

Positioning Maps

Chart Your Path to a Meaningful Career

Competitive positioning is how you differentiate yourself from other job candidates and create value for your employer. It's about how you carve out a niche in the marketplace. These customized guides, by position title, help you achieve this.

December 2024

Your Guide to Becoming a Business Development Representative

Are you interested in becoming a Business Development Representative (BDR) when you graduate?

This **Positioning Map** identifies the programs you can participate in at TRSM, to help you develop a specific and relevant skill set that will make you far more competitive when applying to this type of full-time role.

STEP 1 - Understand the Skills Expected of a BD Representative

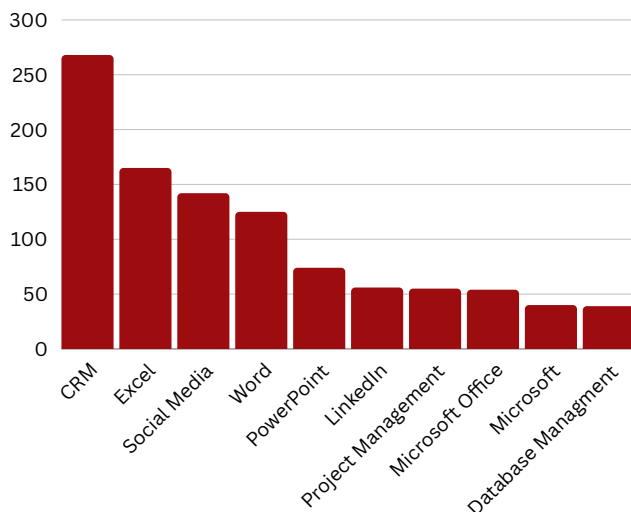
We analyzed 377 job postings in our job portal, for *Business Development Representative* roles, for the period September 2018 to June 20 2023, and identified the top most cited technical and professional skills across these job descriptions.

Highlighted below are the skills employers are seeking when recruiting for this role.

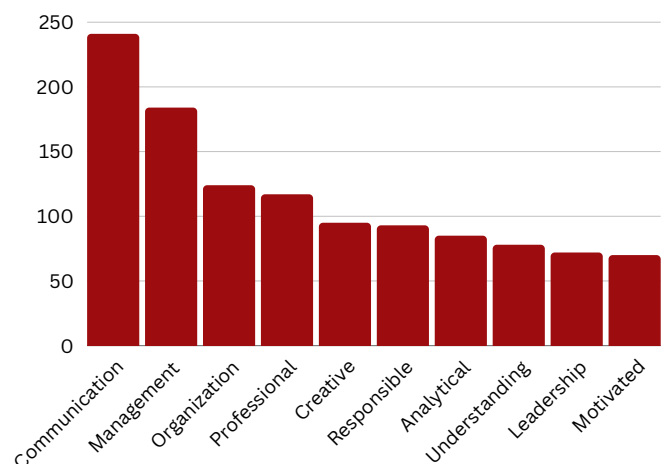
Note the importance of CRM, Excel, Social Media, and Microsoft Word, in addition to the ability to communicate effectively and analyze a problem.



Top 10 Technical Skills for BD Representative



Top 10 Professional Skills for BD Representative



STEP 2 - Learn About the TRSM Programs That Align With These Skills

Program	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Register for Bootcamps: Excel, Power BI, Tableau, SQL, Python, VBA, R, Salesforce (CRM), and Microsoft Certification
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Attend Prep Programs: Project Management, Consulting, Product Management
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Join Student Groups: TMU Toastmasters , TMU Student Groups , TRSM Student Groups
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Participate in Case Competitions/Conferences: Leadership Development , TRACE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ted Rogers Co-op: Depending on Your Program Students in RET, ENT, HTM, BTM and SAF apply at the end of your 1st year, by June 1. All other Business Management majors apply at the end of 2nd year.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Hub Insights reports: All About Co-op , Industry Sector: Sales , A Day in the Life: Client Experience Manager

Why Professional Skills Are Important To Employers

Communication Skills

Business Development Representatives (BDR) require strong sales and negotiation skills to understand customer needs and present solutions effectively in negotiating deals, contracts, and new partnerships. Excellent verbal and written communication skills enhances your networking skills to build relationships with potential clients.

