



Outsourcing Your Company's Sales Function?

“Outsourcing sales, are you nuts?” To many, particularly at first glance, the idea of outsourcing sales is akin to bastardizing the company's reputation. Upon a second review however, there are many valid reasons and in fact benefits, to outsourcing *some* sales organizations or functions.

Three Things You May Wish to Contemplate Regarding Your Organization's Sales Role

1. Can it be outsourced? In many cases, yes, particularly in a B2C environment. If you're in the B2C space and leadership has no natural talent in this area and the initiatives for success seem daunting w/o adding the task of sales to the mix, this might make a great deal of sense. Certainly, worth exploring. With some good marketing and solid sales outsource agreement, life could get much better!
2. Should it be outsourced? If you're a B2B, very likely not. But there are exceptions, one of them being akin to the situation outlined above. The B2B space often requires a greater degree of client intimacy than B2C, quite hard to do w/o sales. However, if you're not leveraging sales on this point, ... Also, if your product has been to a degree commoditized and your differentiators are technical in nature, it may prove wise to hire 3rd party reps...they only work for you in your space while also selling for other businesses in related or even unrelated fields. If on the other hand, your organization is facing churn, is redefining its value proposition, is looking towards account management vs sales, by all means keep sales in house. One “intermediate” step is to keep the sales function in-house yet still eliminate the “sales” title. This is done by spreading sales' responsibility across the organization. This is doable and can produce excellent results, just not w/o some savvy on the topic. Get professional help on this one.
3. Will AI (Artificial Intelligence) eliminate the role as we know it? The answer is addressed in two parts, and they can have inter-dependencies:
 - a. To the extent AI impacts or enables your product and/or service. And IoT (Internet of Things) for that matter.
 - b. To the extent AI enables or neuters your sales function as defined today.

In short, the narrower the scope of your value proposition, the more automated the delivery of your product/service is, the more likely the sales role will be compromised as known today. To the business owner, this may create the ability to get by with less costly sales resource from an HR standpoint. This will also put pressure on other parts of the business to cut costs however as the product can more easily become commoditized.





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On the other hand, if the organization chooses to differentiate itself with superior technical application and market leading product development, a high-quality sales team can become some of the organization's most valuable assets. By high quality sales in this instance, we mean technically adept to provide true client consultation, becoming a trusted advisor in the environment. And leverage internally for feedback to product management.

Either direction has the potential for big benefits to the business. And by adapting early, you'll be doing your team a huge favor as well, regardless of the short-term implications.

