customers.

QUESTIONS FOR THE BOARD

LEADERSHIP PIPELINE

Does your pay structure give your best sellers a reason to step into leadership?

LEADERSHIP BRIEFS

Was your last sales leadership brief written for the stage the business is at today, or the stage it hopes to reach?

HIRING OUTCOMES

Can you name the revenue your last three sales hires produced in their first 18 months?

WHAT THIS MEANS

Five conclusions for CEOs and sales leaders

What the evidence in this report points to for anyone planning a sales hire in the year ahead.

Availability is not a hiring strategy

When good people stay put, the people who apply are mostly the people who are available. Advertising still has a place, but for a role the growth plan depends on it should be one channel, not the whole search.

The best candidates need a reason to move

The sellers who can move your revenue are employed, performing and not looking. They move for scope, earning potential, a stronger product or a leader they want to work for. Reaching them takes market knowledge and a credible proposition.

Price the role to the market, not the organisation chart

Pay now follows commercial complexity more than seniority. Set the complexity tier of a role before you set its range, and check it against current market data rather than last year's salary review.

Brief leadership searches against stage

Define what the business needs from its sales leader in the next 90 days, given today's team size, pipeline and systems. Then hire for that.

Treat operations and enablement as revenue roles

Forecast accuracy, clean data and good onboarding raise the output of every seller. A vacancy in these roles quietly caps the whole team.

> **The market rewards employers who go to the performers, rather than waiting for performers to come to them.**

PART ONE · THE SALES TALENT MARKET

A market that has stopped moving

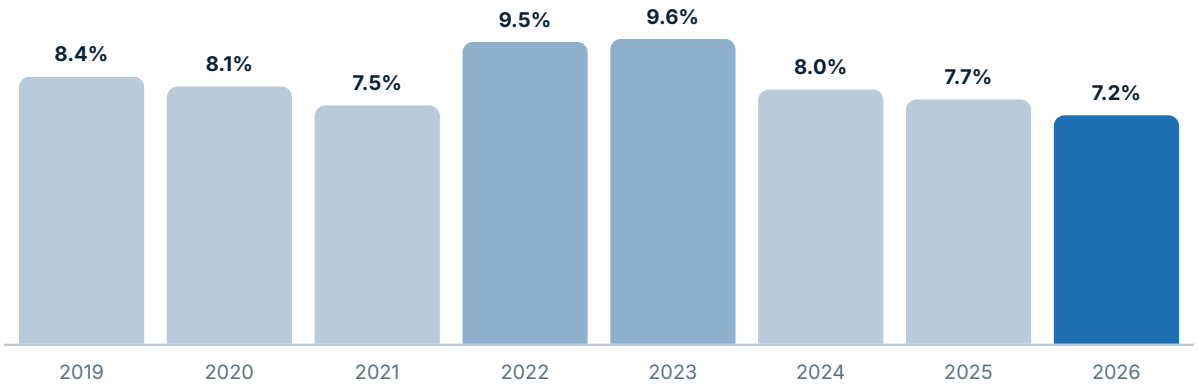
7.2%
of employed Australians changed employer in the year to Feb 2026
ABS[1]

24.6%
of people who left a job did so for a better job or a change, from 32.5% in 2023
ABS[1]

5.5%
rise in applications per job ad on a year earlier, May 2026
SEEK[3]

44%
of recruiting employers report difficulty filling vacancies
Jobs and Skills Australia[4]

JOB MOBILITY RATE, AUSTRALIA, YEAR TO FEBRUARY



Source: ABS, Job mobility, February 2026. The 2026 rate is the lowest recorded in the series, which begins in 1972.[1]

Australia's job mobility rate has fallen for three years running, from 9.6% in 2023 to 7.2%. The fall was sharpest at the top of the skills ladder: mobility among managers dropped from 6.2% to 5.6%, and among professionals from 7.4% to 6.2%.[1]

At the same time, SEEK reported job ads down 4.5% on a year earlier in May 2026, while applications per ad rose 5.5%.[3] On paper employers have more choice. In practice the extra volume comes from people who are available, while the people producing results are staying where they are.

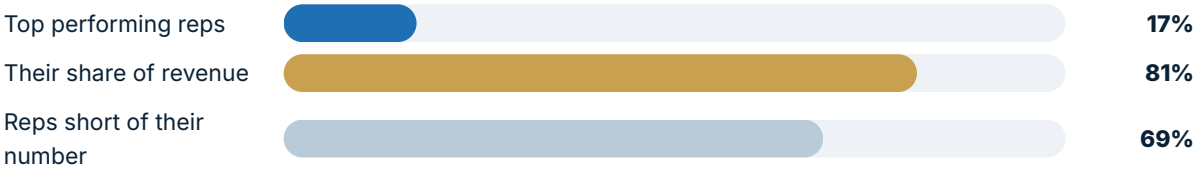
> **More applicants and less movement means the strongest candidates are further from the job boards than they have been in a decade.**

PART ONE · PERFORMANCE

Revenue comes from a few sellers

In most B2B sales teams a minority of people produce the majority of the result. That single fact should shape how every sales hire is approached.

