

ARROW SALES COMPENSATION GUIDE

2025

Salary and incentive structures that attract and retain top talent



Arrow 2025 Sales

Compensation Guide

Executive Summary

Sales compensation is one of the most powerful and often most overlooked drivers of sustainable business growth. As markets shift and buyer behaviour evolves, leaders must rethink how they pay, motivate and retain sales talent. This whitepaper introduces a practical and proven model designed to evaluate and optimise sales compensation strategies. When done well, compensation doesn't just drive revenue - it inspires performance, creates loyalty and embeds a strong sales culture.

This guide also includes a snapshot of recommended 2025 compensation benchmarks for sales hunters and leaders across common B2B sectors in Australia, plus actionable tools to build incentive schemes to reward and motivate your sales team.





If you're not paying incentives, then something is wrong. Is it suitable for changed market conditions? Are they enough to motivate your salespeople? We want to understand this in more detail.



The Sales Talent Crisis:

What's Going Wrong

The average tenure for a salesperson is just 17 months, and falling... In this environment, outdated hiring methods, poor onboarding and unclear compensation structures are costing businesses dearly. While business activity is expected to rise, permanent hiring remains low. Leaders are increasingly relying on one or two performers and finding it harder to retain them.



Key challenges:

Recruiters sending CVs, not delivering insights. "Hit and hope".

Underperformers driving down team ROI

Too many hiring decisions made on "qut feel"

Poor onboarding and lack of data to support new hires Companies can't scale and win top accounts from their competitors

From my 35 years of sales experience, 7 years in recruitment and coaching, it still surprises me that companies reward new salespeople for every dollar sold from clients they've had for many years. No wonder it's become a "haven" if you land a role in an industry-leading company. Our whitepaper is more aligned with how you reward and attract top sales performers, along with scaling your business.

You should expect a 3x to 5x ROI on every sales hire. If your team isn't hitting that, the issue may not be selection, or skills - it could be your compensation structure.



Roles That Make or

Break Growth

Your compensation strategy should follow a structure. Before setting pay, define each role clearly.

ROLE	PRIMARY FOCUS	COMMON PITFALLS	
Internal Sales / Customer Success	Retention, service and inbound orders	Overlooked as a growth engine, limited incentives	
Sales Development Representative	Cold outreach, qualifying leads	Promoted too early without performance track record	
Sales Representative	Territory sales, mix of service and growth	Jack/jill-of-all-trades roles dilute focus	
Technical Sales Representative	Solutions-led sales with deep product knowledge	Hired for technical skill, not sales capability	
Account Manager	Maintain and grow current clients	Misaligned compensation for new business initiatives	
AM/BDM Hybrid	Blend of farming and hunting	Lack of clarity on expectations or targets	
Business Development Manager	Win new business, new markets	Never trained, need prospecting support	
Key Account Manager	Grow large strategic clients	Lack of differentiation from standard AMs	
Regional Sales Manager	Lead teams across a region	Poor coaching and role overload	
Sales Manager	Coach, forecast and develop salespeople	Carrying their own patch instead of leading, not trained to coach	
National Sales Manager	Drive strategy and national team performance	Spread too thin across pricing, ops, sales and strategy	
GM of Sales	Set vision and lead go-to-market execution	Misaligned KPIs, stuck in operational weeds	

When role design is clear, performance can be measured, supported and rewarded correctly. The wrong compensation plan for the wrong role causes underperformance, high turnover and culture damage.





The Building Blocks of Sales Compensation

Sales compensation isn't just a package - it's a structured system design to reward the right behaviours and ensure a clear return on investment. Before diving into benchmarks, it's crucial to understand the building blocks of a modern sales compensation plan:



Book a Meeting!





The Core Elements of Sales Compensation

COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION	WHYITMATTERS	
Base salary	Guaranteed earnings, paid fortnightly/monthly	Provides financial stability and baseline motivation	
Superannuation	Mandatory employer contribution	Important cost to include when budgeting total pay	
Fully Maintained Company Vehicle (FMCV)	Company car value	Often expected for field-based roles; significant cost	
Incentives	Performance-based bonuses or comms	Drives focus, behaviour and growth	
Total Fixed Remuneration (TFR)	Base + Super + FMCV	Full fixed costs of employing a salesperson	
On-Target Earnings (OTE) TFR + Incentives		The total earnings if performance goals	

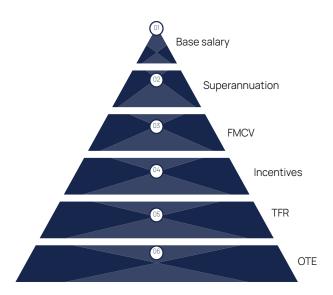
With the base, be careful not to get caught with high fixed costs and average results. When the market softens, this will impact your bottom line.

