

Sales Representative

Sell technical products to businesses. No license, no set degree, and your pay is partly up to you.

TYPICAL PAY

\$104,920

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$53k to \$200k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

up to 4 years

after high school

DEMAND

Moderate

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

**Manufacturers, distributors,
medical device and software firm...**

How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 11 and 12
Get a job that puts you in front of strangers: retail, serving, a call center, anything. Public speaking class if it exists.
- 2 Degree, usually** 2 to 4 years
Business, marketing, communications, or a science or engineering degree if you want medical or industrial sales. Many employers accept any major.
- 3 Entry sales role** 1 to 2 years
Inside sales or business development: calling and emailing new customers to book meetings. Six months to two years of this.
- 4 Account executive** Year 2 to 4
Your own territory or account list, your own quota, your own commission. This is where the money starts.
- 5 Senior, enterprise or management** Year 5 onward
Bigger accounts and longer deals, or switching to running a team of reps.

Pros and cons

- + Six figure income without graduate school or a license
- + Your pay is tied to your own results, not your job title
- + Your degree subject barely matters
- The quota resets to zero every single quarter
- Constant rejection, and most of your calls go nowhere
- Income is unstable, and a bad market is not treated as an excuse

Optional boosts

Move into medical device or capital equipment. A technical degree. CRM (customer relationship management) software. Spanish or Mandarin.

Good to know

Selling became a university subject recently

In 2007 roughly a dozen United States universities taught sales as a program. There are now more than 250. Recruiters go to their competitions the way engineering firms go to career fairs.

Technical sales is its own wage category

The federal wage survey keeps sales of technical and scientific products in a separate box from every other kind of sales, because the pay is so much higher. The knowledge is what is being paid for.

Where these numbers come from

My Next Move: Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Technical and Scientific Products (41-4011.00)

Sales Education Foundation

University of Houston: Stephen Stagner Sales Excellence Institute

Apprenticeship.gov: United States Department of Labor

Numbers checked September 2026. Pay figures are typical full-time annual amounts in United States dollars, based on Bureau of Labor Statistics wage data and published pay scales. They vary by state, employer and experience. Tuition is for in-state students at public schools unless the card says otherwise. Sources, links and the click-through version: <https://career.help/us/careers/sales-representative>



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