SHARE OF REPS AND SHARE OF REVENUE, 530 B2B COMPANIES



Source: Ebsta and Pavilion, B2B Sales Benchmarks 2024. Global sample of 4.2 million opportunities, weighted to B2B technology.[5]

48%

of account executives reached annual target in 2026, down from 51% in 2024

The Bridge Group, predominantly US[6]

6.2

months, the average ramp for a new account executive, the longest the study has recorded

The Bridge Group[6]

60%

of a rep's time goes on work other than selling

Salesforce, State of Sales 2026[8]

Because output concentrates in so few people, the gap between an average hire and a top performer is the difference between a territory that holds and one that grows, a launch that lands and one that stalls. The question worth asking at the start of a search is not how many people applied. It is how many proven performers were actually spoken to.

> **The question is not how quickly a seat can be filled. It is who in the market is already producing the result you need.**

PART ONE · MARKET FORCES

Five forces shaping FY 2027

Each force has a direct consequence for how roles should be designed, priced and filled.

The pay hierarchy has flattened

In technology, enterprise account executives earn $150k to $210k base with OTE adding 50% to 100%. At full target that can exceed the earnings of the Sales Manager above them. In FMCG, National Account Managers on major grocery accounts sit within 5% of State Sales Managers.

SO WHAT **Without a financial or career case for leadership, the strongest sellers stay individual contributors and succession thins.**

Complexity sets the price

Pay follows commercial complexity more than seniority. Roles that combine technical credibility with commercial skill, such as sales engineers, capital equipment BDMs, PPA originators and clinical specialists, carry a premium of 15% to 30% over generalist peers in our searches.

SO WHAT **Set the complexity tier of a role before you set its salary range.**

Growth is shifting to existing customers

Expansion and retention now carry a larger share of revenue in many businesses. Account management, customer success and renewals roles often carry more revenue responsibility than their pay reflects.

SO WHAT **Benchmark these roles against the market, not against their history in your business.**

Partners reach accounts direct sales cannot

Channel, alliance and partnership roles are increasingly where growth plans are won, particularly for businesses entering new markets or selling into large enterprises.

SO WHAT **The most valuable next hire may not carry a direct sales target at all.**

Interviews reward confidence, not results

Unstructured interviews predict job performance at 0.19. Structured interviews, with the same questions scored the same way for every candidate, predict at 0.42.[7] Salespeople interview well, which makes the informal conversation a weak test of the thing you need.

SO WHAT **Verify results with the people who saw them, and decide on evidence rather than impression.**

PART ONE · CRITICAL ROLE INDEX

Where scarcity and revenue impact meet

Not all vacancies carry the same risk. The roles hardest to fill well are often the ones closest to revenue.

SPECIALIST PREMIUM

Partnerships / Alliances Manager
AdTech Programmatic Specialist
Capital Equipment BDM

CRITICAL: SCARCE AND CLOSE TO REVENUE

Enterprise SaaS Account Executive
Healthcare Territory Specialist
Sales Engineer, all sectors
RevOps / GTM Engineer
PPA Originator, Energy

STEADY SUPPLY

Generalist BDM
Mid Market Account Executive
Inside Sales Representative
Territory Sales Representative

COMPRESSION RISK

FMCG National Account Manager
SaaS Customer Success Manager
Financial Services Broker BDM
Construction Specification Manager

↑ Talent scarcity

Revenue impact →

Source: Sales Recruit Partners market view, October 2026.

Critical roles combine scarce supply with direct revenue impact. Searches take longer, the right people are rarely in the market, and the role usually justifies a direct approach rather than an advertisement.

Compression risk roles look well paid on the surface, but the gap to the management layer above them is narrow. Over 18 to 24 months that erodes the case for promotion and thins the leadership pipeline.

If a role sits in the top right of this grid, plan for a direct search from day one.

PART TWO · SALARY BENCHMARKS BY SECTOR

How to read the benchmarks

76	8	$70k	$300k
roles benchmarked	sectors covered	entry SDR base in technology	top of the VP Sales and CRO base range

Compensation is one of the clearest signals of how competitive a role is, where retention exposure sits and how healthy the leadership pipeline will be.

BASE SALARY AUD per year, excluding superannuation. The range runs from smaller and regional employers to enterprise employers in Sydney and Melbourne.

OTE UPLIFT On target earnings as a percentage added to base when 100% of target is achieved. Actual earnings vary with performance.

CAR A car allowance is standard for this role in this sector. Common in FMCG, healthcare and industrial sales, rare in technology and financial services.

HIRING DIFFICULTY

- **HIGH** Scarce supply, long searches, the right people are rarely in the market.
- **MODERATE** Supply tightening or pay compression emerging.
- **WATCH** Steady today, with signs of change within 12 months.
- **STEADY** Supply broadly meets demand.