I like to work on a 60% base, 40% incentive formula or 70/30. The base should be enough for the salesperson to survive one, but the incentive should motivate them to sell and be rewarded for growth. If you pay a too high a base, they can get comfortable, then the only one wanting to grow is you!

As a leader, you need to understand what motivates your sales team. We do this by using the Objective Management Groups evaluations to uncover if they're intrinsic, extrinsic or altruistic. BDM roles suit more of an "extrinsic motivation", that wants to earn more, have a nice house and go on holidays.

Top 5% sales performers are usually extrinsically motivated—driven by money, cars, paying off mortgage and other rewards. They chase sales faster, making them ideal for BDM and leadership roles. Prefer more extrinsic mix, with some intrinsic ok.

About 50% of salespeople are intrinsically motivated—driven by purpose, mastery, and self-satisfaction.



They're ideal for account management or stable roles. A mix of intrinsic and extrinsic works well for hybrids.

Altruistically motivated reps often in the bottom 10% and prioritise helping others over sales. They usually shift to technical or product roles, so watch for this pattern on CVs. Want to find out how your team is motivated? Ask us how?

"Ever wonder why your salespeople don't chase targets or \$\$"





2025 Sales Compensation Benchmarks

Every company, territory and sales role is different. So, instead of chasing averages, use the following benchmarks to guide your thinking on what's competitive, sustainable and aligned with the value each role creates.

To give you the clearest picture, we've segmented compensation benchmarks into three tiers:



Low Tier

Often aligned with regional roles, early-career professionals or support-focused functions. This tier reflects conservative budgets and traditional compensation

strategies.

Mid Tier

Represents the standard across most metro-based, performance-driven roles.
Offers a healthy balance between fixed and variable pay, with growth potential.

High Tier

Used to attract experienced sales talent in high-growth or competitive industries. These packages require clear ROI justification and strong performance metrics.





Base Salary Guide by Role and Experience

ROLE	YEARS OF EXPERIENCE	LOW	MID	HIGH	AVERAGE
Internal Sales / Customer Suc- cess	0 - 2	\$55,000	\$65,000	\$75,000	\$65,000
Sales Develop- ment Represen- tative	2-5	\$65,000	\$75,000	\$85,000	\$75,000
Sales Represen- tative	2-5	\$75,000	\$ 85,000	\$ 95,000	\$ 85,000
Technical Sales Representative	5 - 10	\$80,000	\$ 90,000	\$100,000	\$ 90,000
Account Manager	3 - 5	\$ 85,000	\$ 95,000	\$105,000	\$ 95,000
AM/BDM Hybrid	5 - 10	\$ 90,000	\$105,000	\$120,000	\$105,000
Business Devel- opment Manager	5 - 10	\$ 95,000	\$110,000	\$130,000	\$ 111,667
Key Account Manager	8+	\$125,000	\$140,000	\$160,000	\$141,667
Regional Sales Manager	10+	\$110,000	\$130,000	\$150,000	\$130,000
Sales Manager	15+	\$125,000	\$150,000	\$175,000	\$150,000
National Sales Manager	15+	\$150,000	\$175,000	\$200,000	\$175,000
GM of Sales	15+	\$160,000	\$185,000	\$ 210,000	\$185,000

44% of salespeople aren't motivated by COMP plans. [But that isn't always the salesperson's fault!]





Total Compensation by Tier (OTE Breakdown)

To help model costs, here's how total compensation (OTE) stacks up across different tiers. **The Incentive Levels Are A Guide Only.**



