

State of GTM Compensation H2 2023

For the latest version: <https://clsr.in/gtm-comp-report>

About CloserIQ

CloserIQ is the leading GTM-focused search firm helping venture-backed startups scale from Seed to IPO. We offer executive search, strategic hiring, and team buildout services to help startups scale efficiently at every stage of growth.

Since 2014, we have built 900+ GTM organizations and are recommended by leading institutions like Sequoia, a16z, General Catalyst, Insight Partners, and Battery Ventures.

Executive Search	Strategic Hiring	Team Buildout
<p>We help startups hire mission critical and stage-appropriate GTM executives.</p> <p>Search Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ CRO / COO→ VP of Sales→ VP of Marketing→ VP of Growth→ VP of Customer Success	<p>We offer a unique strategic search model for 2nd in command and early stage executives.</p> <p>Search Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Director of Sales / CS→ Head of Growth→ Head of Partnerships→ Director of Marketing→ Head of Ops/RevOps	<p>By leveraging our technology and network, we can quickly scale GTM teams from First AE to teams of SDRs and Customer Success.</p> <p>Search Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ First Sales Hire→ SDR / BDR→ Account Executive→ Account Manager→ Customer Success

Trusted by 900+ Global Employers



Key Insights

(1) Total compensation is tapering off.

After 6 consecutive quarters of tech industry layoffs, we're seeing compensation plateau and even decrease in some instances across GTM roles.

(2) Reduced quota attainment decreased total earnings.

Reported quota attainment for revenue roles has fallen in the last year, which has significantly decreased On-Target Earnings (OTE). Base salaries have become more of a priority for GTM professionals which has increased relative to OTE for certain roles.

(3) It's an employer's market for the foreseeable future.

Talent pools are saturated with candidates from BigTech layoffs, allowing hiring managers to be more selective and spearfish critical hires using more in-depth interview processes. Durable startups are picking up incredible talent.

(4) Remote hiring is reverting to hybrid and in-office.

While many employers are still committed to offering the flexibility of hybrid work, earlier stage companies are reverting to in-person for key hires. Companies are focused on creating hubs and prioritizing candidates in the same time zone.

(5) GTM organizations are flattening.

As growth slowed, many GTM organizations collapsed middle management and replaced their executive leaders (ex. CRO) with front-line leaders (ex. Head of Sales) and individual contributors.

Individual Contributors (IC)

Top Hiring Sectors



DevTools & Infrastructure



Big Data & AI



Vertical Software



FinTech



HealthTech

Tech layoffs continued in the first half of 2023, but we saw durable sectors like the ones above continue to hire. Demand rose for technical and enterprise sellers as AI and Vertical SaaS companies were the hottest sectors in venture.

In addition, financial services, healthcare, supply chain, and other recession-proof industries continued to see strong venture funding and hiring demand.

Lower Quota, Lower OTE

Over the past year, average quota attainment continued to decline as market uncertainty and budgets impacted sales performance.

In H1-2023, individual contributors attained only 50% of their quota on average. This is a 5% decline since H2-2022 and a 12% decline annually.

For Enterprise Account Executives where compensation is typically 50/50 split between base and OTE, the decline in quota attainment has a huge impact.

A rep making \$125K base / \$250K OTE that achieves only 38% of their quota would make \$149K in total compensation. This is a great reminder that OTEs are merely estimates. Ultimately, quota attainment is what determines total compensation.

Quota Attainment by Role

Role	H2-22 Attainment	H1-23 Attainment	Period Change	Annual Change
BDR / SDR / ADR	56%	53%	-3%	-5%
SMB Account Executive	49%	43%	-6%	-14%
Mid-Market Account Executive	47%	41%	-6%	-15%
Enterprise Account Executive	45%	38%	-7%	-14%
Account Manager	58%	52%	-6%	-13%
Customer Success Manager	67%	64%	-3%	-8%
Sales Engineer	63%	58%	-5%	-18%
Average	55%	50%	-5%	-12%

A Hiring Manager's Checklist for Interviewing Enterprise Account Executives

Hiring the right candidate for high-impact, competitive positions can be daunting. [Download our EAE Interview Guide](#) to ensure you're making the right impression and closing the best talent.

Individual Contributor Compensation

Market contraction, tech layoffs, and declining quota attainment have caused candidates to prioritize job stability and base salaries.

