

# The Export Sales Manager

The export sales manager's responsibilities are not dissimilar to the home market sales manager, but are rather broader in scope and need a slightly different mix of skills and qualities. The typical key job functions include:

- Accepting responsibility for achieving objectives and export targets (volume, value, profits) by direct selling efforts and/ or with the sales support of agents or distributors
- Finding foreign markets for existing company products or services, or suitable products for foreign markets
- Establishing an international network of agents, distributors or customers capable of importing the goods, obtaining acceptable levels of distribution, and providing after-sales service (if necessary)
- Maximizing the sales effort by providing management support and advice, training and feedback in the foreign markets
- Coordinating the planning of international marketing efforts
- Maintaining morale and motivation amongst the network of foreign agents or distributors
- Interpreting and filtering company philosophies, policies and objectives to the foreign representatives
- Communicating effectively with agents and/or distributors through regular market visits, sales and planning meetings, informative bulletins and performance feedback data
- Becoming the company expert on business development and business practices in foreign markets, with the objective of increasing the company's global sales and market shares in foreign markets.
- Identifying and prioritizing export markets
- Forecasting potential sales volumes by market
- Establishing company export prices that ensure competitive destination market prices
- Identifying, setting and achieving market sales objectives, targets, budgets, and profit plans
- Developing field programmes to implement the company's sales and marketing plans in each destination foreign market
- Assisting agents and distributors develop sales organizations and management structures to achieve plans and objectives
- Converting overall export plans and objectives, in liaison with the foreign importers, into specific standards of performance, sales targets, and programmes for each individual market
- Developing an export office sales support function, customer service function and shipping department to handle:
  - Credit control
  - Invoicing and general export documentation
  - Order processing
  - Enquiries, invitations to quote complaints
  - Dispatch of sales promotional materials
  - Market performance monitoring and feedback reporting
  - Export costings
  - Export distribution
- Selecting and training all subordinate export marketers and shipping executives
- Selecting and training all the foreign agents and distributors, and any appointed sub-distributors, dealers, service agents, etc.
- Liaising with departments concerned with forecasting, domestic marketing, product development, budgeting and product costing, production planning, production, distribution, etc.
- Setting export terms of trade, prices, scale discounts, promotional allowances, etc.
- Communicating with subordinates, direct export customers and distributors on plans, programmes, policies, objectives, products and performance feedback
- Assisting in developing and test marketing new products and seeking out new product opportunities in the foreign markets
- Developing expertise in foreign market rules and regulations (including those relating to labelling, health, safety, import licensing requirements, foreign exchange regulations, product liability, agency laws) and ensuring product compliance, and limiting the exposure of the company to risk.

## ***Skills in the international marketer***

The range of job functions facing international marketers is more diversified than for the equivalent level of sales or marketing managers operating in the domestic market. Export marketers need a broader range of skills, developed to a good level of competence.

While they may not need or have the depth of expertise of their domestic marketing colleagues, in providing support to their agents and distributors they will cover competencies ranging through:

- Finance and accounting and general commercial skills
- Marketing and marketing research
- Sales management
- Personal selling and negotiating
- Management and sales training
- Strategy development, forecasting and planning
- Foreign legislation applicable to agency and distributor relationships and sale of goods in foreign markets
- Shipping practice and regulation
- Business systems, performance measurement and management controls
- Human resource management.

The export manager will normally be taking decisions away from the base office, without the immediate support of colleagues with functional expertise. In order to function successfully in an international environment, the export marketer will need to have **linguistic** skills in addition to being highly **numerate**. He or she will also need to demonstrate a mix of personal skills and qualities that includes:

organization, administrative and communications skills, decisiveness, good judgement, initiative, personal stature and authority, adaptability to various cultures and business practices, intelligence, integrity, independence and maturity to work alone abroad, and reliability to honour commitments to customers and contacts. Often managers who are experienced in domestic selling and marketing, or who are technical specialists, are transferred into export management positions without any special training, the assumptions being that the skills and balance of personal qualities needed are the same.

### ***Measuring the export marketers' performance***

The effectiveness of an organization can be monitored or measured by its achievement against goals and objectives. Once the broad export goals and objectives are established, a range of quantitative and qualitative objectives that relate to current plans can be established for each market. These are highlighted in the following list. Individual companies may choose to focus on some of these more than others, according to what is relevant to their markets, distribution system and products.

([http://e-university.wisdomjobs.com/sales-management/chapter-1674-309/developing-international-markets\\_the-export-sales-manager\\_10401.html](http://e-university.wisdomjobs.com/sales-management/chapter-1674-309/developing-international-markets_the-export-sales-manager_10401.html) )