Low Tier Example

Role	Years of Exp.	Base	Super (11.5%)	FMCV	TFR	Incentive	OTE
Internal Sales / Cus- tomer Success	0-2	\$55,000	\$6,325	\$-	\$ 61,325	\$5,000	\$ 66,325
Sales Development Representative	2-5	\$65,000	\$ 7,475	\$-	\$72,475	\$10,000	\$ 82,475
Sales Representative	2-5	\$75,000	\$8,625	\$20,000	\$103,625	\$15,000	\$118,625
Technical Sales Representative	5 - 10	\$80,000	\$ 9,200	\$20,000	\$109,200	\$15,000	\$124,200
Account Manager	3-5	\$85,000	\$ 9,775	\$20,000	\$114,775	\$20,000	\$134,775
AM/BDM Hybrid	5 - 10	\$90,000	\$10,350	\$20,000	\$120,350	\$ 25,000	\$145,350
Business Develop- ment Manager	5 - 10	\$ 95,000	\$10,925	\$20,000	\$125,925	\$40,000	\$165,925
Key Account Manager	8+	\$125,000	\$14,375	\$25,000	\$164,375	\$40,000	\$ 204,375
Regional Sales Man- ager	10+	\$110,000	\$12,650	\$25,000	\$147,650	\$50,000	\$197,650
Sales Manager	15+	\$125,000	\$14,375	\$25,000	\$164,375	\$50,000	\$ 214,375
National Sales Man- ager	15+	\$150,000	\$17,250	\$30,000	\$197,250	\$60,000	\$ 257,250
GM of Sales	15+	\$160,000	\$18,400	\$30,000	\$208,400	\$60,000	\$268,400





Medium Tier Example

Role	Years of Exp.	Base	Super (11.5%)	FMCV	TFR	Incentive	ОТЕ
Internal Sales / Cus- tomer Success	0 - 2	\$65,000	\$ 7,475	\$-	\$72,475	\$5,000	\$ 77,475
Sales Development Representative	2-5	\$75,000	\$8,625	\$-	\$83,625	\$10,000	\$ 93,625
Sales Representative	2-5	\$85,000	\$ 9,775	\$20,000	\$114,775	\$15,000	\$129,775
Technical Sales Representative	5 - 10	\$90,000	\$10,350	\$20,000	\$120,350	\$15,000	\$135,350
Account Manager	3-5	\$ 95,000	\$10,925	\$20,000	\$125,925	\$20,000	\$145,925
AM/BDM Hybrid	5 - 10	\$105,000	\$12,075	\$20,000	\$137,075	\$ 25,000	\$162,075
Business Develop- ment Manager	5 - 10	\$110,000	\$12,650	\$20,000	\$142,650	\$40,000	\$182,650
Key Account Manager	8+	\$140,000	\$16,100	\$ 25,000	\$181,100	\$40,000	\$ 221,100
Regional Sales Man- ager	10+	\$130,000	\$14,950	\$ 25,000	\$169,950	\$50,000	\$ 219,950
Sales Manager	15+	\$150,000	\$17,250	\$25,000	\$192,250	\$50,000	\$ 242,250
National Sales Man- ager	15+	\$175,000	\$ 20,125	\$30,000	\$ 225,125	\$60,000	\$ 285,125
GM of Sales	15+	\$185,000	\$ 21,275	\$30,000	\$ 236,275	\$60,000	\$ 296,275





High Tier Example

Role	Years of Exp.	Base	Super (11.5%)	FMCV	TFR	Incentive	ОТЕ
Internal Sales / Cus- tomer Success	0 - 2	\$75,000	\$8,625	\$-	\$83,625	\$5,000	\$88,625
Sales Development Representative	2-5	\$85,000	\$ 9,775	\$-	\$ 94,775	\$10,000	\$104,775
Sales Representative	2-5	\$ 95,000	\$10,925	\$20,000	\$125,925	\$15,000	\$140,925
Technical Sales Representative	5 - 10	\$100,000	\$11,500	\$20,000	\$131,500	\$15,000	\$146,500
Account Manager	3 - 5	\$105,000	\$12,075	\$20,000	\$137,075	\$20,000	\$157,075
AM/BDM Hybrid	5 - 10	\$120,000	\$13,800	\$20,000	\$153,800	\$ 25,000	\$178,800
Business Develop- ment Manager	5 - 10	\$130,000	\$14,950	\$20,000	\$164,950	\$40,000	\$ 204,950
Key Account Manager	8+	\$160,000	\$18,400	\$25,000	\$203,400	\$40,000	\$ 243,400
Regional Sales Man- ager	10+	\$150,000	\$ 17,250	\$25,000	\$192,250	\$50,000	\$ 242,250
Sales Manager	15+	\$175,000	\$ 20,125	\$25,000	\$ 220,125	\$50,000	\$ 270,125
National Sales Man- ager	15+	\$200,000	\$ 23,000	\$30,000	\$ 253,000	\$60,000	\$ 313,000
GM of Sales	15+	\$ 210,000	\$ 24,150	\$30,000	\$ 264,150	\$60,000	\$ 324,150



Incentives That

Drive Growth

Incentive structures should reward the behaviours that build pipeline, close new business, and retain valuable accounts. But if the plan is too complex or soft, it becomes a cost, not a catalyst for growth.

