

# Advice from a head-hunter for sales people who want to become a CEO

Tim Bright

[www.oneworldconsulting.com](http://www.oneworldconsulting.com)

# Who am I?

- 23 years of consulting experience in Turkey, Asia, the US and Western Europe.
- Recruit General Managers, Sales Directors, Business Heads for some of the world's leading organisations.
- Coach CEOs, Sales Directors and other executives.

# OneWorld Consulting Services



- **Retained Executive Search**
- **Leadership & Development**
  - Executive Coaching
  - Mentoring Programs
  - Leadership Team Development & Facilitation
  - Coaching Skills Programmes
- **Career Transition**
  - Outplacement
  - Onboarding Coaching
  - Career Coaching
- **People Consulting**
  - Salary Benchmark Surveys, Talent Surveys
  - Management Audits / Assessments
  - Cross-cultural Coaching / Training

# Aims for this presentation

- To give some personal observations and advice based on my executive search experience.

# What headhunting projects are easier and harder in Turkey?

- General Managers, CFOs, Marketing Directors
- Sales Managers and Directors
- We recommend young people to go into sales to start their career.

# What do our clients want?

- Field experience across all of Turkey, not just the big cities.
- Great knowledge of all channels. For many of our clients 65% of sales volume is still in traditional channels.
- The ability to work effectively with all types of people.
- Great people management skills.
- Contemporary analytical and structured approach to sales.
- Drink tea in Kayseri, do PowerPoint in New York.

# What are candidate weaknesses?

- Not speaking good enough English.
- Not looking at the whole market, not wanting to work outside of Istanbul.
- Either too 'sokak' or too 'salon'. We need both.
- Too arrogant.
- Too many job changes without good reasons, always 'somebody else's fault'.

# Advice - Develop yourself

- Raise your self awareness, get specific feedback, regularly from all sources, act on it. Know yourself.
- **“Be yourself, more, with skill”** (Goffee & Jones, “Why should anyone be led by you?” *Harvard Business Review*).
- Be authentic, be yourself, but with skill. This doesn’t mean just say what you want or abuse people.
- Know your strengths and weaknesses, use your strengths.
- Learn from your mistakes.



# Develop your business skills

- Constantly improve your sales knowledge, systems and techniques. Read, study, learn formally and from observation. Look for best practices in all sectors. Don't think your sector is the best, the hardest or unique.
- Build your understanding of marketing, operations, finance and HR. Contribute to business discussions.
- Learn about the value chains in your sector.
- Understand the market, think about the future and Michael Porter's 5 Forces (new entrants, substitutes, suppliers, customers, competitors).

# Develop your people skills

- Focus on being a great people manager, improve at this. Study engagement and build highly engaged teams. EQ is more important than IQ and culture beats strategy.
- Learn how to be a great coach. How to listen, and ask questions. Help other people think better. Support and challenge others to develop themselves. Be authentic, not manipulative.
- Focus on people's strengths and on finding solutions, rather than just analysing problems.
- Develop 'learned optimism' in yourself & others (Seligman).

# Career advice

- Always keep in touch with the field and the market, not just the sophisticated end.
- Take horizontal career moves if they will develop you.
- Work in different sectors, regions and countries. Get out of your comfort zone, take risks. Learn from failures.
- Don't change jobs too often without a good reason. Take on more responsibilities in your current company.
- Managing your career is a job. Be proactive. Don't expect people to come and find you.

# Job finding advice

- Network – build connections and raise your profile.
- If you lost your job tomorrow, who are the first 10 people you would contact?
- Contact them now.
- Be aware of your online profile and manage it.

# *What do sales managers do wrong in interviews?*

- Not able to demonstrate successes.
- Claiming all success is their own responsibility.
- Questions that cause problems -
  - “What was the last mistake you made, and what did you learn from it?”
  - “Tell me about a weakness.”
  - “Why did you leave that company?”

# *What do we look for in interviews?*

- Track record of successes, logical career moves.
- Presentation and relationship skills.
- Good analytical skills, systematic approach to sales.
- Ability to recognize and learn from mistakes.
- Continuous development, openness to change.
- Balance of confidence and humility. Maturity, self awareness.

# *What we see in the best sales people*

- Move from individual contributor to leader.
- Most value add is through leading others, but still keep in touch with customers and add personal value.
- Collaborative style, work very well with other functions.
- Add value to the organisation through providing insights, analysing data, coming up with innovations. It's not just about managing relationships.
- A strong focus on developing talent and coaching others.

# *You are in a great position to be a CEO*

- Sales is the core of most businesses.
- Understanding the market environment across Turkey as it changes in coming years will be vital for most companies.
- The team leadership skills that sales managers develop are essential for CEOs.
- Develop yourself, be yourself, stretch yourself and add new skills and knowledge. And....
- ...make sure you have a sustainable life balance, it's a marathon, not a sprint.





See our updated resources, articles and advice -

[www.oneworldconsulting.com](http://www.oneworldconsulting.com)



[twitter.com/oneworldconsult](https://twitter.com/oneworldconsult)



[facebook.com/OneWorldConsulting](https://facebook.com/OneWorldConsulting)