

THE 11 MOST POWERFUL QUESTIONS IN DEAL COACHING



by Rick Page, Founder & CEO
The Complex Sale, Inc.

770.360.9299 | www.complexsale.com | info@complexsale.com

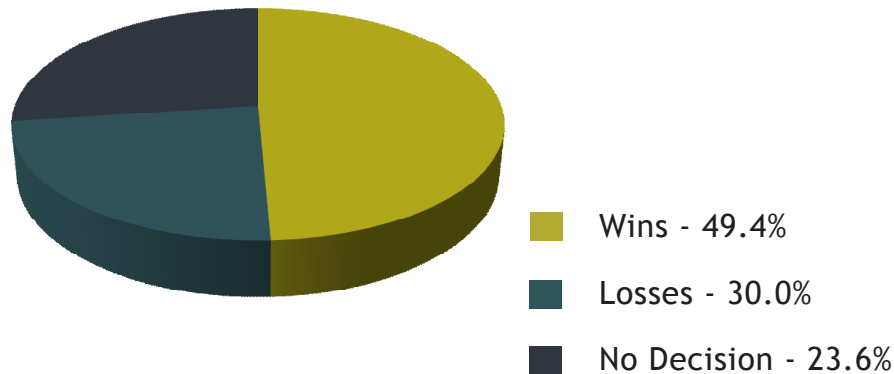
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THE COST OF POOR STRATEGY

In research conducted by CSO Insights[®], it was discovered that less than half of all forecasted deal actually close. More than a quarter (30.0%) are lost to competition, and 23.6% stall and buy nothing from anyone.

This means that salespeople are usually overconfident in their chances of winning because among other reasons they:

- Misread individual preference
- Lack competitive strategy
- Sell too low to people without adequate power
- Lack a source of urgency to close
- Don't understand political decision-making process



SALES EFFECTIVENESS BACKSTOPS

Just hiring good sales talent is not enough to achieve maximum performance. A complete sales process that includes politics, competition, strategic solutions and a closing strategy can increase win rates and consistency.

Finally, good deal coaching by a sales manager can improve strategy and win rates by as much as 25% or more.



Question 1:

WILL WE WIN THIS DEAL?

Good sales managers will very early look at the competitive situation. Is this deal wired for someone else? Often, the client already has a strong idea of who they want to buy from and they've brought others in simply to meet legal requirements or to validate their decision. Sales people, in their desire to be responsive, may not focus on these questions.

Is there a good fit between what the client is looking for and what you have to offer? Do you have a qualification profile with a set of dispassionate criteria on whether or not you should be in the deal. There's a fine line between qualifying and quitting. **Focus on the right deals instead of spreading yourself too thin.**

Question 2:

IS THERE A COMPLETE UNDERSTANDING OF THE PAIN/VALUE CHAIN?

Although the client will provide you with requirements, the best sales people will take the standard operational "requirements" and find the linkage to the "strategic" reason that change is actually going to occur, if it exists. And good coaching reinforces the key point that not all pains are created equal. Not only do we have to understand each stakeholder's pain and craft a stakeholder specific message for your solutions, but we have to know which pains "matter" because of who "cares" about those pains.

Question 3:

HAVE WE DIFFERENTIATED OUR SOLUTION FROM THE COMPETITION?

Does the client view you and your solution differently from your competitors? Has your sales person done the correct positioning early on in the sales cycle? The battle can be won early, during the discovery phase, but we can't leave it up to the client to figure it out for themselves.



Question 4: **DO WE HAVE ENOUGH PREFERENCE WITH THE RIGHT POWERFUL PEOPLE TO WIN?**

First, you need to figure out who the powerful people are in the client's organization. Finding out who those people are depends upon their decision-making process. If they voted today, would we win? Distinguishing the key decision-makers, those that will ultimately choose a vendor, from gatekeepers, information collectors, influencers, etc. will make the difference at the end.

Question 5: **WHEN IS THE DEAL GOING TO CLOSE?**

Do we have a clear understanding of the process to get from vendor of choice to signed contract - i.e. the Approval Process? What might jeopardize this initiative moving forward now? Great coaches won't allow their salespeople to wait until the end to be asking themselves (and the client) these questions.

Question 6: **IS THERE A REAL SOURCE OF URGENCY TO CAUSE THEM TO BUY NOW?**

Compelling events that create real sources of urgency include product launches, government regulations, lost accounts, large competitive surges that need reaction, etc. Have we identified the true source of urgency? Have we validated it? With whom?

Question 7: **DO WE KNOW THE REAL *DECISION-MAKING* PROCESS?**

Determining the algorithm (autocratic, two tiered, departmental, etc.) that the committee is using to select a vendor is always a challenge but it is one of the keys to winning. Does the process seem reasonable? Do we have access to the key decision makers?

Question 8: **DO WE KNOW THE REAL *APPROVAL* PROCESS?**

The answer to this question is determined by how big the deal is. Is corporate involved in the decision? Does the CFO require references? Does the sponsor need to be armed and equipped with economic justification?



Question 9: HOW MUCH WILL IT CLOSE FOR?

Have we created linkage to emotional and political benefits for key decision-makers with our solutions so that they see the value of our solutions? We will get commodified during the negotiation process if we haven't done this effectively.

Question 10: HAVE WE QUANTIFIED THE LOGICAL VALUE OF OUR SOLUTION? (ROI)

An ROI is a satisfier, not a motivator, to make sure an investment is recovered over a period of time. Is there a calculated benefit or Cost of Lost Benefits that is significant? Does the Executive Sponsor buy into it?

Question 11: HAVE THE MAJOR STAKEHOLDERS ACKNOWLEDGED THE EMOTIONAL VALUE OUR SOLUTION PROVIDES?

Providing emotional value for a powerful stakeholder will help push the deal across the line. But we have to validate that they are, in fact, buying our value, and willing to go to bat for our solution when the tug of war for limited budgets occurs in the final steps.

This eBook provides you with valuable insights on what questions to ask during deal coaching and win the sales you can't afford to lose. Rick Page is the founder and CEO of The Complex Sale, Inc. in Atlanta, Georgia.

The Complex Sale, Inc. is a sales methodology and consulting company that helps you win the sales you can't afford to lose - from speeches and tools to training and coaching to total sales force transformation. We help leading companies create pipeline, win opportunities, and dominate accounts in the complex selling environment. Founded in 1994 by Rick Page, author of the sales bestseller *Hope Is Not A Strategy* - *The 6 Keys To Winning The Complex Sale* and *Make Winning A Habit* - *20 Best Practices Of The World's Greatest Sale Forces*, The Complex Sale delivers programs taught by executives who know the environment firsthand. We provide the skills and processes you need to make winning a habit in your organization.

For more information on how The Complex Sale, Inc. can help you and your organization, contact us today at info@complexsale.com or call us at 770-360-9299.



The Complex Sale, Inc.
3655 North Point Pkwy., Suite 100
Alpharetta, GA 30005
Tel: 770-360-9299
www.complexsale.com
info@complexsale.com