Outside of the traditional incentives, here are some examples to consider

Leading Indicators Bonus

Territory planning, timely reporting, proposals, CRM compliance — \$500 bonus.

SPIFs & Sprints

Short-term incentives for key product launches or seasonal pushes.

ROI-Based Payouts

Compensation tied to ROI.

Details on page 13

New/Reactivate Accounts

Earn \$250 for new or reactivated customers.

Performance Multipliers

Use 1.25× or 1.5× accelerators for exceeding targets.

Time in Lieu

Offer time off as a reward if it's more valued than cash.



Pay quarterly, with monthly targets to continuously drive motivation.

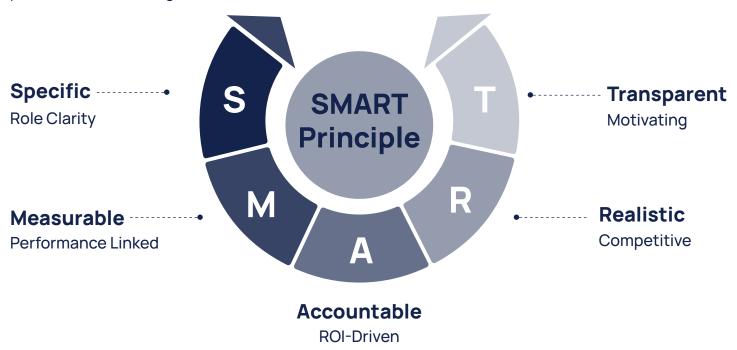
Use no more than **2 - 4 variables** in your incentive plan. Keep it simple, visible, and tied to outcomes. It's best to select the ones that best align with your strategies and goals. See some detailed examples on page 13.



The Framework:

A New Lens on Sales Compensation

The framework is built on five key principles that help business leaders create sales compensation plans that scale with growth.



PRINCIPLE	FOCUS	WHATITMEANS			
S - Specific	Role Clarity	Compensation aligns with clear expectations and KPIs			
M - Measurable	Performance Linked	Payouts are tied to tangible sales metrics			
A - Accountable	ROI-Driven	Salespeople are rewarded based on value delivered, not tenure			
R - Realistic	Competitive	Market-aligned to attract A-players, but disciplined on margin			
T - Transparent	Motivating	Easy to understand, track and explain to candidates and sales teams			

Key point :



Examples for incentive

Programs for 3x or 5x ROI

To support this exercise, we've used market based data across low sales/high margin and high sales/low margin scenarios. Each example includes 3x and 5x ROI benchmarks based on industry best practices that are adjustable to your business, product mix, and margin profile.

The objective here is to reward your salespeople after 3x or 5x is achieved. Not on all sales. For new hires, you could include a ramp-up option. It could be tiered interim targets, accelerators or a guaranteed percentage for the first six months. It also depends on the length of your sales cycle.

Position title	Base	Ave	3x base	5x base
Account Manager	\$90,000	\$ 22,500	\$ 67,500	\$112,500
AM/BDM [Hybrid]	\$105,000	\$ 26,250	\$ 78,750	\$131,250
Business Development Manager [BDM-Hunter]	\$120,000	\$30,000	\$ 90,000	\$150,000
Sales Manager	\$150,000	\$ 37,500	\$112,500	\$187,500

For this option, I wanted you to see that some are in the red. At \$250,000 in sales, it isn't enough. The sales and or margin are too low at 5x, you need \$750k sales for ROI.

