

The tales of sales

WHILE question marks remain over the economy and jobs in many sectors, sales careers in many fields are bucking the trend with companies taking on whole armies of new staff.

By Ben West

Expansion plans at Vodafone this year, for example, have included the recruitment of 200 staff to support the opening of 50 new high street stores.

Harpers Fitness, a national chain of public-access leisure centres with

in commission to members of its sales team. One member of the sales team in Worcester sold more than 278 memberships, which secured him £3,750 in commission alone.

North London-based Ben Underwood rose from lifeguard to regional sales manager at Greenwich Leisure in just over two years and is now enjoying

competition. On a typical day I'll set out the day's sales activity for the team, review targets and have a one-to-one coaching meeting with at least one of the team most days.

"We drive sales through simple but effective marketing. I constantly look to motivate and improve the performance of my team."

Alexander Barani, sales and marketing manager for the Jason range of natural cosmetics, is also relishing a career in sales.

Mr Barani, who has been promoting Jason for 20 years, said: "I typically spend my day juggling sales, PR and marketing. I am part of the integral process of bringing and launching new products to the market."

"Each day I liaise with major customers. My job isn't always about the hard sell but offering our stores as much support as we can, especially given the

financial climate. Sales is a tough job. It takes persistence and time and you have to have broad shoulders to take the rejections. But when coverage comes in I take great pride in communicating this to the stores so they know what customers will be requesting.

"However, new business is always near the top of the agenda so I identify potential stores and meet them to present the range and illustrate sales potential in a market which is flourishing."

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more than 70 across the UK, is finding many members of its sales team are achieving a full-time salary doing part-time work, with many working only 15 hours a week. In January the company paid out more than £100,000

his job as sales and membership manager at David Lloyd Leisure at Enfield, Middlesex.

Mr Underwood, 29, a sports psychology graduate, said: "Sales suits me best because there is a very tangible sense of achievement and

BUCKING THE TREND Sales advisers are being taken on. Left: Alexander Barani



THE Psychology Of Success by Judith Leary Joyce (Prentice Hall, £10.99) is an ideal read for budding sales executives. It identifies the emotional drivers that help progress and explores what can be learned from those who succeed.