

[< back](#)

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The Sales Manager as Entrepreneur – Are You Sure?

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Abstract

This study examines how and whether entrepreneurial orientation (thinking like an entrepreneur) and entrepreneurial intent (acting like an entrepreneur) influence performance within established firms. The context is sales, the function that within firms arguably has the largest scope for entrepreneurial activities but that has, surprisingly, not yet received scholarly attention. We test a framework that includes mediating mechanisms with 252 sales managers in the UK and find that entrepreneurial orientation improves performance both directly and indirectly, but that entrepreneurial intent does not have direct effects. Overall, we contribute to the literature by revealing how individuals translate entrepreneurial orientation into superior performance, thus advancing the emerging research stream on the causal chain between entrepreneurial orientation and performance. Findings have important practical and public policy implications.

< [back](#)



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