



The Sales Pipeline Revealed

Creating an effective Sales Pipeline

Pipeline Definition

The Sales Pipeline is a visualization of the sales process based on its progression throughout the transactional sales cycle. The Pipeline is one of the most important sales tools as it helps the sales team understand the true potential of its prospects and customers and helps improve sales effectiveness. It should also include all pre-qualified opportunities to maximize closing ratio and forecast accuracy.



Pipeline Objectives

- Improve Opportunity Closing Rate and Time
- Close More & Bigger Opportunities
- Improve Forecast Accuracy
- Maximize Sales Best Practices

Basic Stages Of The Sales Process

Stage 1: Prospecting

This is the stage in which we identify and qualify prospects (**hunters**) and / or develop opportunities from existing accounts (**farmers**).

CRM: During this stage we measure the number of calls, visits, conversions and new opportunities. Remember....If there are no prospects, there is no pipeline!

Stage 2: Qualification

During this stage we validate that the customer has a real purchase potential.

- Budget
- Authority
- Need
- Timeline

This process serves as a filter to identify customers with most potential (readiness to buy) and establish opportunity follow-up plans, priority and focus.

CRM: During this phase we monitor the adherence to the qualification process and we make a "Ranking" of prospects to prioritize those with the greatest potential. It is also important to measure the conversion rate from prospects to opportunities.

Stage 3: Needs Assessment

Th At this stage, the goal is to learn more about the **true customer needs** and wants. Our mission is to find the **right product or service** for the potential customer. **The needs assessment effort is key to reducing lost deals and objections at closing time.**

Do not limit your efforts to uncover traditional needs, but also **invest time** to understand personal goals, preferences, desires and even customer dreams. Gather enough information to know them better and become an indispensable value-add ally. As a benefit you may also impress the customer as they get to experience a legitimate interest from you!

CRM: During this phase we monitor adherence to the process of capturing personal, business, product and service needs.

Basic Stages Of The Sales Process

Stage 4: Value Proposition

At this stage we strive to offer the right product or service with benefits and value that far exceeds customer expectations. We can only achieve this if we thoroughly understand their needs and wants.

Our goal is to show the customer a better future with our company as their indispensable value-added ally.

CRM: At this stage we monitor the implementation of best practices in value proposition design (Best-Fit, ROI, TCV, etc.) and reconfirm clear identification of the decision maker(s) and the decision-making process (B2B)

Stage 5: Negotiation

When the customer seeks to adjust the terms and/or conditions of the proposition, a critical negotiation process begins.

The key to this process is to apply the basic principles of pro- active listening, assimilation, empathy and "Win-Win" Objection Handling strategies.

CRM: At this stage we monitor the implementation of closing techniques, stage duration and include management/mentor coaching and involvement as required.



Stage 6: Closing

This is the final stage of the sales pipeline and it is met when the customer accepts the order, purchase or service. Congratulations!

If the deal is lost (rejected), please be sure to capture the "Lost Reasons and Causes" and adopt solutions as part of your on-going sales strategy and methodology.

CRM: At this stage we measure closing time, opportunity, closing rates and adherence to the process. Ensure that best practices have been used, collected, shared and automated as applicable.

Knowing these stages will help you and your team accelerate your Sales Pipeline. All it takes is a close look at the process from start to finish and be willing to make changes where changes are due.

Learn more about accelerating your Pipeline [on our blog](#)



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