SDR/BDR roles saw a slight increase in average base and OTE by 1.6% and 3.7% respectively. We saw a flight to quality (experience) as companies shifted to requiring 1+ years of experience for most SDR roles. Enterprise AEs saw an overall decrease in compensation, with average base and advertised OTEs falling by 8%.

Post-sales (AM & CSM) compensation was resilient as companies shifted their focus from new to existing customers. Average base salaries declined by 4% while OTEs increased by 2%. As post-sales became a more revenue-driven role, AMs saw an interesting shift in Base/OTE from 70% to 60%.

In the table below, the Low and High columns represent the 25th and 75th percentiles. For startups looking to attract top talent, we recommend benchmarks at or above the Average.

Role	Base Salary			On-Target Earnings		
	Low	Average	High	Low	Average	High
Sales/Business Development Representative	\$49,000	\$58,000	\$73,000	\$72,000	\$85,000	\$100,000
SMB Account Executive	\$58,000	\$70,000	\$86,000	\$105,000	\$128,000	\$160,000
Mid-Market Account Executive	\$70,000	\$88,000	\$110,000	\$131,000	\$166,000	\$210,000
Enterprise Account Executive	\$91,000	\$117,000	\$143,000	\$181,000	\$230,000	\$283,000
Account Manager	\$61,000	\$79,000	\$98,000	\$99,000	\$130,000	\$163,000
Customer Success Manager	\$71,000	\$87,000	\$105,000	\$95,000	\$118,000	\$143,000
Sales Engineer	\$90,000	\$116,000	\$142,000	\$118,000	\$153,000	\$189,000
Sales Ops Analyst	\$77,000	\$88,000	\$100,000	\$85,000	\$98,000	\$111,000
Marketing Specialist	\$51,000	\$61,000	\$71,000	\$55,000	\$65,000	\$76,000
Marketing Manager/Team Lead	\$70,000	\$85,000	\$102,000	\$83,000	\$101,000	\$121,000

Our compensation benchmarks use a proprietary blend of composite averages across our recent reported offer data and 4 external party data sources.

E Curious what other companies are paying for your current opening today?

Shoot your question to hiring@closeriq.com for a free diagnostic on the market rate based on your growth stage and parameters.

Sales Leadership Hiring Trends



Since the tech recession started, we've seen a flurry of GTM leadership changes as growth slowed. Many startups downshifted their executive teams, replacing CROs and VP of Sales with functional front-line Head of Sales.

In Q2, we saw an uptick in Head of Sales searches as recently funded startups pursue growth with their first early stage GTM executive hire. The focal point has become that elusive Series A Head of Sales that is willing to sell, hire, manage, and own GTM.

Leadership Hiring in 2023

With so much risk and uncertainty in quota attainment, we've advised companies to shorten the horizon in which they are assessing leadership needs.

The general methodology we recommend for early stage revenue leadership hiring is to start with a diagnostic. Identify the key gaps across the customer journey: marketing, sales development, sales, customer success, and revenue operations. From there, the gaps map to core competencies and relevant experiences that the right leader should have.

Finally, devise the set of assessment questions to objectively evaluate the depth of candidate knowledge. This methodical approach is a more linear and prudent way to hire early stage GTM executives.

Detailed Scorecards and Assessments for Head of Sales

	Priority Scorecard	Time Allocation: 1-4 weeks (S)	Time Allocation: 6-10 weeks (L)
Executive Summary			
Strategic			
Operational			
Customer Success			
Revenue Operations			
Leadership			
Communication			
Problem Solving			
Team Management			
Industry Knowledge			
Overall Score			

Hiring for a leadership role? [Get in touch.](#)

Our Contained and Retained Search models help startups make stage-appropriate GTM leadership hires backed by the industry's best guarantee policy.

Sales Leadership Compensation

In H1-2023, GTM leaders prioritized lean and efficient teams to reinvigorate revenue goals.

Average base salaries for SDR / BDR Managers decreased by 20% and OTE by 7%. For Sales Managers, average base and OTE fell by 10% and 20%, respectively. Directors of Customer Success (CS) and Business Development (BD) saw base salaries increase by 2% and 4.4%. However, the average OTE decreased for CS by 19% while increasing by 1.5% for BD. The opposite of their IC counterparts, the Base/OTE split for CS leaders shifted from 60% to nearly 80%.

Compensation remained steady for Directors of Sales, with average base and OTE increasing by 1%. VPs of Sales saw a more noticeable change, as the Base/OTE split shifted from 60% to 50%, causing the average base salary to decrease by 4.4% and OTE to increase by 9.1%.