Lower sal	es volume, mic	d level GP:			Level Paid	
Quarterly 3x ROI					5.0%	
BUDGET	GP %	PROFIT	3X BASE	GAP	QUARTERLY	PER MONTH
\$250,000	25.00%	\$62,500	\$ 67,500	\$ (5,000)	\$ (250.0)	\$ (83.3)
\$400,000	25.00%	\$100,000	\$78,750	\$ 21,250	\$1,062.5	\$ 354.2
\$550,000	25.00%	\$137,500	\$ 90,000	\$ 47,500	\$ 2,375.0	\$ 791.7
\$750,000	25.00%	\$187,500	\$112,500	\$75,000	\$ 3,750.0	\$1,250.0
Quarterly 5x ROI					5.0%	
BUDGET	GP %	PROFIT	5X BASE	GAP	QUARTERLY	PER MONTH
\$250,000	25.00%	\$62,500	\$150,000	\$ (87,500)	\$ (4,375.0)	\$ (1,458.3)
\$400,000	25.00%	\$100,000	\$150,000	\$ (50,000)	\$ (2,500.0)	\$ (833.3)
\$550,000	25.00%	\$137,500	\$150,000	\$ (12,500)	\$ (625.0)	\$ (208.3)
\$750,000	25.00%	\$187,500	\$150,000	\$ 37,500	\$ 1,875.0	\$ 625.0



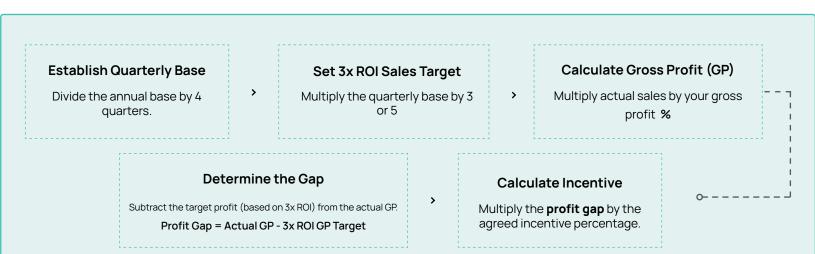
Examples for incentive

Programs for 3x or 5x ROI Based on \$120k base

If your GP is higher, reduce the incentive percentage accordingly. Adjust this annually to align with market conditions and maintain a balanced, sustainable plan

Lower sale	es volume, Hig	h level GP:				
Quarterly 3x ROI					2.5%	
BUDGET	GP %	PROFIT	3X BASE	GAP	QUARTERLY	PER MONTH
\$450,000	40.00%	\$180,000	\$ 90,000	\$90,000	\$2,250	\$ 750
\$600,000	40.00%	\$240,000	\$90,000	\$150,000	\$3,750	\$1,250
\$750,000	40.00%	\$300,000	\$90,000	\$210,000	\$ 5,250	\$1,750
\$900,000	40.00%	\$360,000	\$ 90,000	\$270,000	\$ 6,750	\$ 2,250
Quarterly 5x ROI					2.5%	
BUDGET	GP %	PROFIT	5X BASE	GAP	QUARTERLY	PER MONTH
\$450,000	40.00%	\$180,000	\$150,000	\$30,000	\$ 750	\$ 250
\$600,000	40.00%	\$240,000	\$150,000	\$90,000	\$1,800	\$600
\$750,000	40.00%	\$300,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$3,000	\$1,000
\$ 900,000	40.00%	\$360,000	\$150,000	\$210,000	\$4,200	\$1,400

How we calculate the ROI?



