



Winning The Complex Sale

Disqualify Your Leads

If your conversion rate is low, or lead times are excessively long, then may be it is time you started to disqualify your leads.

Much is said and written about the importance of qualifying leads so that time is used effectively and not wasted on business opportunities that will go nowhere.

In qualifying we normally have a little checklist that would typically include some needs analysis and financial checks among other things.

Yet how often do we find that we do this qualification, proceed in committing resources to the opportunity, yet our proposals are unsuccessful, or the customer does nothing?.

How many opportunities in your pipeline have a less than 20% chance of coming to a successful conclusion for your customer and you? Very often it is quite high.

So why do we spend so much time preparing quotes and presentations, designing things and generally using the resources of our organisation when the chances of winning are so low. Surely we would be better giving our time to finding high quality opportunities and working on these.

If this is your situation, then be more ruthless with your qualification, and turn it into disqualification.

Rather than looking for reasons as to why you should be trying to do business with this prospect, and hoping that this one will be successful, be honest if there is a reason not to pursue the opportunity.

If you find reasons, then stop for a moment and either:

1. Eliminate the reason first before you proceed.
2. Make the decision early on to not proceed any further.
What happens next in this situation is really important, and is often overlooked.
You must maintain your credibility with the customer, and their perception of your presence in the marketplace. Do this by providing some advice based on your experience of their industry and their situation, as to what they could do. Be a trusted advisor, and you will get the invitation to come back next time, when the opportunity may be worth pursuing.
3. Explain to the customer the situation, gain their understanding and agreement, and come back to the opportunity when the time is right.

Organisations have very limited resources, and these resources must be spent on the quality pieces of business.

Next time you are working on an opportunity, be honest and ask yourself, 'would I be better off somewhere else?'

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