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Mutual Respect

One of our members, a CIO, recently placed a request through the Discussion Group for some assistance on upgrading and expanding his company's CRM. He specifically requested peer input and advice as well as possible starting place templates and business process improvement documents. He was hoping to hear from other CIOs that had faced similar challenges and hear their thoughts concerning viable approaches. He received about twenty responses, a few of which were worthwhile, but to his annoyance many were sales pitches; and forwarded one of the replies to me that came from a vendor that is not a TENG member. As our CIO put it, "this is a real abuse of the (Discussion) group's purpose."

I have nothing against professional sales people, since I really am one myself and you probably don't mind them either; but there exist appropriate times and ways to use them and introduce them to colleagues. And the truth is most of us don't want to hear a biased sales pitch when we're trying to solve a problem. In addition, Group rules specify that the Discussion Group will not be used for business development.

I suspect that in some cases, the offending members have either landed with software vendors or have trusted vendors who have served them well in the past, and sincerely wanted to help our requesting CIO. But under no circumstances should they have made a sales inquiry or referred this request out of the network to a vendor without first obtaining the CIO's permission. What may have been driven by a desire to help appeared as predatory and self-serving.

For us to maintain TENG's steady growth and reputation for quality we must ensure that we treat each other with the same or better level of respect and assistance that we would expect to have returned to us. Marketing your business or handing off member requests for advice to technology vendors is clearly not the way to do that and if these activities persist, we will lose valued members.

Please contact me immediately if you are the recipient of this form of abuse through our Yahoo Groups or through any TENG activity.

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