In the table below, the Low and High columns represent the 25th and 75th percentiles. For startups looking to attract top talent, we recommend benchmarks at or above the Average columns.

Role	Base Salary			On-Target Earnings		
	Low	Average	High	Low	Average	High
SDR / BDR Manager	\$80,000	\$95,000	\$113,000	\$115,000	\$135,000	\$158,000
Sales Manager	\$99,000	\$117,000	\$133,000	\$178,000	\$209,000	\$237,000
Sales Ops Manager / Director	\$89,000	\$110,000	\$134,000	\$123,000	\$154,000	\$191,000
Director of Customer Success	\$131,000	\$153,000	\$176,000	\$165,000	\$194,000	\$226,000
Director of Business Development	\$142,000	\$167,000	\$201,000	\$229,000	\$274,000	\$335,000
Director of Sales	\$129,000	\$153,000	\$177,000	\$235,000	\$284,000	\$327,000
VP of Sales	\$159,000	\$190,000	\$221,000	\$298,000	\$359,000	\$420,000

Our latest compensation benchmarks use a proprietary blend of composite averages across our recent reported offer data and 4 external party data sources.

Justworks

"CloserIQ has streamlined our entire sales recruiting process. Over the past few years, they have consistently provided us with strong candidates so we've been able to save time by focusing on high probability hires. We've made 40 hires across the entire sales org at all levels of seniority and in various roles. I would highly recommend them as a talent partner."



Robert Lopez
Chief Revenue Officer / SVP, Justworks

Heads of Revenue Compensation

We used 200+ data points across our survey and recent search data to better understand how Heads of Revenue are being compensated. We analyzed 11 independent variables (ex. number of direct reports, span of control, location, tenure, company ARR, etc.) but the most determinant factor was company stage of funding.

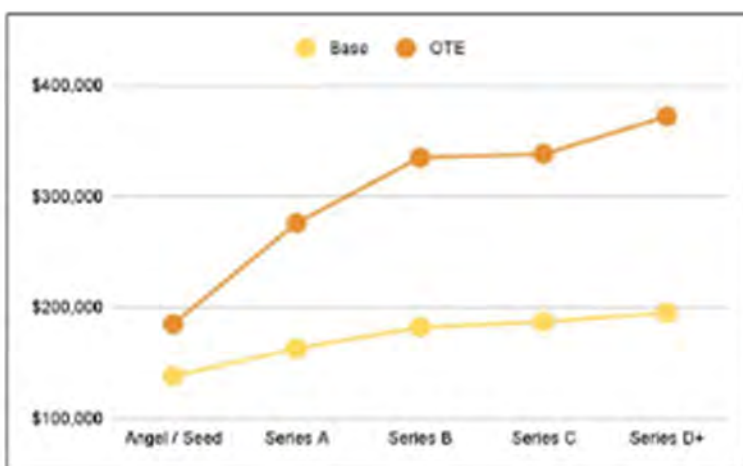
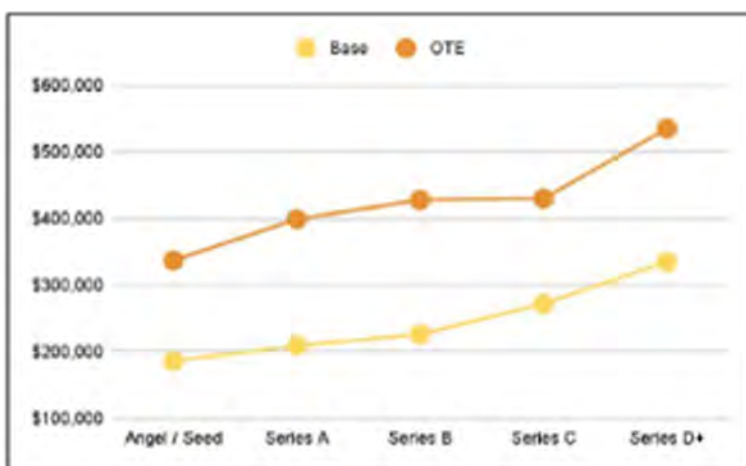
Not surprisingly, compensation levels mostly tracked venture funding stage. Growth stage startups generally paid more, and hired more senior level revenue leaders with more years of experience and broader span of control across sub-functions of the GTM organization.