Management Skills

A BDR will have the proficiency in managing multiple projects simultaneously and meeting deadlines. Employers require you to have the ability to coordinate resources and teams to execute business development initiatives.

Organizational Skills

It's important for a BDR to prioritize tasks and manage time effectively to achieve goals. You must have the ability to balance short-term and long-term business development activities.



Professionalism Skills

BDRs are required to maintain a positive, professional and proactive approach to challenges within the project team.



Analytical Skills

Having the capacity to analyze client requirements and identify opportunities to drive sales is a skill that is universal in any business setting.



Teamwork Skills

BDRs work with internal and external departmental cross-functional teams, promoting teamwork. Being able to foster positive relationships among new and existing team members is important in a business development role.



Tech Savvy Skills

Familiarity with Salesforce, Excel, project management software, and other collaboration tools allows you to better understand clients and data.

STEP 3 - Prepare for the Interview

Typical Interview Questions for a Business Development Representative

Here are some examples of behavioural questions, paired with answers to guide you when preparing for your next interview. Keep in mind interview questions can vary depending on the industry and level of the role.



Tip #1 This question tests your communication skills. It also tests your understanding of the business development role. If you can define the parameters of the role, it will show hiring managers that you know what you're signing up for.

What does a Business Development Representative do?



Business Developers act as a bridge between potential customers and the sales team. They are instrumental in kick-starting the sales process, building relationships, and identifying opportunities for business growth. Their work is fundamental to a company's overall success by ensuring a steady influx of qualified leads into the sales pipeline.





Tip #2 This question tests your understanding of the organization's existing client base, its target customer, and its position in the marketplace. Be prepared to offer a customer profile, but also offer suggestions for potential client bases that haven't yet been tapped. For example: Where can the organization grow its client base?

What do you think describes our ideal customer?



The ideal customer for your company, in my opinion, is one who not only has a need for your products or services but also aligns with your company's values and goals. They should be a good fit in terms of industry, company size, and budget. Understanding your ideal customer is crucial for tailoring the sales approach and ensuring that the efforts are focused on prospects with the highest likelihood of conversion.



Tip #3 Hiring managers want to know how you work, your knowledge of best practices, your attention to detail, and your creativity. Talk about how you prospect for potential customers—where do you look and how do you identify the right contacts? Talk about the kind of questions you ask prospects to determine whether they are qualified to move further along the sales process.

Can you walk us through your sales process?



My approach to the sales process typically follows these steps. I begin by identifying potential leads, which may include cold calls, email outreach, and leveraging social media platforms. Once a lead expresses interest, I engage in a conversation to assess their needs and budget. Then I present our products or services as solutions to the prospect's specific needs, highlighting the value and benefits. In closing I work towards securing the commitment. After a deal is closed, I maintain communication to ensure customer satisfaction



Tip #4 This question evaluates your ability to overcome obstacles and help seal the deal. Client objections typically fall into one of four categories: lack of need, lack of urgency, lack of trust, and lack of funds. Answer this question by sharing how you might approach each of those objections, from attentively listening to their concerns, to requesting time to discuss the matter further.

How would you handle a difficult prospect?

“ Handling a difficult prospect requires patience and a strategic approach. I would listen actively, let the client prospect express their concerns or objections fully. I'd empathize, acknowledge their concerns and try to understand their viewpoint. I would also ask open-ended questions to get to the root of their concerns and address them directly. I'd be polite and maintain professionalism throughout the conversation. ”

 **Quick Tip!**

- Use the STAR method to answer behavioural questions based on your own experiences to showcase your knowledge and capabilities. Review the [Behavioural Interviews Hub Insights Report](#) to prepare.
- Remember to tailor your responses to your own experiences and the specific company you're interviewing with.

