

Step 1: Profile Matching

We help salespeople strategically identify the best job opportunities available after considering their:

- Income Goals**
- Overarching Career Goals**
- Existing Work Experience**
- Preference to Work In-person or Remote**
- Risk Tolerance**

Profile Matching

Lesson Overview

- Understanding the Industry
- Understanding Different Roles
- Creating Your Target Employer List
- Career Development Maps

Understanding The Landscape

Why Does SaaS Pay So Much?

1. Cost of Goods Sold (write once sell forever!)
2. High Demand for Talent

SaaS Product Landscape

[Link to SaaS Products](#)

Different Company Profiles

1. startups,
2. mid-sized companies,
3. industry leading companies

Compensation Structure

On-Target Earnings

- OTE is a combination of an employee's base salary and the expected variable commissions or bonuses for achieving target performance levels.
- Example \$300k OTE = \$150k Salary + \$150k Annual Commission

Compensation Structure

Stocks

- Equity compensation (stock options or RSUs) represents partial ownership in the company, but only creates value if the company grows significantly and achieves a liquidity event (IPO or acquisition) or, for public companies, through stock price appreciation
- Enterprise Leaders (Salesforce, Google, Microsoft) offer RSUs that vest into liquid, tradable stock with immediate market value, providing predictable additional compensation (\$50k-\$200k+/year) on top of cash earnings that you can sell quarterly
- Growth Champions offer stock options or RSUs that may become valuable if the company goes public or gets acquired, typically within 3-5 year timeframe given their growth trajectory—realistic \$100k-\$1M potential but not guaranteed
- Venture-Backed Startups offer highest equity percentages (0.1%-0.5%) to offset risk, but these options are illiquid and speculative—70-80% of well-funded startups still fail, meaning most equity grants expire worthless despite impressive share counts
- Never rely on unvested or illiquid equity for living expenses or financial planning; only liquid RSUs from public

Understanding Different Roles

Understanding the Landscape

- Global Account Director - (Enterprise Leaders)
- Global Account Director (Growth Champions)
- Enterprise AE - (Enterprise Leaders)
- Enterprise AE - (Growth Champions)
- Enterprise AE - (Venture-Backed Startups)
- Mid-market AE - (Enterprise Leaders)
- Mid-market AE (Growth Champions)
- Small Business AE (Enterprise Leaders)
- Small Business AE (Growth Champions)
- Small Business AE (Venture-Backed Startups)

Company Profile	Company Type	Example
Enterprise Leaders	Industry Leader/ High-Growth	Salesforce, Google, AWS
Growth Champions	Rising Star/ Product-Led SaaS Company	Zoom, Slack, Miro, Airtable, DocuSign
Venture- Backed Startups	High-Growth/ Startups	Ramp, Gong, Brex, Rippling, Dell

Enterprise Leaders

Company Characteristics:

- Established market dominators (\$1B+ revenue) with household brand names like Salesforce, Google, Microsoft, and AWS—maximum job security, comprehensive benefits, and predictable career paths make these optimal for building enterprise skills and resume credibility
- Lowest risk profile with stable income, mature sales processes, and 70-85% of reps consistently hitting quota; best choice for career switchers, parents/providers, or anyone prioritizing income stability over equity speculation
- Highest cash compensation (\$300k-\$600k+ OTE) with liquid RSU grants vesting into tradable public stock worth \$50k-\$200k+ annually—immediate wealth accumulation without gambling on company success
- Strategic fit: Choose if you need predictable earnings, want enterprise methodology training, seek work-life balance, or plan to build savings before taking calculated risks at high-growth companies
- Trade-offs include slower promotions due to organizational layers, bureaucratic processes, and lower learning velocity, but provides foundation for future moves to leadership roles at smaller, faster-growing companies

Growth Champions

Company Characteristics:

- High-growth product leaders (\$50M-\$500M revenue) with strong market positioning, proven business models, and clear IPO trajectory within 3-5 years—balanced risk/reward profile optimal for mid-career professionals seeking acceleration
- Moderate risk with validated revenue streams and institutional funding, but still dependent on execution and market conditions; expect evolving processes, strategic shifts, and potential restructuring during downturns
- Competitive compensation (\$200k-\$400k OTE) with meaningful pre-IPO equity (0.01%-0.1%) that has realistic potential to yield \$100k-\$1M+ at successful exit—neither gambling nor guaranteed, but reasonable odds if you evaluate company fundamentals
- Strategic fit: Choose if you have 3+ years SaaS experience, can tolerate uncertainty for career growth, have 6-12 months financial cushion, and want to optimize for both current earnings and equity upside
- Expect fast-paced environment (50-60 hour weeks), frequent priority changes, and need for self-direction, but offers fastest path to leadership roles, skill diversification, and significant wealth creation in successful exit scenarios

Venture-Backed Startups

Company Characteristics:

- Well-funded early-stage startups (Series A-C, <\$50M revenue) experiencing rapid growth but still proving scalability and business model viability—highest equity percentages but also highest risk of complete failure
- High risk profile with 70-80% failure rate despite venture funding; companies may run out of capital, pivot away from your market, or shut down unexpectedly even after raising significant funds—minimal job security regardless of your performance
- Compensation heavily weighted toward equity (0.1%-0.5% ownership) to offset lower cash (\$140k-\$220k OTE), requiring successful exit in 5-10 years to realize any value—90% probability equity becomes worthless, 10% chance of \$500k-\$10M+ payout
- Strategic fit: Only choose if you're risk-tolerant with 12-18 months financial runway, early in career without obligations, seeking maximum learning velocity, or making calculated bet as part of diversified strategy (not all-in on one startup)
- Reality check: Expect 60-70 hour weeks, ambiguous roles, constant change, limited resources, high stress, and strong possibility of job loss—most employees leave before equity vests, and even "hot" startups frequently fail

Compensation Expectations

- Global Account Director- (Grade 1)
- Global Account Director (Grade 2)

Salesforce
\$376k – \$504k

Salesforce
\$188k – \$252k

Compensation Expectations

- Enterprise Account Executive- (Grade 1)
- Enterprise Account Executive- (Grade 2)
- Enterprise Account Executive- (Grade S)

Salesforce
\$376k – \$504k

Salesforce
\$188k – \$252k

Compensation Expectations

- Small Business Account Executive- (Grade 1)
- Small Business Account Executive- (Grade 2)

Salesforce
\$376k – \$504k

Salesforce
\$188k – \$252k

Compensation Expectations

- Mid-Market Account Executive- (Grade 1)
- Mid-Market Account Executive- (Grade 2)
- Mid-Market Account Executive- (Grade S)

Salesforce
\$376k – \$504k

Salesforce
\$188k – \$252k

Compensation: Enterprise Leaders

Detailed Breakdown

- Base Salary Range: \$150k-\$250k depending on role level (AE to Global Account Director) and company tier within Enterprise Leaders
- Variable/Commission: \$150k-\$350k at 100% quota attainment, structured as quarterly or annual bonuses with accelerators at 100%+
- Total OTE: \$300k-\$600k+ for enterprise roles, with top performers at companies like Salesforce, Google, AWS earning \$800k-\$1M+ total comp
- Liquid RSU Grants: \$50k-\$200k+ annual value that vests quarterly into tradable public stock you can sell immediately for cash
- Benefits Package: Comprehensive health insurance, 401k matching (typically 3-6%), unlimited PTO, professional development budgets, wellness programs
- Quota Attainment: 70-85% of reps consistently hit quota in healthy Enterprise Leader sales orgs, providing predictable income

Compensation: Growth Champions

Detailed Breakdown

- Base Salary Range: \$120k-\$180k depending on company stage (Series B vs. Series D) and role complexity
- Variable/Commission: \$80k-\$220k at 100% quota attainment, with aggressive accelerators for over-performance common at high-growth companies
- Total OTE: \$200k-\$400k for mid-market and enterprise roles, competitive with Enterprise Leaders for cash compensation
- Pre-IPO Equity: 0.01%-0.1% ownership in stock options or RSUs that vest over 4 years, currently illiquid but potential \$100k-\$1M+ value at successful exit
- Benefits Package: Competitive health insurance, 401k (often no match), standard PTO, equity-heavy total comp philosophy
- Quota Attainment: 60-75% of reps hit quota in well-run Growth Champion companies, slightly more variable than Enterprise Leaders
- Risk-Adjusted Value: If company achieves successful IPO or acquisition in 3-5 years, total comp can match or