A note on use. Benchmarks tell you where the market sits. They do not tell you what a specific person will move for. For a passive candidate, the case for the role, its scope and its leader often matter as much as the number.

Software and technology

SaaS, cloud and cyber. The highest base salary sector in Australian sales, where enterprise AEs at full target can out earn their managers and presales roles remain undersupplied.

ROLE	BASE SALARY (AUD)	OTE UPLIFT	HIRING DIFFICULTY
SDR / BDR	$70k to $85k	+20% to 30%	WATCH
Inside Sales Representative	$75k to $95k	+20% to 30%	WATCH
Account Executive, SMB	$110k to $125k	+30% to 40%	STEADY
Account Executive, Mid Market	$125k to $140k	+40% to 50%	MODERATE
Account Executive, Enterprise	$150k to $210k	+50% to 100%	HIGH
Strategic Account Manager	$160k to $190k	+40% to 60%	HIGH
Customer Success Manager	$110k to $135k	+10% to 20%	HIGH
Renewals Manager	$100k to $120k	+10% to 20%	MODERATE
Sales Engineer / Presales	$140k to $175k	+20% to 30%	HIGH
Partnerships / Alliances Manager	$150k to $190k	+30% to 40%	MODERATE
Sales Enablement Manager	$120k to $140k	+10% to 20%	WATCH
Sales Operations / RevOps	$120k to $150k	+10% to 15%	WATCH
Sales Manager	$160k to $200k	+40% to 60%	STEADY
Head of Sales	$200k to $230k	+50% to 75%	STEADY
Sales Director	$220k to $250k	+75% to 100%	STEADY
VP of Sales / CRO	$250k to $300k	+100%	STEADY

Market note. Enterprise AE packages have outgrown the management layer above them. Businesses that cannot offer equity, broader scope or a clear path tend to see their best sellers move on within two years.

Source: Sales Recruit Partners market view, October 2026. See methodology on page 27.

Financial services

BDMs in payments and corporate banking carry a premium, with demand ahead of supply. Packages weighted to OTE are drawing broker facing BDMs into fintech.

ROLE	BASE SALARY (AUD)	OTE UPLIFT	HIRING DIFFICULTY
Assistant Relationship Manager	$90k to $110k	+10% to 20%	STEADY
Relationship Manager	$120k to $165k	+15% to 25%	WATCH
Senior Relationship Manager	$160k to $185k	+20% to 30%	MODERATE
BDM, Payments / Corporate Banking	$140k to $170k	+20% to 30%	HIGH
Broker BDM, Mortgage / Wealth	$120k to $150k	+15% to 25%	MODERATE
Private Client Adviser	$140k to $180k	+15% to 25%	WATCH
Executive Manager / State Manager	$200k to $260k	+25% to 40%	STEADY

Market note. Relationship Manager teams look stable, but succession behind them is thinner than most businesses assume.

Healthcare and medical

Devices and pharma. Clinical complexity carries a consistent premium, hospital and specialist reps out earn GP reps, and car allowances remain standard.

ROLE	BASE SALARY (AUD)	OTE UPLIFT	CAR	HIRING DIFFICULTY
GP Sales Representative	$90k to $110k	+10% to 20%	Yes	WATCH
Hospital Specialist Representative	$110k to $135k	+20% to 30%	Yes	HIGH
Clinical Sales Specialist	$120k to $145k	+20% to 30%		MODERATE
Territory / Product Specialist	$110k to $140k	+20% to 30%	Yes	HIGH
Key Account Manager, Hospitals	$120k to $140k	+20% to 35%		MODERATE
Market Access Manager	$130k to $160k	+20% to 30%		WATCH
Regional / State Sales Manager	$130k to $160k	+30% to 40%		STEADY
National Sales Manager	$160k to $200k	+30% to 50%		STEADY
Sales Director	$200k to $250k	+40% to 60%		STEADY

Market note. Territory Managers are the most sought after role in the sector, with diagnostics, device and digital health businesses all hiring the same profile. Retaining strong performers here deserves active attention.

Source: Sales Recruit Partners market view, October 2026. See methodology on page 27.

FMCG and manufacturing

Pay compression between National Account Managers on major grocery accounts and State Managers is the defining structural issue in this sector.

ROLE	BASE SALARY (AUD)	OTE UPLIFT	CAR	HIRING DIFFICULTY
Territory Representative	$75k to $90k	+10% to 15%	Yes	WATCH
BDM, Foodservice / Route	$105k to $135k	+15% to 25%		STEADY
Category Manager, Commercial	$110k to $130k	+15% to 25%		STEADY
Shopper Activation Manager	$100k to $120k	+10% to 20%		STEADY
Key Account Manager, Grocery	$100k to $120k	+15% to 25%		MODERATE
National Account Manager, Majors	$125k to $150k	+20% to 30%		HIGH
State Sales Manager	$130k to $155k	+20% to 30%		STEADY
National Sales Manager	$150k to $180k	+25% to 35%		STEADY
Sales Director	$180k to $220k	+30% to 40%		STEADY

Market note. NAMs managing Coles and Woolworths sit within 5% of State Manager salaries in most capital city markets. Without a compelling management proposition beyond pay, succession risk builds.

