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Sales Job Watch Dec 15 2010

Ideal Cost Hiring 60 Sales Representatives

By Shareen Pathak

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Got ethics? Get hired.

Ideal Cost, a merchant consulting firm that works with small and mid-sized business to cut down credit card acceptance rates through negotiations with credit card vendors, is hiring at least 60 sales reps nationwide. One of the requirements is that candidates have strong morals.

"We want someone who would rather lose a sale than make a wrong one," said Robert Livingstone, founder and president of the West Palm Beach, Fla.-based firm. "Our reps have to be clean and honest."

Why? Because Livingstone has a bone to pick with the credit card processing business, which he calls the "filthiest" industry you can get involved in. Livingstone wants his company to rise above the credit card processing firms that do not take an honest approach. He himself used to work in the industry but had to leave, because he "didn't fit in with everyone else."

So he founded Ideal Cost in January 2009 and claims the company only gets paid if the client's needs are satisfied and the customer does see some cost savings as a result of their work.

To make sure he only gets candidates with an ethical gene, Livingstone puts job seekers through a set of psychological tests, which examine what motivates a person, how upstanding they are and whether they would be a good fit for the company. Though sales experience is preferred, Livingstone said he hires people if he "has a good feeling about them."

Reps work remotely, and can arrange to work flexibly. The company provides training over the phone and online. He plans to finish hiring by summer next year. The company has just under 300 clients right now.

Compensation is commission-based, and every employee gets 50% of the profit of every account -- much higher than the industry average, said Livingstone.

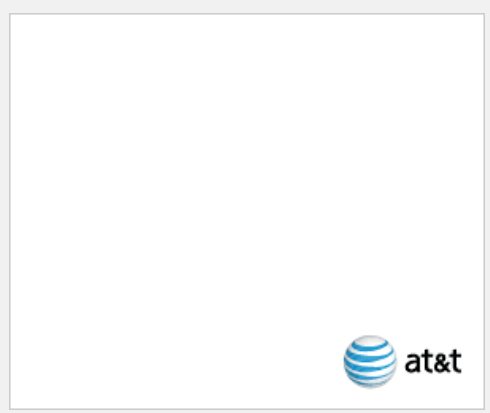
Livingstone himself runs a tight ship. "There's no regulation in this industry," he said. "But I treat it as if our reps and I could lose licenses -- even though we don't have any."

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