Compensation: Venture-Backed Startups

Detailed Breakdown

- Base Salary Range: \$100k-\$140k at early-stage startups, with some well-funded Series B/C companies offering \$120k-\$160k
- Variable/Commission: \$40k-\$80k at 100% quota attainment, but quotas often change mid-year as company finds product-market fit
- Total OTE: \$140k-\$220k cash compensation, significantly lower than other profiles to offset with equity grants
- Equity Grants: 0.1%-0.5% ownership in stock options with 4-year vesting, but 70-80% probability this becomes worthless if company fails
- Benefits Package: Basic health insurance, limited or no 401k, minimal PTO, lean operating philosophy means fewer perks
- Quota Attainment: 40-60% of reps hit quota as company experiments with ICP, pricing, and sales process—highly variable performance
- Reality Check: You're betting \$100k-\$200k in foregone cash comp annually for 10% chance your equity is worth

Creating Your List of Target Employers

Understand Current Position

Self-Assessment Framework

- Years in SaaS Sales: Are you new to SaaS (0-1 years), building skills (1-3 years), or experienced (3+ years)?
- Current Income & Financial Obligations: What's your current total comp? Do you have dependents, mortgage, or financial responsibilities requiring stable income?
- Risk Tolerance & Financial Runway: How many months of expenses do you have saved? Can you afford 12-18 months of income uncertainty?
- Primary Career Goal: Maximize current cash earnings? Build enterprise skills and resume credibility? Pursue equity upside and wealth creation?
- Work Preferences: Do you thrive in structure (processes, training, support) or prefer autonomy (ambiguity, self-direction, wearing multiple hats)?
- Learning Style: Do you learn best from proven methodologies and mentorship, or through trial-and-error and rapid iteration?
- Download the Self-Assessment Worksheet to score your answers and identify your optimal company profile

Career Goals

- Life Long AE
- Startup Hopper
- Early Retire
- Leadership Track
- Business Owner/ Founder
- Eventually Transition Discipline

Creating Your List

(Link List of Company's By Grade)

Creating Your List

Additional Tool: RepVue

Creating Your List

Additional Tool: Best Place to Work

Example 1: Career Stability Seeker

Profile: Parent/Provider prioritizing income security | Target: Enterprise Leaders

- Salesforce - Market leader in CRM, \$31B+ revenue, predictable \$350k-\$600k OTE, excellent benefits, strong work-life balance
- Microsoft (Dynamics 365) - Tech giant with stable territories, \$250k-\$450k OTE, comprehensive training, low risk
- Oracle - Enterprise software leader, \$300k-\$550k OTE, established accounts, predictable commission structure
- Google Cloud - Rapid growth within stable parent, \$280k-\$500k OTE, cutting-edge product, strong brand credibility
- AWS - Cloud market leader, \$300k-\$600k+ OTE, massive installed base, excellent career progression paths
- Adobe - Creative/marketing software leader, \$250k-\$450k OTE, sticky products, low customer churn
- SAP - Enterprise ERP leader, \$280k-\$500k OTE, long sales cycles, deep customer relationships, global reach
- ServiceNow - IT workflow platform leader, \$300k-\$550k OTE, strong product-market fit, growing TAM

Example 2: Equity Optimizer

Profile: Mid-career professional seeking balanced risk/reward | Target: Growth Champions

- DataRobot - AI/ML platform leader (\$300M+ ARR), strong Series G funding, IPO trajectory 2-3 years, 0.02-0.05% equity potential
- Gong - Revenue intelligence leader (\$200M+ ARR), category creator, \$250k-\$400k OTE + meaningful equity, high growth
- Notion - Collaboration workspace (\$100M+ ARR), viral product-market fit, strong brand momentum, IPO-track
- Airtable - Low-code database platform (\$150M+ ARR), broad use cases, enterprise expansion, well-funded
- Figma - Design collaboration leader (recently acquired by Adobe for \$20B - example of successful exit outcome)
- Rippling - HR/IT platform (\$200M+ ARR), multi-product expansion, fast growth, strong unit economics
- Webflow - No-code web platform (\$100M+ ARR), designer-favorite, enterprise push, equity potential
- Superhuman - Email productivity (\$30M+ ARR), premium positioning, strong NPS, growth trajectory