Energy and utilities

A market in two halves. Generalist BDM pay is steady, while PPA origination and channel ecosystem roles command sharp premiums.

ROLE	BASE SALARY (AUD)	OTE UPLIFT	HIRING DIFFICULTY
BDM, Commercial Energy	$120k to $145k	+20% to 30%	STEADY
Strategic / Channel Manager	$130k to $160k	+25% to 35%	MODERATE
Key Account Manager, Energy Solutions	$135k to $165k	+20% to 30%	MODERATE
State Sales Manager	$135k to $170k	+30% to 40%	STEADY
National Sales Manager	$160k to $200k	+30% to 50%	STEADY
Head of Sales / Sales Director	$230k to $300k	+40% to 60%	STEADY

Market note. Specialist capability in PPA origination and channel ecosystems is scarce and typically priced 20% to 30% above generalist BDMs. Global energy businesses entering Australia are hiring mid level KAMs.

Source: Sales Recruit Partners market view, October 2026. See methodology on page 27.

Engineering, industrial and mining

Technical commercial roles, which combine engineering knowledge with deal complexity, are undersupplied and carry a 20% to 30% premium over generalist peers.

ROLE	BASE SALARY (AUD)	OTE UPLIFT	CAR	HIRING DIFFICULTY
Industrial Sales Representative	$80k to $95k	+10% to 20%	Yes	STEADY
Technical Sales Representative	$100k to $120k	+15% to 25%		STEADY
Territory Manager	$110k to $130k	+15% to 25%		MODERATE
Sales Engineer	$110k to $140k	+20% to 30%		HIGH
BDM, Capital Equipment	$120k to $150k	+20% to 30%		HIGH
Key Account Manager	$125k to $150k	+20% to 30%		WATCH
National Account Manager	$140k to $160k	+20% to 30%		STEADY
State Sales Manager	$130k to $170k	+25% to 35%		STEADY
National Sales Manager	$150k to $190k	+30% to 40%		STEADY
Sales Director	$200k to $250k	+40% to 50%		STEADY

Market note. Sales engineers and capital equipment BDMs are in demand from mining services, automation and equipment businesses at the same time.

Advertising and digital media

Programmatic and AdTech specialists carry premiums as media buying grows more complex, and partnership managers are in demand as agencies consolidate.

ROLE	BASE SALARY (AUD)	OTE UPLIFT	HIRING DIFFICULTY
Sales Executive / Account Executive	$110k to $130k	+15% to 25%	STEADY
Programmatic Specialist	$120k to $140k	+15% to 25%	MODERATE
Partnership / Agency Manager	$145k to $160k	+20% to 30%	MODERATE
Strategic Account Manager	$140k to $170k	+20% to 30%	HIGH
Enterprise AE, AdTech / Platforms	$150k to $190k	+20% to 35%	MODERATE
Sales Manager	$180k to $220k	+25% to 35%	STEADY
Head of Sales / Sales Director	$215k to $250k	+30% to 40%	STEADY

Market note. Strategic Account Managers carry the highest retention risk in this sector, as global platforms entering Australia offer stronger packages. Retention plans for this group are worth putting in place early.

Source: Sales Recruit Partners market view, October 2026. See methodology on page 27.

Building and construction

Specification roles are the commercial pivot point, shaping purchase decisions well before a tender is issued.

ROLE	BASE SALARY (AUD)	OTE UPLIFT	HIRING DIFFICULTY
Sales Representative	$80k to $100k	+10% to 20%	STEADY
Specification Manager	$110k to $140k	+15% to 25%	HIGH
Business Development Manager	$100k to $120k	+15% to 25%	STEADY
State Sales Manager	$125k to $150k	+20% to 30%	STEADY
National Sales Manager	$150k to $200k	+25% to 35%	STEADY
Head of Sales / Sales Director	$180k to $230k	+30% to 40%	STEADY

Market note. Specification Managers are often paid below their influence on revenue, and are in demand from businesses that recognise the value of their networks.

Architecture and interiors

Specification sales and design account management drive the pipeline. Senior tenure is more stable here than in technology or financial services.

ROLE	BASE SALARY (AUD)	OTE UPLIFT	HIRING DIFFICULTY
Specification Sales	$110k to $130k	+15% to 25%	HIGH
Account Manager, Design	$110k to $130k	+15% to 25%	STEADY
Key Account Manager	$120k to $145k	+20% to 30%	STEADY
State Sales Manager	$130k to $155k	+20% to 30%	STEADY
National Sales Manager	$160k to $200k	+25% to 35%	STEADY
Head of Sales / Director	$200k to $250k	+30% to 40%	STEADY

Market note. As in construction, specification roles carry the most risk. Senior roles turn over less often, so when a vacancy opens the right person is usually in a role elsewhere.

