

# Who's the Sales Professional in Entrepreneurial Business? You Are!

(Part 1 of a Three Part Series)

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## The Need for Professional Salesmanship

Okay, so you've done your research. You've developed your product, arranged for financing, identified and secured your business location and opened your new business venture. What's next?

Perhaps you remember the movie *Field of Dreams*. Remember the mantra that drove Kevin Costner to build a baseball field in the middle of a corn field somewhere in Iowa? "If you build it, they will come."

Have you ever felt that way about your baby—your business? Have you made the mistake of thinking that just because you "build it" your customers will "buy it?" If so, then you've no doubt found that it doesn't really work that way in business. And while this is true for large and small businesses alike, it reigns supremely true for the entrepreneurial business enterprise.

For the entrepreneur, selling is just as much an imperative as product development, back office operations, personnel and other management initiatives. As with all business disciplines, the better you are at selling your products, the more success you will experience.

So just how important is selling, you ask? Why must I embrace it and even master it to grow my business? Why can't I just build it, and why won't people just buy my product?

All valid questions. So let's explore this in some detail.

In business there are five core disciplines that make up the functionality of any enterprise: innovation, funding, production, distribution and service. While what constitutes each discipline will vary, distribution generally consists of marketing, advertisement and promotions, distribution methodology (or channels), and sales. Sales however isn't just a stand alone key to distribution. Rather, it is an underlying aspect of the other three components of distribution. And it also impacts each of the other four disciplines.

Not convinced? Just take a look at your surroundings. Every man-made thing you see has been sold by someone. In fact, not only were the finished products (i.e., what you now see, feel, hear, smell or taste) sold, but so were the raw materials and contributing components that ultimately make up the finished goods. Selling also occurred during the times of product design and development, marketing and promotions, costs underwriting, etc. Additionally, for those products that require post-sales service and support, professional sales skills are a valuable asset, especially when there are problems and/or opportunities for repeat business. Thus, selling is involved in each of the five core disciplines of your business.

So since sales or selling is such a large part of the success of your business, and because you are its principle representative, why wouldn't you embrace it, and why wouldn't you want to master it?

Perhaps selling has a negative connotation for you, as it does for many people. Maybe you don't feel that you're adequately equipped to do it. Should either apply, you'll want to read one or both of the next two parts of this article.

In Part Two, I'll discuss what I call the "mystique of selling." I use text from my book, *The Sales Mentor*, to explain what selling is fundamentally and why each of us is born to it. Additionally in Part Three, I'll explain how each of us can become effective sales professionals. Again I use text from *The Sales Mentor*, however in this part of the article, I discuss the most important lesson that you must learn in selling. Also, I explain the four core methods available to each of us to learn sales.

As the principle in your enterprise it's imperative that you embrace selling and learn to master it to grow your business. For many of us, selling can be mysterious. Most of us are also not properly prepared to succeed at it. In the remainder of this article I'll clear up the mystery and give you succinct pointers on how to learn to become an effective sales professional.

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