Example 3: High-Risk Growth Hunter

Profile: Early career, risk-tolerant, maximum learning | Target: Venture-Backed Startups

- Hex - Data collaboration platform (Series B, \$50M funding), early stage, 0.15-0.3% equity, high learning velocity
- Clay - GTM data platform (Series B, \$60M funding), fast growth, scrappy team, broad skill development
- Modal - Cloud compute platform (Series A, \$30M funding), technical product, small team, massive ownership
- Watershed - Carbon accounting (Series B, \$100M funding), climate tech, mission-driven, growing category
- Juni - Childcare benefits (Series A, \$25M funding), solving real problem, early sales hire, define role
- Ramp - Corporate cards/spend (Series C, \$750M funding), hypergrowth, aggressive goals, sink-or-swim culture
- Mercury - Banking for startups (Series B, \$120M funding), fintech, fast-moving, equity upside potential
- Crossbeam - Partner ecosystem (Series B, \$76M funding), category creation, evangelical selling required
- Brex - Corporate credit (Series D, \$1B+ valuation), redefining startup banking, high-pressure environment
- Deel - Global payroll (Series D, \$12B valuation), explosive growth, international complexity, equity diluted but valuable

Career Development Maps

Overview

- Three distinct career pathways exist to reach different income milestones (\$300k, \$500k, \$1M+), each requiring different company profile choices, timelines, and trade-offs
- Path to \$300k: Most achievable at Enterprise Leaders within 3-5 years of focused enterprise sales experience and consistent quota attainment
- Path to \$500k: Requires either senior Enterprise Leader role (Director/VP) or successful Growth Champion equity outcome through IPO or acquisition
- Path to \$1M+: Achievable through Enterprise Leader leadership (VP/CRO), Growth Champion equity multiplier, or Venture-Backed Startup success (lowest probability, highest upside)
- Career stage matters: Your current position, skills, and financial situation determine which path is realistic and optimal for you right now
- The following slides break down specific timelines, milestones, probability analysis, and decision points for each income tier

Path to \$300k Total Comp

Realistic Timeline & Milestones

- Timeline: 3-5 years from entry-level SaaS AE role to consistent \$300k+ total compensation at Enterprise Leaders
- Year 1-2: Entry-level AE role at Enterprise Leader (\$180k-\$250k OTE), focus on learning enterprise sales methodology, CRM mastery, building pipeline discipline
- Year 3-4: Mid-market or Enterprise AE role (\$250k-\$350k OTE), demonstrate consistent quota attainment, expand deal sizes, develop champion-building skills
- Year 5+: Senior Enterprise AE or Account Director role (\$300k-\$450k OTE + \$50k+ RSUs), handle strategic accounts, mentor junior reps, considered for management
- Probability of Success: 60-70% of reps who stay 3+ years at Enterprise Leaders and consistently hit 80%+ quota achieve \$300k+ total comp
- Alternative Path: Join Growth Champion as experienced hire, achieve equity outcome through IPO that vests \$100k-\$300k annually on top of \$200k+ cash OTE

Path to \$500k Total Comp

Multiple Routes & Trade-offs

- Enterprise Leader Route: Progress to Director/Senior Director level managing \$5M-\$20M in ARR, 5-7 years experience required, \$400k-\$600k OTE + \$100k+ RSUs
- Growth Champion Route: Senior AE/Account Director with equity grant that vests \$150k-\$300k+ annually after successful IPO, combined with \$250k-\$350k cash OTE
- Hybrid Strategy: Build skills at Enterprise Leader (3-4 years), then move to Growth Champion pre-IPO (2-3 years), time equity outcome for maximum value
- Probability Analysis: Enterprise Leader route 40-50% probability over 7-10 years | Growth Champion equity route 25-35% probability over 5-7 years (must pick winning company)
- Key Differentiator: Enterprise Leader path is more predictable but slower | Growth Champion path is higher risk but can accelerate timeline significantly
- Trade-off Decision: Choose Enterprise Leader route if you need income certainty and have time | Choose Growth Champion if you can tolerate 3-5 years of uncertainty for accelerated outcome