Source: Sales Recruit Partners market view, October 2026. See methodology on page 27.

PART TWO · PAY MOVEMENT

Where pay is moving

The roles under the most pay pressure are the roles closest to revenue. Employers who benchmark once a year tend to find out after a resignation.

ACCELERATING

- Enterprise SaaS Account Executives
- Healthcare Market Access Managers
- Energy PPA and Channel Specialists
- AdTech Programmatic Specialists
- Sales Engineers, all sectors
- RevOps and GTM Engineers
- Partnerships Managers

COMPRESSING

- FMCG National Account Managers
- SaaS Customer Success Managers
- Construction Specification Managers
- Financial Services Broker BDMs
- GP Sales Representatives

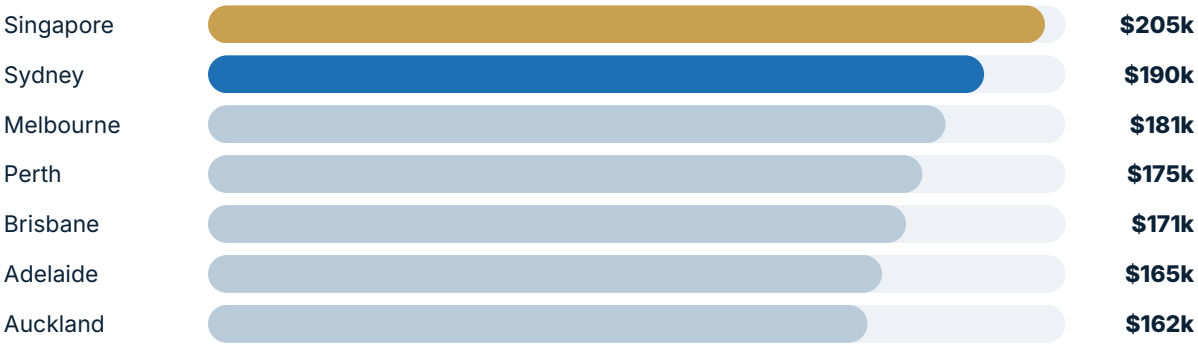
STEADY

- Mid Market Account Executives
- Generalist BDMs, all sectors
- Territory Managers
- Inside Sales Representatives
- Sales Enablement Managers

Source: Sales Recruit Partners market view, October 2026.

City and APAC differences

Our ranges are anchored to Sydney and Melbourne. Published 2026 data for account executive on target earnings shows how other markets compare.



Median account executive OTE, AUD, 2026. Source: Pointer Strategy salary benchmarks.[9] New Zealand roles typically sit 10% to 15% below Australian metropolitan rates.

Action. Check every role in the accelerating column against these ranges this quarter. Where your base sits below the midpoint, decide now whether to close the gap or plan for the vacancy.

PART THREE · SALES LEADERSHIP HIRING BY STAGE

Most leadership mishires are a stage error

The most expensive leadership failures are rarely caused by hiring the wrong person. They are caused by hiring the right person for the wrong stage.

The framework that follows maps five sales leadership stages against the deliverables, profile, failure modes and pay each requires. It draws on more than twenty years of leadership search across Australia and APAC, and on established thinking on sales management, including Jordan and Vazzana's work on sales management metrics and Roberge's models for scaling a sales team.[13]

The central point is consistent across research and practice. Each stage is a distinct role, not a bigger version of the one before. A selling leader appointed into a role that needs a manager of managers brings the wrong instincts, the wrong use of time and the wrong accountability to a team that needs organisational design and manager development.

So the first question in any leadership search is not what this person might eventually become. It is what the business needs from them in the next 90 days, given its team size, pipeline and systems today.

BEFORE YOUR NEXT LEADERSHIP SEARCH

Which stage is the business operating at today, measured by team size, pipeline maturity and commercial systems rather than ambition?

A different leader at each stage

Stage 1 proves the commercial motion personally.
Stage 2 sells and coaches at the same time.
Stage 3 stops selling and runs the system.
Stage 4 develops managers, not reps.
Stage 5 owns all revenue across functions.

1	2	3	4	5
FOUNDING SELLER	**SELLING LEADER**	**FRONTLINE MANAGER**	**MANAGER OF MANAGERS**	**COMMERCIAL CHIEF**
0 to 2 reps	2 to 5 reps	6 to 15 reps	15 to 50 reps	50+ across functions
Proves the motion	*Sells and coaches*	*Runs the system*	*Builds the layer*	*Owns all revenue*

1 The founding seller

Team size: 0 to 2 reps

Common titles: Head of Sales · National Sales Manager · Founding Head of Sales · Sales Lead

The mandate

The founders have closed the first customers. This leader must make that commercial motion repeatable beyond warm networks and founder relationships, closing deals personally to prove the ideal customer while turning founder knowledge into a playbook a team can follow.

