

A woman with long dark hair, wearing glasses and a black leather jacket over a grey turtleneck, is sitting at a desk and working on a laptop. The background is a blurred office setting. There are large yellow geometric shapes on the left and right sides of the image.

Difference Between AEs & SDRs

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Account Executives and Sales Development Representatives... what is the difference?

The idiom “two heads are better than one” is perfectly conveyed in the relationships between Account Executives (AEs) and Sales Development Representatives (SDRs).

The role of Sales Development Representatives

Research

SDRs conduct research in order to build up a large list of prospects who they can reach out to. They generate leads by identifying businesses who would benefit from using the product or service they are selling.

Outbound/Prospecting

They reach out to prospective clients who might be interested in your product or service. This is usually done through cold calling, email, social media, or responding to queries from the website.

Inbound/Discovery

SDRs also work closely with the marketing team to drive inbound inquiries. Inbound inquiries typically come from businesses who have seen the product or service on offer being advertised and are interested in implementing or learning more about it.

Closing

SDRs may have the opportunity to close smaller deals as they become more experienced, which can be generated from outbound and inbound inquiries. Closing these smaller deals at this stage is good experience for the next step in a SDRs career (usually Account Executive/Customer Success).

Once SDRs have identified new prospects and qualified them through an initial meeting, they are then typically passed on to the Account Executive (AE).

Account Executives and Sales Development Representatives... what is the difference?

Any company that has a Sales Development function should ensure that their AEs and SDRs work well together. The coordination between the two is vital for businesses if they want to win deals and fuel growth.

The role of Account Executives

Addressing the client's needs

AEs must understand and empathise with the needs of the client. They must also demonstrate how to use the products and services on offer and show how it will address any issues the client has.

Salaries

AEs get paid a base salary, which is typically 10% of their annual revenue target and they also receive a 100% Bonus for achieving their annual revenue target.

Specialisms

AEs typically specialise in selling into a specific stakeholder, region or vertical.

Closing

AEs have a focus on closing deals and generating direct revenue. They must be knowledgeable about the client's business and be persuasive to get them to commit to purchasing the product or service on offer.

Mentoring

AEs typically work with and mentor SDRs as they help to open up and win net new logo's.