Path to \$1M+ Total Comp

Extreme Performance or Equity Outcomes

- Enterprise Leader Leadership: VP of Sales or CRO role at \$500k-\$800k base + \$200k-\$400k bonus + \$200k-\$400k RSUs, requires 10-15 years experience and executive skills
- Top 1% Individual Contributor: Global Account Director managing \$50M+ portfolio at Salesforce/AWS/Google, \$600k-\$1M+ OTE + significant RSU grants, rare and competitive
- Growth Champion Equity Multiplier: Senior sales leader (Director+) with 0.05%-0.15% equity at company that IPOs at \$5B+ valuation, creating \$2.5M-\$7.5M equity value vesting over 4 years
- Venture-Backed Startup Success: Early sales hire (employee #10-50) with 0.2%-0.5% equity at startup that achieves \$5B+ exit, potential \$10M-\$25M outcome but <5% probability
- Founder/Consultant Route: Start your own SaaS company, consulting practice, or join as co-founder with meaningful equity (5-20%), highest upside but different risk profile entirely
- Probability Reality: <2% of SaaS sales professionals reach \$1M+ sustained annual compensation | Requires exceptional performance, strategic career moves, executive skills, and significant luck/timing

Career Path Decision Framework

Choosing Your Route

- Current Position Analysis: Where are you now? (Years of experience, current comp, skill level, financial obligations) □ This determines which paths are realistic
- Income Target Selection: \$300k (achievable), \$500k (challenging), \$1M+ (exceptional) □ Higher targets require more risk, longer timelines, or leadership trajectory
- Risk Tolerance Assessment: Can you afford 3-5 years of lower cash comp for equity upside? Do you have financial obligations requiring stable income? □ Determines Enterprise Leader vs. Growth Champion focus
- Timeline Expectations: Need \$300k in 3-5 years? Can wait 7-10 years for \$500k+? □ Patience and financial runway determine viable paths
- Strategic Company Moves: Plan 2-3 company transitions over 10-year career (Enterprise Leader □ Growth Champion □ Leadership role) rather than staying at one company entire career
- Continuous Skill Development: Top 10% of earners invest heavily in skills (MEDDIC, Command of Message, executive relationships, product knowledge, industry expertise)—never stop learning

Case Study 1: Sarah Chen

Career Switcher □ Enterprise Leader Success

- Background: Former teacher (age 32) transitioning to tech sales, no SaaS experience, needed stable income with two young children and mortgage
- Initial Situation: Received offers from both Venture-Backed Startup (\$160k OTE + 0.3% equity) and Salesforce (\$240k OTE + RSUs), startup offered "life-changing" equity potential
- Decision: Chose Salesforce despite lower equity because: Structured training program, predictable income, comprehensive benefits, work-life balance with family obligations
- Year 1-2 Results: Completed Salesforce training, ramped to 85% quota attainment, earned \$220k total comp (base + commissions), gained enterprise sales methodology foundation
- Year 3-4 Progress: Promoted to Commercial Account Executive, \$280k OTE, hit 110% quota, \$320k total comp including RSUs, developed strategic account management skills
- Current Outcome (Year 5): Senior Enterprise AE, \$350k OTE, \$380k actual total comp, financially secure, work-life balance maintained, strong resume for future moves

Case Study 1: Key Lessons

What We Learn from Sarah's Success

- Profile Matching Worked: Sarah correctly identified as "Career Stability Seeker" needing predictable income—Enterprise Leader was optimal choice despite lower equity upside
- Short-term Sacrifice, Long-term Gain: By choosing lower equity for higher cash, she built financial security and skills that compound over decades of career
- Hidden Risk in Startups: Even "well-funded" Venture-Backed Startups fail 70-80% of time—Sarah avoided catastrophic career setback that would have derailed financial goals
- Training Value: Enterprise Leader training program accelerated her learning curve by 2-3 years compared to figuring it out at startup where "everyone is learning together"
- Life Stage Matters: At 32 with family obligations, she couldn't afford to gamble on equity—different decision would be appropriate for 25-year-old single professional
- Long-term Optionality: With 5 years of Salesforce on resume and proven enterprise sales skills, Sarah can NOW make calculated move to Growth Champion if she wants equity upside