Interestingly, we once again saw a dislocation in an elevated Series A compensation level relative to Seed and Series B. Anecdotally, we see very often startups make overly ambitious offers to recruit executives from larger companies after their Series A. We created our **Strategic Search** service specifically for Series A Head of Revenue searches as more often than not, the prudent decision is a Director-level hire as opposed to an VP/CRO.

This report combines insights derived from surveys distributed within our community, as well as proprietary data from our database.

Company Funding	Head of Revenue	
	Base	OTE
Angel / Seed	\$186,000	\$337,000
Series A	\$209,000	\$399,000
Series B	\$226,000	\$428,000
Series C	\$272,000	\$430,000
Series D+	\$335,000	\$535,000

Company Funding	2nd in Command	
	Base	OTE
Angel / Seed	\$138,000	\$185,000
Series A	\$163,000	\$276,000
Series B	\$182,000	\$335,000
Series C	\$187,000	\$338,000
Series D+	\$195,000	\$372,000



What about equity? Equity can be highly circumstantial. The average equity for a Head of Revenue at early stages (Seed through Series A), was 1.3% with range of 0.8% at the 25 percentile and 1.9% at 75 percentile. Maximum reported was 5%. At growth stages (Series B and beyond), the average was 0.8% with a range of 0.4% at 25 percentile and 1.0% at 75 percentile. Maximum reported was 3%.

Gender Wage Gap in GTM

New data published by the [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](#) shows that in Q2 2023, women were paid on average 84% less than men, with the gender wage gap increases for higher income earners. The highest earning tenth of male workers made up to 27% more than their female counterparts.

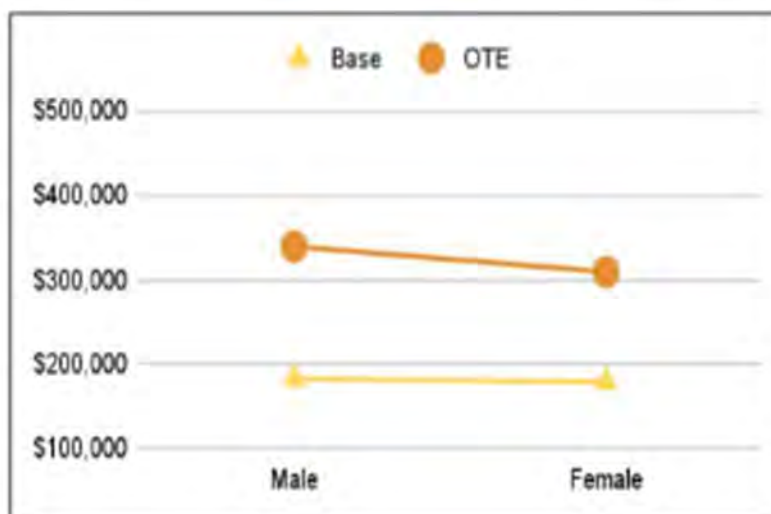
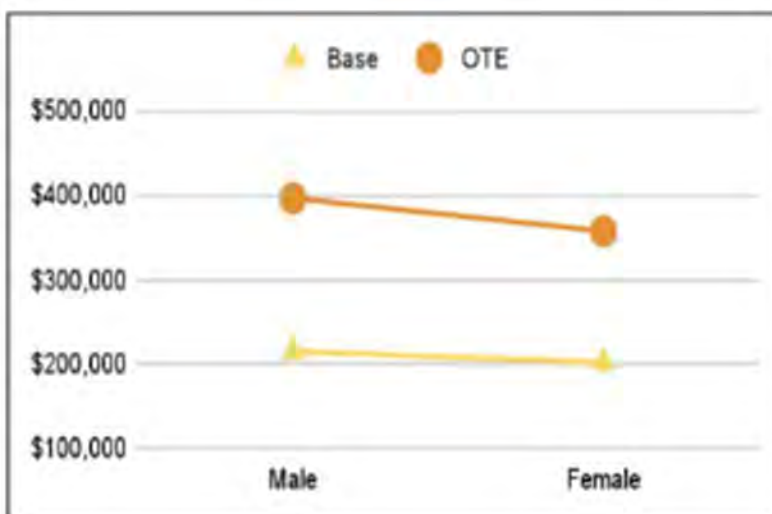
We examined our GTM Leadership survey data to see how compensation levels differed between male and female revenue leaders in the startup ecosystem. Our analysis pointed to a smaller wage gap than the national average for this cohort of GTM leaders.

