

Sales for contractors

Introduction

There are many [reasons why permanent employees go contracting](#), and the move to contracting can be extremely rewarding. Contractors have more control over their career direction, typically earn more, and have more [holiday flexibility](#) than permanent employees.

The keys to achieving the financial rewards are:

keeping your skills updated to ensure you are marketable.

minimising downtime between contracts.

maximising your revenues.

As a contractor you will be sold to and also need to become a salesperson yourself to sell your product - you!

The [importance of a professional sales approach](#) cannot be stressed enough, and this sales guide for contractors will give you a good grounding for the skills you will need to help you reap the rewards from your contracting career.

Some Sales Facts about the Contract Market

Some things to consider:

Having the top skills will not guarantee a contract or the top rates:

[Keeping your skills current and updated](#) will certainly ensure you can *potentially* command the highest premiums, but it certainly doesn't mean you *will* earn the highest premiums. Neither does it ensure you will always be in work.

Bad candidates often beat better ones:

The contractors who win the contracts are the ones who know best about [finding a contract](#), and not necessarily the ones who are best candidates for the contracts. There are plenty of exceptional contractors out of work, or working for less than they are worth simply because they are unable to successfully sell their product – themselves.

Market demand is not the main driver to success:

There is both [seasonal demand for contractors](#), and longer supply/demand fluctuations similar to the stock market. When demand is high even contractors with the worst sales approach find themselves gaining contracts with agents often fighting over them. When demand falls, the contractors with little or no sales knowledge find themselves unable to secure contracts and often head back to permanent employment, or worse, no employment. However, the ones who are best at selling themselves snap up the available contract positions.

Price is not the issue:

Contractors with little or no sales experience often wrongly believe that competitive pricing is the sole key to securing business. This is untrue. Clients will expect to pay market price for the goods they receive. Price is rarely the main issue. As Alan Sugar stated in *The Apprentice*, "...any fool can stand on the street and sell ten pound notes all day for eight quid."

Bad negotiation means lower income:

A failure to [negotiate your contract rate](#) will minimise your income from contracts and simply line the pockets of an agent via a large [agency margin](#), which is of course their goal.

How Sales Will Help You

To maximise your financial rewards you need to learn and apply good professional sales techniques. Your expertise is the product you are selling, and despite what some people say, even the best products do not sell themselves.

A good grounding in sales will help you in the following areas:

CV Preparation - the sales brochure about you

Finding contracts & obtaining interviews.

Interview Technique.

Contract Negotiation.

The most successful contractors acknowledge the [importance of a professional sales approach](#), and learn and apply good sales technique and process

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throughout their career.

Learning Sales

This guide to sales for contractors aims to dispel some of the myths and provide you with some insights into sales.

To fully master sales can take a lifetime, but as with so many things, to grasp a basic understanding is utterly achievable. This basic understanding can drastically improve your contracting career and put you ahead of the rest.

It will also provide you with an understanding of a critical part of any business, often ignored (at their peril) by contractors not working directly in sales.

The Contractor Sales Guide

The articles in this guide cover the many areas of sales and contain specific examples within the contracting industry:

1. [What is sales](#)
2. [Understanding Recruitment agencies and consultants](#)
3. [Negotiation for contractors](#)
4. [Strategies used in sales](#)
5. [Presentation](#)
6. [Presenting](#)
7. [The sales process](#)
8. [Closing – the theory and practices](#)
9. [Objections and objection handling](#)
10. [Features and benefits](#)
11. [Body language and image](#)
12. [Learn to use 'open ended questions' and recognise them](#)
13. [What sales people don't want you to do!](#)

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