What this leader must deliver

- Closes deals personally from day one, not from a strategy workshop
- Turns founder knowledge into a written playbook: ideal customer, discovery, objections, pricing and qualification
- Stands up the CRM from scratch, with stages, fields and basic reporting
- Writes the first forecast the board can rely on, weekly and defensible
- Makes the first one to three sales hires, from brief to onboarding
- Designs commission plans that reward the right behaviour

The right profile

Five to ten years in commercial roles, most recently as a top performing seller or founding sales hire in a growing business. Has built from zero rather than inherited a working motion. Energised by ambiguity and still loves the craft of selling.

Who this is not

A leader who has managed teams but not carried a personal target in three or more years, who wants to build a team before the model is proven, or who prefers strategy to selling.

Proof at 90 days

- → *Deals won and closed by the leader personally*
- → *A written playbook covering ideal customer, discovery and objections*
- → *CRM live, with at least one ramping rep working in it*

> **MOST COMMON FAILURE**
>
> Hiring someone who wants to manage before there is anything to manage. A Stage 1 leader who stops selling in the first 90 days has misread the role, and the business pays in lost pipeline and slower market proof.

Base $130k to $180k · OTE uplift 30% to 50%

2 The selling leader

Team size: 2 to 5 reps

Common titles: Head of Sales · Sales Manager · National Sales Manager · Commercial Manager

The mandate

The team is too small to justify pure management. This leader carries a personal target, typically 40% to 60% of a full individual target, while coaching two to five reps, running weekly pipeline reviews and acting as the closer on strategic deals. It is the most commercially demanding role in the framework and the one most often misjudged.

What this leader must deliver

- Carries a personal revenue target of 40% to 60% of a full individual target
- Runs deal reviews and coaches in live opportunities
- Joins calls, presents and closes complex deals alongside reps
- Knows when to step into a deal and when to let a rep learn
- Puts in a simple sales process the team actually follows
- Runs pipeline reviews rigorous enough to forecast accurately
- Spots underperformance early and has the hard conversation

The right profile

A high performing seller with natural coaching instincts and the energy to switch between selling and managing in the same day. Has managed one or two reps before. Low ego, and cares more about the team's number than personal recognition.

Who this is not

Simply the best individual seller on the current team. Sales performance and coaching ability are largely unrelated. Also a poor fit: anyone who sees the personal target as a temporary inconvenience.

Proof at 90 days

- → *Personal target on track or ahead at the 30 day review*
- → *At least one rep showing measurable conversion improvement*
- → *A weekly forecast submitted with real confidence in the numbers*

MOST COMMON FAILURE

Promoting the best individual contributor. It is the most predictable sales leadership failure in Australian businesses. The instincts that make an elite seller are not those that make an effective coach, and the business loses its best rep and gains a struggling manager at the same time.

Base $160k to $210k · OTE uplift 30% to 50%

3 The frontline manager

Team size: 6 to 15 reps

Common titles: Head of Sales · Sales Director · National Sales Manager · GM Sales · Head of Revenue

The mandate

The hardest transition in sales leadership. The team is too large for the leader to be across every deal, so they must stop selling entirely. Their output now comes through team performance, process quality and consistent coaching. It is the transition most leaders resist and most organisations fail to enforce.

What this leader must deliver

- Drops the personal target and focuses entirely on team performance
- Introduces a formal sales methodology, such as MEDDPICC, Challenger or SPIN, and holds the team to it
- Builds structured coaching: call reviews, deal clinics and development by rep
- Designs territories and segments that prevent overlap
- Runs proper forecasting: weighted pipeline, commit and upside, weekly
- Owns the tech stack, with CRM discipline treated as non negotiable
- Builds a hiring rhythm so someone is always ramping

The right profile

A systems thinker, process driven without being bureaucratic. Has scaled at least one team from under 10 to more than 20 reps. Can build or critique a capacity model, a ramp model and a target setting framework. Recruits, develops and exits people without drama.

Who this is not

A strong Stage 2 leader who is not yet ready to give up their own target and deal involvement, or a leader from a large corporate who has never built a process from scratch.

Proof at 90 days

- → *Personal target formally moved to zero*
- → *A coaching cadence documented and running across every rep*
- → *Forecast accuracy within 15% at the 60 day mark*

MOST COMMON FAILURE

Appointing a Stage 3 leader who keeps selling, because they miss it or do not yet trust the team. When the leader stays in deals, reps stop developing, pipeline depends on one person and the team stops scaling.

Base $200k to $260k · OTE uplift 30% to 50%

4 The manager of managers

Team size: 15 to 50 reps

Common titles: Sales Director · GM Sales · National Sales Director · Head of Commercial

The mandate

A management layer has emerged. The leader now runs two to four frontline managers, each with five to eight reps, plus SDR leadership and a sales operations function. The role is organisational rather than operational, and the main accountability has shifted from managing sellers to developing managers.

