

What is sales?

Introduction

This article is part of our [sales guide for contractors](#). In this article we describe what professional sales is, and how it is applicable to contractors.

Sales - An Explanation

Sales is a critical part of any business and is often widely misunderstood. In the UK in particular, sales as a career is often considered to be unprofessional and there is a degree of mistrust surrounding 'sales people' and the processes they use.

As with any profession, some sales practices and people fall far short of delivering the promises they make. This is however not true of the whole industry.

Sales is in fact a science and follows strict rules and processes. Sales is the method of presenting a product in the most positive light, maintaining control over the 'sales process' and ultimately achieving the highest level of profit together with delivering the highest level of customer satisfaction. Although this certainly does not mean that sales as an industry necessarily has your 'best interests' at heart, and it is for this reason that it is so important to gain a basic knowledge of what sales is and how it operates.

Sales and Contracting

There are many [advantages to using agencies to find contracts](#). Contractors will certainly be exposed to sales people and their processes the moment a recruitment consultant or agency assists them in finding a new position.

Contractors also need to become salespeople and use their own sales skills to convince an agent to put them forward for interview, sell themselves to the client during an interview, and then to finally negotiate an attractive rate.

A solid understanding of sales is imperative to the successful sale of any product, including the sale of contractors as knowledge workers (or consultants). Ultimately 'any commercial product or service is a product that must be sold'. Despite what you may have been told, even great products do not sell themselves.

As a contractor you will be forced to engage yourself in a sales capacity, and it is in your interest to learn how to do it well.

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