

**White Paper:  
Sales Activity Assessment, Sales Call Reluctance®  
and the Context Behind Performance**



**Executive summary**

Confident Approach positions its Sales Activity Assessment as a way to move beyond traditional sales training by identifying the psychological and organisational barriers that reduce sales activity and commercial performance.

The work is built around SPQ\*Gold/FSA, an assessment designed to measure Sales Call Reluctance® rather than broad personality traits, and is used to uncover why salespeople avoid key activities such as prospecting, booking meetings and asking for commitment.

**The distinctive element is not the assessment alone.**

The method combines FSA data with sales activity patterns, average sales levels, closing ratio context and interviews with key stakeholders to understand how leadership, internal collaboration and commercial reality shape behaviour.



In practice, this creates a broader diagnostic model that looks at the salesperson, the manager and the wider system around the sales organisation rather than assuming performance problems sit only with the individual seller.

**The problem with most sales improvement efforts.**

Many sales organisations know what they want more of: more prospecting, more qualified meetings, stronger pipelines and higher closing ratios.

Yet improvement efforts often focus on skills training, process compliance or motivation while missing a more difficult question: why do capable people fail to do what they already know they should do?

This gap matters because low activity is rarely explained by knowledge alone.

Salespeople may understand the process and still hesitate to pick up the phone, delay follow-up, avoid difficult

conversations or fail to ask for the next step. When that happens repeatedly, the impact appears in activity levels, average sales results and conversion outcomes.

**A behavioural rather than personality-based approach.**

Confident Approach explicitly describes SPQ\*Gold/FSA as a limited-purpose instrument designed to measure Sales Call Reluctance® and related attitudes that influence comfort with initiating contact for new business.

The assessment is positioned as different from general personality questionnaires because its items are tied more directly to job-relevant behaviours and attitudes in selling situations.

That distinction is important. Broad personality models can provide general tendencies, but they often require a large interpretive leap when organisations try to apply them to concrete selling behaviour.

FSA is intended to reduce that gap by focusing on barriers linked to prospecting and other commercial actions, which makes the output more actionable for coaching, selection and development in sales-specific contexts.

**What Sales Activity Assessment means in practice.**

A meaningful Sales Activity Assessment should not stop at a test result. Confident Approach describes a broader practice where assessment findings are interpreted alongside business and behavioural data to understand what is driving or blocking sales performance.

In this model, four evidence streams matter:

1. FSA results that identify patterns of Sales Call Reluctance® and related behavioural blockers.
2. Activity data that show what salespeople are actually doing, such as prospecting, follow-up, meetings or customer outreach.
3. Commercial outcomes such as average sales and closing ratio, which help connect behaviour to business performance.
4. Interviews with leaders and other key stakeholders to reveal the context shaping the sales culture, expectations, pressure points and internal friction.

Taken together, these inputs create a richer picture than any single metric can provide.

A low closing ratio may reflect poor qualification, weak conversations or late-stage hesitation.

Low prospecting activity may be linked to fear of rejection, low confidence, internal conflict or leadership signals that unintentionally discourage outreach.

#### **Why context changes the diagnosis.**

Sales performance never happens in a vacuum. The same salesperson can behave very differently depending on leadership style, internal processes, customer expectations, role clarity and how success or failure is discussed inside the organisation.

That is why the broader diagnostic approach matters. By assessing not only frontline sellers but also managers and internal functions that influence the sales organisation, it becomes possible to understand whether the problem is individual reluctance, managerial pressure, unclear priorities, cultural friction or a mixture of all four.

This system-level perspective is one of the strongest arguments for Sales Activity Assessment as a strategic method rather than a narrow test intervention.

When the goal is sustainable improvement, organisations need to understand how internal context amplifies or suppresses selling behaviour over time.

#### **From reluctance to measurable commercial impact.**

Research and practitioner materials around SPQ\*Gold/FSA consistently argue that reduced sales activity and increased reluctance are connected.

If sellers avoid prospecting, postpone follow-up or hesitate in commitment conversations, the commercial consequences appear downstream in lower opportunity flow, unstable pipelines and weaker close performance.

#### ***This makes activity a leading indicator and average sales or closing ratio lagging indicators.***

A diagnostic that connects all three is more useful than one that only evaluates personality or motivation because it helps leaders answer three separate questions: what behaviour is happening, what result it is creating and what psychological or organisational factor may be causing it.

What makes the approach distinctive  
The strongest case for Confident Approach is not simply that FSA exists, but that the company appears to use it as part of a wider behavioural and organisational analysis.

**Several elements stand out as distinctive:**

**Element: Why it matters!**

Sales-specific assessment FSA is described as measuring Sales Call Reluctance® rather than broad personality, which makes the output more relevant to prospecting and sales behaviour.

Focus on both individuals and systems. The approach addresses leadership and structural conditions, not only the salesperson.

**Link to commercial data:**

Activity, average sales and closing ratio provide business evidence alongside behavioural assessment.

**Context interviews**

Stakeholder interviews help explain why the same behaviour appears in one team and not another.

This combination gives leaders a more credible basis for deciding whether the right intervention is coaching, management change, process redesign, role clarification or new hiring criteria.

**Implications for leaders**

For sales leaders, the main implication is clear: do not treat low activity as a pure discipline issue before checking for behavioural and contextual causes.

A salesperson who avoids outreach may not need another motivation speech; the real need may be targeted coaching around rejection, authority, pressure or fear of asking for commitment.

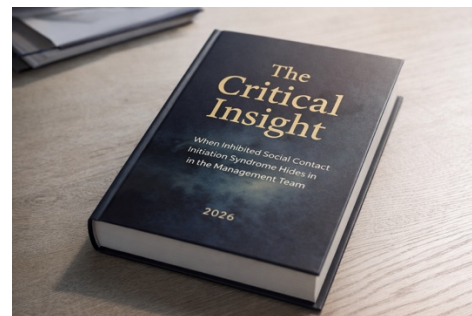
For senior management, the message is broader. If internal functions, leadership behaviour or the wider commercial system are discouraging proactive sales behaviour, then no amount of frontline training will solve the issue on its own.

In those cases, assessment must include the system around sales, not only the people carrying the quota.

**Conclusion**

Sales Activity Assessment is most valuable when it connects behavioural diagnostics to commercial reality.

Confident Approach's use of SPQ\*Gold/FSA, together with activity data, average sales, closing ratio and stakeholder interviews, points to a broader model for understanding performance: one that treats selling as a behavioural outcome shaped by both individual psychology and organisational context.



That broader perspective is likely the most compelling part of the offering. Instead of asking only whether salespeople have the right skills, it asks a more commercially useful question: what is preventing the right behaviour from happening consistently in this specific sales environment?

When that question is answered well, the result is not just more insight but better decisions about coaching, leadership, hiring and sales execution.