For Heads of Revenue, the average base salary for females was 6.3% less than males. The gap widened for OTE, as females reported 10.3% less. Females in 2nd in command roles like Directors of Revenue averaged a base salary of 1.7% less than males. However, OTE jumped to an average of 9.6% less.

These numbers indicate progress in narrowing the gender wage gap within GTM Leadership roles. However, there is still work to be done to achieve true pay equity. It is important for companies to continue assessing and addressing any disparities in compensation to create a more inclusive and fair work environment.

Head of Revenue	Base	OTE
Male	\$214,271	\$396,306
Female	\$201,556	\$357,556

2nd in Command	Base	OTE
Male	\$181,994	\$339,337
Female	\$178,875	\$309,500

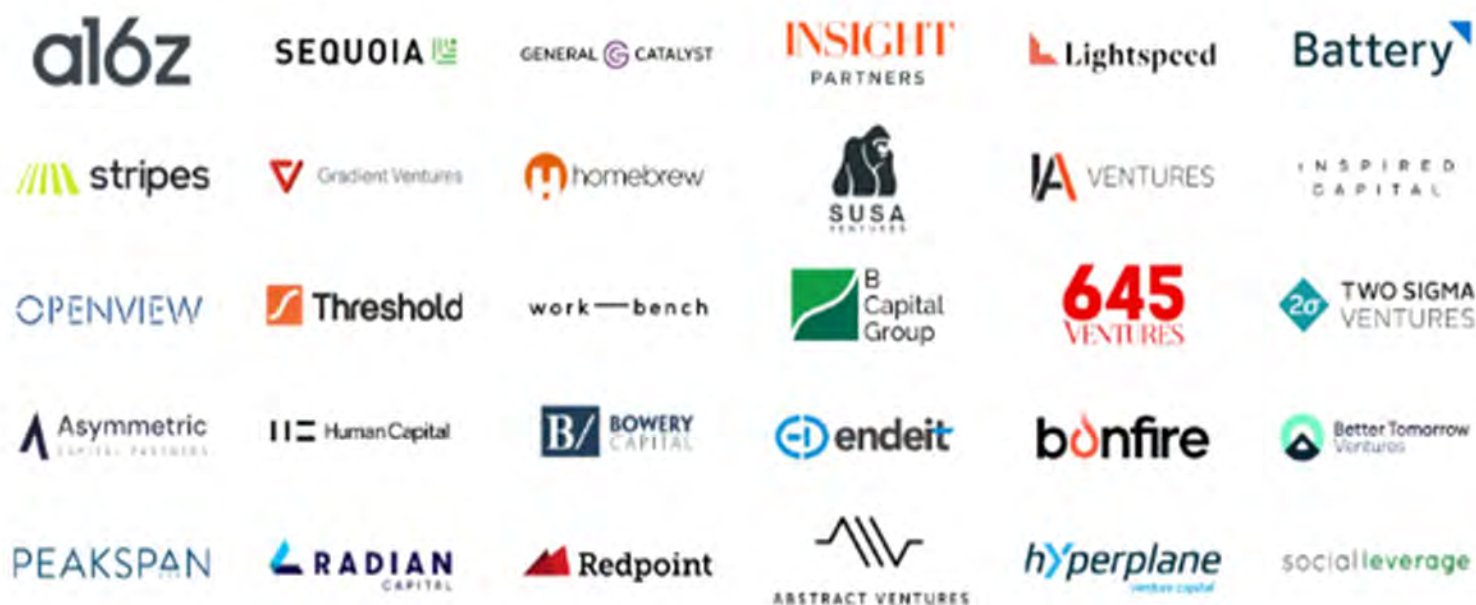


We are a proud leader in promoting GTM Diversity and invite you to explore WISE

WISE

WISE is a global community for female sales leaders, offering tactical diversity and retention solutions to the world's most innovative companies. Learn how a [WISE partnership](#) can help you empower the women on your team and increase employee engagement.

Trusted by Leading Institutions



"The team at CloserIQ has been a valuable resource, both for me and our BTV portfolio. They provide excellent support for portfolio company searches, keep us updated with market trends and insights, and go a step further by providing access to useful content and workshops that educate founders on a wide range of GTM topics."



Yoni Lateiner
Talent Partner, Better Tomorrow Ventures

Hiring? Please reach out to your relationship manager or contact us at hiring@closeriq.com

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