

Professor Richardson,

A close relative of mine works in IT sales. I reached out to him to see about sharing some details on the types of roles available in the IT sales world and just how lucrative the opportunities are.

He works for what the industry calls an SI (systems integrator) or VAR (value added reseller). These types of firms encompass all sorts of specialized and niche players within the overall IT market space. In particular he works for a top end/large scale SI/VAR that deals primarily in common infrastructure (hardware) and business applications (software) –as opposed to sector specific players that deal only in finance say, or health, or Gov. or oil.

Types of Roles

- **SE's** (*systems engineers*)
- **SME** (*subject matter experts*)
- **Sales Specialists** (*– easiest god damned job in the world and HARDEST to find talent for. Describe value, book a meeting, bring an SE, be someone the customer likes to hang out with, answer all questions and make problems disappear, close – collect a cheque.*)
- **Technical pre-sales:** *someone who's potentially capable of doing actual 1's and 0's work but more importantly can stand up and deliver a presentation to an executive board – they don't end up doing the monkey work and move on once the sale is finished to the next one*
- **Deployment/Delivery Staff**
- **Support Staff**
- **General Sales**
- **All the other business functions but tailored to IT - marketing, HR, finance etc. – without understanding of IT, traditionalists are useless – example: getting a marketing genius but they don't know the first thing about our business or IT in any way – they can't design a marketing program that drives ROI for shit.**

Pay Structure/Opportunities

Good SE's/ SME's: *min \$150K+ some sort of variable pay structure*

Sales Specialists: *Salary ranges starting at \$45K - \$100K base depending on relevant experience + some sort of variable pay structure*

Variable Pay

- *Variable pay rates are 30%-70% of base depending on level of experience and how much leverage you put the company under. (lower base gets you a higher % of variable – meaning \$45K base could still have an OTE (on target earning of \$100K+)*
- *Over attainment pays numerous kinds of kickers and sliding scale bonuses, some capped, some not.*
- *We pay 2.5x your commission rate on any overachievement, uncapped. (paid one guy last year \$48,xxx commission on his last Q cheque because he ended up 187% of plan).*

The figures in the table below represent an example of the payscale at an SI/VAR level. As my relative explained, there is another world again at the manufacturer level. (eg. working for Microsoft or F5 or VMWare – we're talking OTE of \$200-\$350K, with stocks, options etc. etc.) High stress, high turnover – but you get in, make \$ and get out and go work anywhere with a big name on your resume.

Base	Variable	Total	Base	Variable	Total	Base	Variable	Total
FY2011			FY2012			FY2013		
\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 42,538.51	\$ 382.50	\$ 42,921.01	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 57,546.66	\$ 117,546.66
\$ 77,039.96	\$ 27,777.13	\$ 104,817.09	\$ 79,000.00	\$ 16,836.33	\$ 95,836.33	\$ 79,000.00	\$ 31,672.17	\$ 110,672.17
\$ 46,698.37	\$ 18,399.66	\$ 65,098.03	\$ 48,000.00	\$ 13,509.97	\$ 61,509.97	\$ 50,166.67	\$ 14,328.15	\$ 64,494.82
\$ 58,811.99	\$ 21,772.07	\$ 80,584.06	\$ 59,160.00	\$ 24,963.86	\$ 84,123.86	\$ 64,403.33	\$ 30,947.42	\$ 95,350.75

Some guidelines on how to sound smart when talking about the biz?

- *Business efficiency is derived from technology, which increases revenue and reduces costs – it's about doing more with less at 40,000 ft but never say that. (cliché)*
- *Technology evolves so fast that business IT teams are all under staffed, underfunded and can't keep up. Thus the need to buy specialized products and use consultants who know the solutions*
- *Sometimes customers can actually do the work but it's a problem with scale to meet their needs (resourcing eg. finding talent - is a huge business as much as actually having talent reserves or being talent)*
- *Canada (even North America) has a huge deficiency of white collar, high paying jobs within the IT field – either techno geeks (coders, programmers, designers) or folks that can operate in transitional positions (sales) and fit somewhere in the middle – which lands you at a firm coming up with a solution, or selling solutions.*
- *The new supply/ distribution channel is not bricks and mortar. MS/Cisco/NetApp/VMWare/Oracle can't sell direct to EVERY customer; although their solutions are capable of becoming ubiquitous – so they all have HUGE extended sales forces (hundreds of thousands if not millions of ppl) within their partner eco-system that take their products to market or somehow leverage capabilities which drive sales.*