What this leader must deliver

- Recruits, develops and manages frontline sales managers as the primary job
- Designs the management layer by segment, vertical, account or geography
- Keeps teams consistent without micromanaging individual deals
- Builds forecasting that rolls up reliably into one trusted view
- Owns planning for targets, headcount, territory and capacity
- Establishes sales operations as a dedicated reporting function
- Plans succession for every manager reporting to them

The right profile

An executive operator who thinks in structures, not deals. Has personally hired and developed sales managers, not just reps, and has run a sales organisation of more than 15 people for at least two years. Numerate enough to own a monthly board forecast and comfortable deciding on imperfect information.

Who this is not

A strong Stage 3 manager who has never led leaders. The instincts that make an excellent team manager, hands on coaching and deal involvement, become interference one level up and undermine the managers they are meant to develop.

Proof at 90 days

- → *Frontline managers running their own pipeline reviews unaided*
- → *A documented succession plan for each manager*
- → *Each manager showing one clear improvement in coaching quality*

> **MOST COMMON FAILURE**
>
> Hiring a brilliant Stage 3 leader who has never managed managers. Leading leaders is a different capability, and organisations consistently underestimate the gap.

Base $230k to $300k · OTE uplift 30% to 50%

5 The commercial chief

Team size: 50+ across functions

Common titles: Chief Revenue Officer · Chief Commercial Officer · Executive General Manager · Head of Revenue

The mandate

The commercial leader now owns sales, customer success, partnerships and revenue operations as one strategy. They sit on the executive team, own the board forecast and are accountable for retention, expansion and gross margin alongside new business.

What this leader must deliver

- Aligns sales, marketing, customer success and operations behind one strategy
- Designs the organisation across every layer, from VPs to individual sellers
- Owns total revenue: new business, expansion, retention and gross margin
- Builds revenue operations: forecasting, pipeline analytics and territory modelling
- Owns the board and investor relationship on revenue
- Sets go to market strategy across direct, channel and partnerships
- Builds a bench of VPs and directors who run divisions independently

The right profile

A true executive: strategic, commercial and organisational. Has run a commercial organisation of more than 50 people across several functions, and communicates with boards and investors with composure. In Australia, often a leader returning from a senior offshore role or stepping up from an ASX listed or multinational parent.

Who this is not

A CRO who is really a Stage 3 or 4 leader: strong on sales execution, but without strategy across functions, board level communication or investor composure. The title is common. The capability is rare.

Proof at 90 days

- → *First board revenue presentation delivered, with the forecast owned*
- → *Customer success and sales operating as one function within 60 days*
- → *A 12 month commercial strategy endorsed by the board*

MOST COMMON FAILURE

Appointing on title rather than capability. Strategy across functions, investor communication, board level revenue accountability and the ability to develop VP talent are genuinely scarce in Australia.

Base $280k to $400k+ · OTE uplift 50% to 100%+

PART THREE · QUICK REFERENCE

Matching the leader to the stage you are at

Define the profile before the search begins. Brief against stage and deliverables, not title.

Profile and accountability

	STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3	STAGE 4	STAGE 5
Team size	0 to 2 reps	2 to 5 reps	6 to 15 reps	15 to 50 reps	50+ across functions
Do they sell?	Yes, full target	Yes, 40% to 60%	No, coaches	No, develops managers	No, sets strategy
Main output	Pipeline and playbook	Team target and own deals	Team performance	Organisation performance	Total revenue and retention
Reports to	Founder or CEO	CEO	CEO or COO	CEO or COO	CEO and board

Pay and the most common failure

	STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3	STAGE 4	STAGE 5
Base salary	$130k to $180k	$160k to $210k	$200k to $260k	$230k to $300k	$280k to $400k+
OTE uplift	30% to 50%	30% to 50%	30% to 50%	30% to 50%	50% to 100%+
Most common failure	**Hires a manager, not a seller**	**Promotes the best rep**	**Keeps selling too long**	**Has never led leaders**	**Really a Stage 3 or 4 leader**

Source: Sales Recruit Partners leadership search experience, Australia and APAC, 2026.

> **Every one of these failures is avoidable. The only precondition is an honest view of the stage the business is at today, before the search begins.**

PART FOUR · REVENUE OPERATIONS

Who to hire, and when

Revenue operations has moved from back office support to a direct lever on growth. The right hire depends on how mature your function already is.

Reps spend 60% of their time on work other than selling.[8] Clean data, a forecast people trust and tooling that removes admin all give time back to customers. The common mistake is hiring for the function you want in three years rather than the one you have today.

STAGE 1 · FOUNDATION

The function founder

The situation. Data sits in spreadsheets, inboxes and memory. No agreed view of the ideal customer. Each week's forecast looks different and few people trust it.

The mandate. Build the commercial operating system from a blank page: a working CRM, a clean data model and the first prospecting workflows.

