

Sample account manager job description and interview questions

Account managers are an essential part of your sales team. They provide a positive customer experience for current clients and help your business secure new clients. If you are planning to hire an Account Manager for your company, take a look at our Account Manager job description example and our sample interview questions to get started.

What is an Account Manager?

An Account Manager is in charge of building relationships with customers. They develop long-term relationships with their assigned client accounts to maintain and grow those accounts. They work to increase sales in existing accounts by identifying additional solutions that can meet customers' needs. They also support reordering and contract renewals to retain clients.

Many Account Managers also work to acquire new customers. This can include conducting outreach to prospective customers over the phone, in person, and through email. Account Managers try to learn about the prospective client's current needs and educate them on their company's products or services and how they can meet those needs.

Account Manager job description template

Overview

The Account Manager will be responsible for developing and maintaining relationships with new and existing clients. They will serve as the primary point of contact for their assigned accounts and will handle any customer needs or concerns. The Account Manager should be able to effectively identify customer needs and offer solutions and product recommendations based on those needs. The ideal candidate will demonstrate exceptional communication and problem-solving skills.

Job Responsibilities

- Manage assigned accounts with existing and potential customers.
- Identify customer needs and recommend appropriate merchandise to meet those needs.
- Place orders while taking into account delivery dates and inventory levels.
- Upsell and cross-sell to expand to increase sales volume.

- Analyze customer buying influences, then develop budgets and purchasing criteria for assigned accounts.
- Prepare and analyze sales reports.
- Educate customers on new releases and product or service updates.
- Meet with decision-makers and stakeholders to sell into new accounts.
- Collaborate with internal teams to support sales and marketing initiatives.
- Work to meet sales goals and performance metrics as assigned by leadership.

Qualifications

- Excellent communication skills
- Knowledge of negotiation techniques
- Effective time management skills
- Previous work experience in sales
- Proficiency with Microsoft Excel
- Bachelor's degree in business administration or a related field preferred

Account Manager interview questions

Here are some helpful questions to ask when interviewing Account Manager candidates. These questions are designed to help you learn more about the candidate, their past work experience, and how they would approach the role if hired.

1. How do you build strong client relationships?

Building strong relationships with current customers and prospects is the primary purpose of an Account Manager role. This question gives the candidate a chance to share how they go about building those relationships. An ideal Account Manager client will have strong interpersonal skills and a strategy for fostering meaningful customer relationships. The candidate may share how they build rapport with new clients, their communication and follow-up strategy, and examples of how they've built customer relationships in their past roles.

2. How do you stay in touch with all of your customer accounts and keep track of their needs?

The best Account Managers typically have some sort of system for keeping track of their customer communications and monitoring client needs. Those that don't utilize some form of customer tracking or communication planning system tend to let clients fall through the cracks. Without an organized system, they'll likely devote most of their time to the most communicative or needy clients, and fail to proactively reach out to the more self-sufficient clients. All customer accounts should be receiving regular check-ins in order to boost client retention and satisfaction.

There's not necessarily a right answer here, but there is a wrong one. Every sales professional has their own system for tracking client needs and customer outreach. They can use spreadsheets, calendars, planners, project management tools, or schedule tasks within the CRM system. The primary concern is that the candidate demonstrates that they have a system and possess organizational skills.

3. Are you comfortable cold-calling prospective customers?

Phone sales and cold calling are often regarded as the most challenging sales activities. Not everyone is comfortable cold-calling prospects, but you want an Account Manager that is confident in their ability to close sales and build client relationships through cold-calling.

One thing to note about this question is that you'll usually get a "yes". After all, most candidates would prefer to get an offer, so they're likely going to give you the answer that they think you're looking for. You'll want to pay attention to not only what they say but how they say it. Did they sound enthusiastic about the prospect of cold-calling or nervous? Were they displaying confident body language? You can also encourage them to expand on their past phone sales experience.

4. Tell us about a time when you lost a client or missed out on a sale. What did you learn from that experience?

With this question, you should be evaluating the candidate's ability to learn and grow from mistakes or missed opportunities. The ideal candidate should demonstrate self-awareness by giving a genuine answer of where things went wrong and how they would improve next time. You don't want to hire the candidate that says they've never made a mistake or lost a sale, as nobody has a 100% close rate. Instead, you want to hire someone that can demonstrate that they're continuously working on themselves and growing as a sales professional.

5. Describe the most challenging account you have worked on.

This question is a great way to give candidates an opportunity to share a success story or showcase how they overcame a major challenge. Everyone that's worked in customer service or sales understands that some customers can be extremely challenging to work with. The question allows the candidate to explain how they handle those challenges.

There may have been a particularly challenging request, a hard-to-please client that they eventually won over, or something else. It's helpful to get a picture of what they view as a challenging account and how they've worked to close sales or retain customers despite the challenges presented.