

LEAD GENERATION

What Is an SDR?

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What Is an SDR? Role, Day-to-Day, Salary Ranges (2026) and SDR vs BDR

Short answer: An SDR (sales development representative) is a salesperson who finds and qualifies potential buyers and books first meetings for account executives, who then run the sales process and close. SDRs work the top of the funnel through email, phone and LinkedIn, and are usually measured on qualified meetings held, not revenue.

Key takeaways

- An SDR **creates and qualifies opportunities**; an account executive (AE) closes them. Some companies call outbound-focused SDRs **BDRs**.
- The Bridge Group's 2025 study found a median of **112 activities a day**, **4.1 quality conversations** and a quota of **10 meetings held a month**, with 60% of SDRs hitting it.
- Payscale's 2026 data puts average SDR base pay at about **\$51,700** in the US, **£29,500** in the UK and **Rs 7.3 lakh** in India; on-target earnings add commission on top.
- Outsource SDR work when you need to prove a market before hiring, or when nobody has time to manage reps.

The SDR job as a daily funnel

Stage	Median (Bridge Group, 2025)	What it means in practice
Activities per day	112 (about 44 calls, 41 emails, 19 LinkedIn touches, 8 other)	Most of the day is outreach, not talking
Quality conversations per day	4.1	Roughly one real conversation for every 27 activities
Meetings held per month (quota)	10	The number most SDRs are paid on
Meetings that become real opportunities	6 per month	The number the business actually cares about
Share of SDRs at quota	60%	The lowest the study has recorded

SDR funnel math (template: copy and adapt)

Meetings per month = conversations per day x working days x conversation-to-meeting rate

Using the 2025 medians:

4.1 conversations x ~21 working days = ~86 conversations a month

10 meetings / 86 conversations = roughly 1 meeting for every 8 to 9 conversations

To book more meetings, an SDR can only:

1. Have more conversations (better lists, better timing, more channels)
2. Convert more of them (sharper reason to meet, better qualification questions)

More activity alone only helps if it produces more conversations.

SDR vs BDR vs AE

	SDR	BDR	AE (account executive)
Main job	Qualify and book meetings	Create new pipeline through prospecting	Run the sales process and close
Lead source (common usage)	Often inbound: demo requests, form fills	Outbound: people who have not raised a hand	Meetings passed on by SDRs/BDRs, plus own pipeline
Measured on	Qualified meetings held	Meetings and opportunities created	Revenue closed against quota
Typical seniority	Entry to mid level	Entry to mid level	Mid to senior
Usual next step	AE or SDR manager	AE or partnerships	Senior AE, sales manager

SDR salary ranges in 2026

Market	Average base	Base range (10th-90th percentile)	Total pay range	Source
United States	\$51,677	\$40k to \$67k	\$45k to \$82k	Payscale, updated May 2026
United Kingdom	£29,462	£22k to £39k	£24k to £49k	Payscale, 2026 figure (updated Nov 2025)
India	Rs 7,30,080	Rs 3.46 lakh to Rs 10 lakh	Rs 3.83 lakh to Rs 20 lakh	Payscale, updated May 2026

Quick answers

What does SDR stand for?

SDR stands for sales development representative. It is an entry-level to mid-level sales role focused on the start of the sales process: researching prospects, reaching out by email, phone and LinkedIn, qualifying interest and booking first meetings for an account executive, who then handles demos, proposals and closing.

What is the difference between an SDR and a BDR?

In many companies an SDR follows up on inbound leads, such as demo requests and form fills, while a BDR (business development representative) prospects outbound, contacting people who have not shown interest yet. Many other companies use the two titles interchangeably, so always check the job description rather than the title.

How much does an SDR earn in 2026?

According to Payscale's 2026 data, the average SDR base salary is about \$51,700 in the US, about £29,500 in the UK and about Rs 7.3 lakh in India. Commission and bonuses add to that. WinsAbove's 2026 review of compensation surveys puts median on-target earnings at about \$85,000, with about \$60,000 as base.

How is an SDR measured?

The main metric is qualified meetings held per month, often with a second target for meetings that convert into real opportunities. The Bridge Group's 2025 report found a median quota of 10 meetings held per month. Activity counts, reply rates and conversation counts are useful leading indicators but should not be the target on their own.

Is SDR a good career?

For many people it is the standard entry point into B2B sales. It teaches prospecting, objection handling and qualification, and the usual next step is account executive or SDR manager. The Bridge Group's 2025 report found average SDR tenure of 1.9 years, which reflects how often SDRs are promoted or move on.

Should I hire an SDR or outsource sales development?

Hire in-house when outbound already works, you have a sales leader to coach reps and you sell into one home market at volume. Outsource when you need to prove a market first, enter a new region, or have nobody with time to manage SDRs. Many companies outsource first, then hire once the playbook is proven.

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