Case Study 2: Marcus Rodriguez

Mid-Career Equity Optimizer □ \$850k Outcome

- Background: 5 years at Oracle as Enterprise AE (age 31), single, \$380k total comp, wanted equity upside without extreme startup risk
- Initial Situation: Choosing between staying at Oracle for VP track, joining AWS for \$450k OTE, or joining Snowflake (pre-IPO Growth Champion) for \$280k OTE + 0.03% equity
- Decision: Chose Snowflake in 2019 (Series D, \$3.9B valuation) because: Proven product-market fit, clear IPO trajectory, reasonable cash comp reduction (\$100k/year), meaningful equity grant
- Year 1-2 Experience: Lower cash comp (\$280k vs. \$380k Oracle), faster pace, more ambiguity, but direct impact on revenue and broader skill development than Oracle
- September 2020: Snowflake IPO at \$70B market cap (18x valuation increase from his grant price), his 0.03% equity became worth \$2.1M vesting over remaining 3 years
- Current Outcome (2023): Total comp from Snowflake: \$280k salary/commissions + \$700k equity vesting annually = \$980k total comp, recently promoted to Director of Sales

Case Study 2: Key Lessons

What We Learn from Marcus's Success

- Calculated Risk: Marcus didn't join early-stage startup (avoided 70-80% failure rate)—he chose late-stage Growth Champion with proven metrics and clear IPO path (much higher probability)
- Timing is Everything: Joined 18 months before IPO at \$3.9B valuation, rode wave to \$70B IPO, perfect timing created massive equity outcome
- Financial Runway Required: Could only afford \$100k/year pay cut because he was single, had savings, and 5 years of high income from Oracle built cushion
- Profile Match: "Equity Optimizer" with moderate risk tolerance, 3+ years experience, financial cushion—perfect fit for Growth Champion route
- Not Pure Luck: Marcus researched Snowflake fundamentals (revenue growth, net retention, competitive moat) rather than just gambling on equity—thoughtful analysis increased probability
- Career Acceleration: Snowflake experience post-IPO carries more weight than Oracle—now has options for VP roles, consulting, or next Growth Champion opportunity

Case Study 3: Jessica Thompson

Venture-Backed Startup Reality Check

- Background: 2 years SaaS experience at HubSpot (age 26), saw peers joining startups with "amazing equity", felt FOMO, wanted to "get rich" quickly
- Initial Situation: Offered roles at two Venture-Backed Startups: Company A (Series A, \$15M funding, 0.4% equity, \$160k OTE) and Company B (Series B, \$50M funding, 0.15% equity, \$180k OTE)
- Decision: Chose Company A for higher equity percentage (0.4% vs. 0.15%), reasoning that "4x the equity" meant "4x the outcome"—focused on share count not probability
- Year 1 Experience: Chaotic environment, quota changed 3x, product pivoted twice, burned through cash quickly, hired VP Sales who changed entire process
- Year 2 Crisis: Company raised bridge round at down valuation (from \$75M to \$50M), her equity diluted by 40%, new investors got liquidation preferences reducing her outcome even if successful exit
- Year 2.5 Outcome: Company ran out of runway, couldn't raise Series B, shut down operations—equity worth \$0, Jessica unemployed with 2.5 year gap in resume at lower comp than HubSpot

Case Study 3: Key Lessons

What We Learn from Jessica's Failure

- Probability Matters More Than Percentage: 0.4% of \$0 (70-80% probability) is worth less than 0.01% of \$1B (40-50% probability at Growth Champion)—she optimized for wrong variable
- FOMO is Expensive: Emotional decision driven by peer comparison rather than systematic analysis of her profile, financial situation, and company fundamentals
- Stage Risk Underestimated: Series A startups have <20% probability of reaching Series B, much less IPO—she didn't understand how low probability her outcome was
- Career Setback Cost: 2.5 years at failed startup is gap on resume that's hard to explain to Enterprise Leaders, cost her \$150k-\$200k in foregone income plus career momentum
- Profile Mismatch: With only 2 years experience and no financial runway, she shouldn't have been in Venture-Backed Startup category at all—Growth Champion or Enterprise Leader would have been appropriate
- Due Diligence Failure: Didn't research Company A's burn rate, runway, competitive position, founder track record—treated equity like lottery ticket not investment