



Spring 2023  
Regional Challenge  
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Presented by



## Case Competition Topic

### Salesforce Pre-employment Screening and Testing

#### Company Overview

Love's Travel Stops and Country Stores, Inc., widely known as Love's, was founded in 1964 by Tom and Judy Love in Watonga, Oklahoma with one leased gas station. Originally they called their company Musket Corporation. The company has grown dramatically since then, and Love's currently has over 500 travel stops, and they operate several different business divisions including financial services. You can find out more about Love's at [www.Love's.com](http://www.Love's.com).

#### Student Competitors' Profile

This case competition is a critical thinking challenge that requires a few assumptions just as the role play competition requires competitors to assume they are an actual sales professional for Love's. For this competition, you should assume that you are a recent graduate from a prestigious sales program, and you have recently been hired by Love's as a sales professional. Further, you should assume that as part of your undergraduate education, you took a course dedicated to marketing and sales ethics. Links below will provide you with both an overview and more in-depth training in the field of philosophical ethics and its application to concrete situations in marketing and sales.

You had expected to jump right in and start selling. However, based on your academic transcript Love's identified you and your partner(s) as a select number of new sales hires given the opportunity to work on a special project. In exchange for your help, the company has agreed to defer your sales quota requirements and compensate you accordingly until the completion of the project. Your challenge for this special project is to provide input on the company's redesign or complete overhaul of its salesforce pre-employment recruitment processes including the potential to add pre-employment testing to the hiring process. The rationale for this bold move is that Love's founders Tom and Judy Love were young and full of ideas when they started Love's, and they believe that this bold initiative may lead to the

development of innovative “out of the box” type solutions since you have yet to be exposed to the difficulties of navigating corporate culture and affecting corporate change.

## **The Problem**

Hiring qualified sales professionals is one of the most difficult tasks a company can undertake. The difficulty applies to all company employees. However, because the salesforce is the “life blood” of any company (given that its success or failure will ultimately determine the viability of the firm) the challenge to get accurate and reliable data about prospective employees is imperative. Further, issues of hiring always involve a great deal of ethical decision making since issues of fairness and equity are at play.

Although Love’s has developed sophisticated hiring criteria to minimize risk on the front end (i.e., salesforce recruitment) they are not immune to all of the law like generalization of business management. One such law like rule of business is the 80/20 rule. This is commonly known as the Pareto rule after the Italian economist Vinfredo Pareto who noticed that 80% of the land in Italy was owned by 20% of the population. The odd thing about this ratio is how often it accurately describes other business phenomenon. For example, many businesses have found that the top 20% of their salesforce generates 80% of their revenue. Because of Love’s advanced analysis of candidates, the rule is not that extreme at Love’s. However, top management has noticed that there is some truth to the rule even after the implementation of sophisticated recruitment analytics.

Love’s currently engages in a rigorous recruitment and selection process. This process involves a combination of factors including background checks on applicants’ academic achievements, past employment history, reference checks, and multiple rounds of interviews with the candidate. Finally, Love’s has an aggressive mentorship program that pairs new salespeople with experienced professionals to ensure that new salespeople are well trained in the company’s products, its philosophy, and corporate culture. However, like all large corporations this process is not a 100% success and turnover in the salesforce has occurred. Because a failed candidate selection has the potential to cost Love’s thousands or even hundreds of thousands of dollars, the executive management has tasked Todd Wilson with the task of increasing recruitment success, and to that end he has chosen you and your team to help him.

Todd has worked closely with several professors at the University of Central Oklahoma to identify top talent, and the partnership with UCO has been fruitful. Todd was discussing how to make his recruitment process even better with one of UCO’s faculty members Professor Grant Aguirre who has past corporate experience in the field of recruitment since he once owned a health care recruitment company.

Grant mentioned that he is working on some research that suggests certain psychological metrics appear to be predictive of success in sales. For example, recent data analysis reveals that some of the scales of the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) seem to be predictive of positive sales performance. Specifically, the scales that relate to depression, masculinity/femininity, and social introversion are the best indicators of sales performance.

The MMPI originally consisted of 10 scales and a number of sub-scales. With regard to the scales that Grant has been studying, there is a negative correlation between the depression and social introversion scales, and a positive correlation between the masculinity scale. In other words, a lack of depression on the part of a candidate appears to be a good predictor of sales success. Likewise, the opposite of social introversion (someone who is a social extrovert) seems to be predictive of success. Finally, the more masculine traits a candidate exhibits seems to positively predict success in sales.

Further Grant mentioned the research by Amy Cuddy and power posing suggests that individuals with high levels of testosterone outperform individuals with low levels of testosterone, and that people with low levels of cortisol outperform individuals with high levels of cortisol.

Based on his discussions with Grant, Todd wondered if Love's should start using MMPI and biometric testing as part of the screening process.

While many companies have employed pre-employment tests of a wide variety, these practices are not without ethical and legal controversy. These kinds of practices obviously involve issues of fairness, equity, and privacy. Further, they are in some cases limited by laws such as the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 which can be found at 42 U.S.C. §§ 12101 et seq. Also, some states such as California have limited the use of such testing based on state privacy laws and state common law.

### **Your Assignment**

You and your partner(s) are among a select group of salespeople that have been tasked with developing either a new or a significantly revised sales recruitment process. You must be able to discuss and justify how you developed the criteria you selected. **Your proposal must be based on a "valid" ethical theory! Failure to use a "valid" theory will be scored as an automatic loss.** Please carefully review the ethics links below. You may use internet and text resources in your development of an analysis of the proposed tests. Also, you may suggest an alternative recruitment plan. You will present your proposal to two senior Love's executives. Those executives will be chosen and randomly assigned by the Company, and you will not know

their identity until you present. If they like your proposal, they will move this on to the next step.

## **Appendix A**

### Ethics Education and Training Links

At a minimum you should watch the following short primer on ethics.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UeyskDgGb3Y&t=107s>

The following additional links provide more depth on the topic that you may find helpful.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ors-g3hhqn4&t=3977s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HDEwxEG7I-0>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WeAwkOTc-Q4>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PMAToDtFp40>

## **Appendix B**

### Amy Cuddy Video

In this video Amy Cuddy discusses her research. Assume that Todd would like to use some of the biometric tests (testing for testosterone and cortisol) that she discusses, and that he would like to have potential candidates go through a sales role play similar to the job interview that Amy discusses in the video.

[https://www.ted.com/talks/amy\\_cuddy\\_your\\_body\\_language\\_may\\_shape\\_who\\_you\\_are?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_may_shape_who_you_are?language=en)