GTM Engineer · RevOps Manager · Head of RevOps

$110k to $150k base

STAGE 2 · RELIABILITY

The systems integrator

The situation. A CRM exists, but data quality is uneven and reports contradict each other. Work falls through the gaps between sales, marketing and customer success.

The mandate. Turn improvised infrastructure into a dependable revenue engine, with one set of numbers everyone trusts and a forecast the board can rely on.

Head of RevOps · RevOps Director · Senior RevOps Manager

$150k to $190k base

STAGE 3 · SCALE

The revenue strategist

The situation. Forecasting is dependable and pipeline risk is visible in real time. Automation and AI assisted workflows are in daily use, and scale brings multi region complexity.

The mandate. Lead RevOps as a strategic discipline, own the systems and analytics roadmap, and advise the CRO, CFO and board on commercial performance.

VP Revenue Operations · Head of GTM Operations

$200k to $280k base

> **A vacancy in RevOps, enablement or partnerships rarely shows up in attrition reports, yet it quietly caps the performance of every seller in the business.**

PART FIVE · WHERE TO FOCUS

Seven priorities for FY 2027

For CEOs, sales leaders and HR partners reviewing their sales talent plans for the year ahead.

PAY

Price roles against today's market

Map every sales role against the ranges in Part Two, starting with roles rated high for hiring difficulty and those in the accelerating column.

LEADERSHIP

Know your real stage

Assess your commercial organisation against the five stage framework, operationally rather than aspirationally, and brief any open leadership role against it.

SUCCESSION

Name your three critical roles

Identify the three roles whose vacancy would most affect revenue in the next 12 months, and check whether anyone is ready to step in.

SEARCH

Go direct where it matters

For roles the growth plan depends on, reach the people who are performing and not looking, with a proposition worth their time.

SELECTION

Prove performance before you hire

Verify results by year against stated targets with the managers who set them, use structured interviews, and add practical work.

ONBOARDING

Plan the first 90 days before the offer

Have territory, accounts, tools and first customer meetings ready before day one. The sooner a hire is in front of customers, the sooner the plan moves.

MEASUREMENT

Judge each hire by the revenue it creates

Track time to first revenue, attainment at 6 and 12 months, 12 month retention and whether you would make the same hire again. Track it by source, so you learn which channels deliver performers and which deliver applicants.

Time to fill tells you when the seat was filled. Attainment tells you whether it was filled well.

ABOUT SALES RECRUIT PARTNERS

Sales recruitment is what we do. Growing revenues is why we do it.

Sales Recruit Partners is a specialist B2B sales recruitment firm. Since 2004 we have helped employers across Australia and APAC hire salespeople and sales leaders, from business development and account management through to executive sales appointments.

At our core we are headhunters. Most of the people we place were not looking when we called. We find the performers in your market, check their results before you meet them, and present a shortlist of at least four assessed candidates.

We offer three search models, from shortlists in as little as 10 business days through to milestone based executive search. Each is priced as a fixed professional fee agreed before work begins.

2004
the year we began specialising in B2B sales recruitment

9,000+
placements across Australia and APAC

550
sales placements in the 12 months to September 2026

4+
assessed candidates on every shortlist

Melbourne	Sydney	Brisbane	Perth	Adelaide
Victoria	New South Wales	Queensland	Western Australia	Opening soon

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Free hiring tools: benchmark salaries, design a commission plan and build the business case for a new role under Hiring Tools at salesrecruit.com.au.

APPENDIX · DEFINITIONS AND METHODOLOGY

How we built this report

Base salary

Annual fixed pay in AUD, excluding superannuation, commission, bonuses and car allowances.

OTE uplift

On target earnings at 100% of target, expressed as a percentage added to base. Actual earnings vary with performance.

Hiring difficulty

Our rating of how hard a role is to fill well. High means scarce supply and long searches. Moderate means supply is tightening or pay compression is emerging. Watch means steady today with signs of change within 12 months.

Pay compression

When the gap between a role and the management layer above it narrows to around 5% to 10%, removing the financial case for promotion.

Off market talent

Performers who are not looking for a new role and so do not appear on job boards, in applicant pools or in resume databases.

Ramp period

Time from a new hire's start date to full productivity against target.

Salary methodology

Salary ranges are the Sales Recruit Partners market view as at October 2026. They are drawn from our placement and offer records, live search mandates and candidate and hiring manager conversations across Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and Perth, and cross checked against published 2026 market sources, including SEEK salary insights, Pointer Strategy GTM benchmarks, RepVue and the Robert Walters Salary Guide 2026.[9][10][11][12] Ranges reflect the realistic spread from smaller and regional employers to enterprise employers in Sydney and Melbourne.

Third party data

Figures from published research are reported as published and referenced. Several studies are global or weighted to the United States, as noted. This report is general information and is not professional advice for any specific hiring decision.

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Sales Recruit Partners figures are drawn from our own placement records. Third party sources are cited to give context to our market observations and remain the property of their authors.

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