STEP 4 - Update LinkedIn and Resume - and Apply

Now that you have better positioned yourself for this role, make sure to update your LinkedIn profile, your resume and cover letter to reflect how aligned you now are with this type of role.

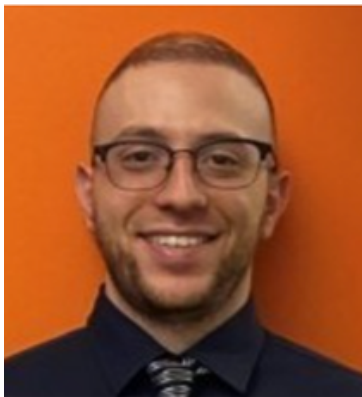
Check out these Hub Insights resources for best practices on doing just this!

1. [LinkedIn](#)
2. [Resumes](#), [Cover Letters](#)
3. [Interview Tips: Behavioural Interviews](#), [Behavioural Interviews In-depth](#)

Employers Hiring Business Development Reps



Meet TRSM Alumni



Strategic Development Account Executive, FedEx Express Canada

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“ I have held a few Sales roles at FedEx Express Canada and most recently I was promoted to Strategic Development Account Executive. My average day-to-day consists of both managing and prospecting through small and medium sized businesses in my designated territory. I ensure customer challenges and situations are resolved in order to streamline their daily operations, allowing for faster movement of their goods to market. ”

A few words of advice and pointers to any TRSM students interested in pursuing a career in BD and Sales is to be adaptable, be willing to take initiative, and to be reliable. It is up to you to get creative with your problem-solving skills and adapt to changing environments. I would also encourage students to build their technological skills through BCH Bootcamps. Both Salesforce CRM and Excel are a few technologies I use daily in my role.

Learn More for Free



Business Development Guide

The BD School is shaping the the future of Business Development and helping young BDR's acquire the skills to excel and leave a mark in the corporate world. Click [here](#) to access the BD Guide.



Canadian Professional Sales Association (CPSA)

Endless resources for students interested in kick starting a career in sales. Check out networking events opportunities, scholarships and the OPSA student Sales guide.



Ted Rogers Leadership Centre

Access a variety of resources on how to engage through networking, learn new skills and expand the mind through a in-depth speaker series led by academic and non-academic speakers who examine ethics in commerce.

Visit the Business Career Hub

Employer Events

The BCH hosts several employer events to prepare you for your professional career. Refer to your weekly BCH Careers Newsletter for a list of upcoming [events](#).

Bootcamps/Prep Programs

Advance your technical, earn digital badges, and gain an advantage in today's workforce through Bootcamps. [Click here to register for current bootcamps.](#)

Coaching & Mock Interview

For career coaching, interview prep and more, [schedule a 1:1 appointment](#) with a Career Consultant or a Co-op Coordinator.



Career Consultant Contributor Alethia Davis-Hecker

Alethia is a Career Consultant and UWindsor Alumni with 6+ years of experience in the career services industry. She is the founder of SMILE (non-profit). She is passionate about encouraging students to live fruitful lives and aspire to greatness!



Student Contributors Muneera Ali

Muneera is a Business Technology Management student who worked as a Project Coordinator at the Business Career Hub in her 3rd year. She is interested in self-development, gaining meaningful experiences, and wishes to pursue a career in the ever expanding field of Information Technology.



Katie Doan

Katie, a Global Management Studies student, held the role of a Project Coordinator for Hub Insights during her 4th Co-op work term. As an active student leader, she supports several initiatives including AIESEC and Fit For Business, where she was a Mentor for 1st Year Students. Her career aspirations encompass Project Management, Supply Chain, and Logistics Management.