

The sales process

Introduction

This article is part of our [sales guide for contractors](#).

In this article we describe how the sales process for recruitment agencies operates. Understanding this will increase your chances of securing contracts quicker, and at the top rates.

What is a 'Sales Process'

Amongst sales professionals, the 'sales process' is well known and is a vital structure applied to selling a product or solution. So what is a 'sales process' and why is it useful to understand it?

For non-sales professionals, it can be of huge benefit to understand the way sales works and the structures that are employed. You can gain an idea as to what is happening to you when you are being sold to and can even engage a sales process of your own.

The sales process is the set of processes put in place by the sales person and these processes will describe a clear and structured way to introduce a product and then follow each step up until the point when a sale has been made, and even after the sale.

The sales process further dismisses the myth that sales people use the gift of the gab or cheat their way into making sales.

All major organisations pay particular attention to the sales process they train their staff to use and the best organisations insist that their sales staff stick to the sales process provided rigidly. Why? Well, usually because it is a process that has been carefully planned and most importantly – because it is known to work in their relevant industry or for their particular product.

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The Recruitment Sales Process

The sales process describes a number of steps to be taken by the sales person that will lead them from the beginning of a sale, through to the close. Let's look at a typical sales process employed by recruitment consultants when selling a position to a contractor:

1. Match a CV to a current position
2. Recruitment consultant contacts the candidate and introduces themselves
3. The introduction explains the nature of the call, the business of the agency and what the consultant is looking to do (i.e. arrange an interview with the contractor for the position)
4. The contractor then needs to be qualified. This means: is the contractor looking for a new position, are they qualified to carry out the work, do they charge an acceptable rate, and are they interested in the position?
5. The recruitment consultant then interviews the contractor (normally via telephone and in the same call)
6. The recruitment consultant assesses the contractor's ability to carry out the work and how successful they feel the contractor will be at an interview. The recruitment consultant must 'sell' the position to the contractor
7. The recruitment consultant must then 'sell' the contractor to their client. They will send over the C.V for the contractor (which may well have been modified to represent the contractor in a better light) and must convince their client that the contractor is worthy of an interview
8. The recruitment consultant then prepares the contractor for the interview process. This will include providing background material for the contractor to read up on and characteristics of the client will be expressed
9. After being offered the position, the recruitment consultant will then attempt to [negotiate the rate of pay](#) for the contractor with the highest margin they can attain for their agency
10. The final job is for the recruitment consultant to further convince their client that the contractor is the best person for the job and that the rate is acceptable. At the same time, the recruitment consultant must also convince the contractor that this is the best role for him and at the highest rate of pay.
11. On agreement from both sides, the deal is closed and [contracts are signed](#)

The sales process described above demonstrates in very simple terms how the structure of a sale might work. Of course in reality, the sales process will be far more complex and lengthy. It is easy to see the logic in ensuring a process is followed. Without such a process, often elements that should have been covered in the sale are forgotten and missed out. As little as possible is left to chance.

The sales process also allows for sales teams to more accurately forecast the likelihood of business won and it is easy to manage a number of deals at the same time as long as you understand how far down the sales process you are. Sales processes are always adapted and modified so as to provide the smoothest and most effective way of closing a sale.

When you are being sold to, try to be aware of the sales process that is being used by the sales person. It will make clear to you what is happening and what the sales person is attempting to do. Do not let such a process prevent you from looking at all of the angles when considering making a decision and make absolutely sure such a process does not manipulate you into making a decision too quickly.

Using Your Own Sales Processes

If you are looking to sell something, always right down the structure of what you think needs to happen and how best you might tackle each point. Then, follow the processes through – making changes where necessary. Then, you have your own sales process!

“ try to be aware of the sales process that is being used by the sales person ”

All experienced and successful contractors have developed their own sales process when searching for contracts. They might not have formalised it and written it down, but they will have fine tuned a process over the years which works for them. The easy route for you is to find those people and ask them how they did it, which will give you an excellent kick start for your own process. We have detailed a candidate process for you already in our article [How To Find A Contract](#).

You will also need a sales process for an interview. Many interviewers don't have a process, so it will be easy for you to drive the conversation in the direction you want to ensure you get all the correct points across and sell yourself well. We discuss this in much more detail in our article [The Killer Interview Technique](#).

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