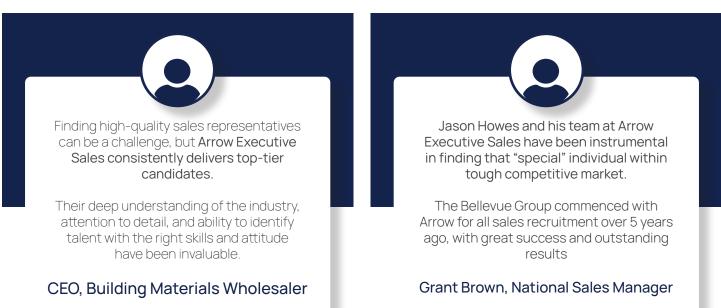


Lower sale	s volume, Low	er level GP:				
Quarterly 3x ROI					3.0%	
BUDGET	GP %	PROFIT	3X BASE	GAP	QUARTERLY	PER MONTH
\$1,000,000	13.00%	\$130,000	\$ 90,000	\$40,000	\$1,200	\$400
\$1,500,000	13.00%	\$195,000	\$ 90,000	\$105,000	\$ 3,150	\$1,050
\$2,000,000	13.00%	\$260,000	\$ 90,000	\$170,000	\$ 5,100	\$1,700
\$2,500,000	13.00%	\$325,000	\$ 90,000	\$235,000	\$7,050	\$ 2,350
Quarterly 5x ROI					3.0%	
BUDGET	GP %	PROFIT	5X BASE	GAP	QUARTERLY	PER MONTH
\$1,000,000	17.00%	\$170,000	\$150,000	\$20,000	\$600	\$200
\$1,500,000	17.00%	\$255,000	\$150,000	\$105,000	\$ 3,150	\$1,050
\$2,000,000	17.00%	\$340,000	\$150,000	\$190,000	\$5,700	\$1,900
\$2,500,000	17.00%	\$425,000	\$150,000	\$275,000	\$ 8,250	\$2.750
Note: GP % va	alues shown (1	3% and 17%) a	are for compar	ison only — ad	just as needed	d.

Use this framework to evaluate your current compensation plans. Are they driving performance? Are they predictable and scalable? Are they motivating the right behaviour?

Be cautious with high sales and low margins, especially if you're scaling production. These two options help balance growth with profitability effectively.

What Our Valued Clients Say





Sample incentive for a BDM:

3x ROI + accelerators

If your GP is higher, reduce the incentive percentage accordingly. Adjust this annually to align with market conditions and maintain a balanced, sustainable plan

OPTION 1 - BALANCED & ALIGNED							
ROI incentive:	New clients/reacti- vated (x3):	New product sales:	Quarter total:				
\$3,750	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$2,000	\$8,750			

• Rewards margin, growth, consistency, and strategic activity. Aligned with long-term performance goals.

OPTION 2 - RISKY TRADE-OFF						
ROI incentive:	New clients/reacti- vated (x1):	Leading KPI:	New product sales:	Quarter total:		
\$5,150	\$500	\$500	\$1,000	\$7,150		

• Looks good on ROI, but lacks focus on core activities. Missing KPIs can stall future sales and pipeline growth.



Sample incentive for a

Sales Manager

The best practice for sales managers is to reward them for the team's results, as they all contribute to overall performance and working towards the same goals.

		OPTION 1		
ROI incentive for overall business:	New clients/ reactivated (x3):	Leading KPI (planning, CRM, reporting):	New product sales:	Quarter total:
\$8,000	\$4,000	\$3,000	\$2,000	\$17,000

Rewards are aligned with strategy and performance Or, include key KPIs from the list below to keep focus on the right areas and drive consistent performance. You can measure this from your CRM performance analytics.

Achieving the overall budget

Weight of pipeline opportunities

Win/Loss ratio

A reduction in the length of the sales cycle









Now What?

Your Next Best Steps

If this guide has sparked ideas or revealed gaps, here are 5 key questions to consider:

Are your current compensation plans motivating the right behaviours?	Ø
Can every team member explain how they earn their incentives?	Ø
3. Are you attracting (and keeping) sales hunters?	\bigcirc
4. Do you have objective data guiding hiring and performance decisions?	\bigcirc
5. Are you confident your sales hires are delivering 3-5x ROI?	Ø

If you're unsure about any of the above, it's time to take a closer look.

Checklist for the top 5 red alerts for business leaders wanting to GROW.

Salespeople have a high base, and they're comfortable.	✓
No incentive to drive or motivate new business development	/
Your team are caught up in daily customer service, not prospecting	✓
All salespeople are paid the same, regardless of their experience	✓
Paying underperformers too much, and not paying your high performers enough.	✓

How many would you tick as a concern? If you'd like to explore other numbers, we can help build a plan that truly motivates your team to perform.

The best investment you can make is an objective evaluation of your salespeople, systems and processes.



About the author

Arrow Executive Sales helps B2B companies grow revenue by attracting, hiring, and coaching top-performing salespeople. We specialise in sales strategy, executive search, onboarding, incentive design, and capability assessments—powered by world-class platforms like Objective Management Group and Membrain CRM.

With deep experience building national teams across manufacturing, construction, industrial and professional services, we combine data-driven frameworks with real frontline insight. We've assessed 5,000+ sales pros and supported businesses from \$5M to \$1.3B in turnover. Our goal? Building sales cultures that scale—and stick. With the right people!





Refer a business and earn \$300 with the Arrow Referral Voucher Program.

This paper would not be possible without the insights of our team, clients, sales candidates, industry partners and the ongoing data from tools like OMG and Membrain, our CRM partner. A big thank you to the Arrow Executive Sales team and our clients across Australia who've trusted us to help them scale successfully.











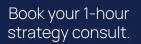




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