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EBOOK

FROM THE CEO OF PCLUB.IO AND FORMER DIRECTOR OF SALES AT GONG

THE UNDERGROUND DISCOVERY SCRIPTS

10 Proven Scripts, Questions, and Talk Tracks
to Turn Discovery Calls Into Customers

CHRIS ORLOB

Hey Sales Pro!

You might be skeptical...

Are there really “magic words” that can get you new customers and close deals?

Yes, there most certainly are!

What you say to a person you are speaking with can make the difference between closing a deal, or losing them forever.

Words and language create **mental images** inside your buyer’s mind. Mental images trigger **emotions**. Emotions trigger **behavior**. And the right behavior will lead to a **decision to purchase**. So, it’s important to know **what to say (and when) to close as many deals as possible**.

Here are the most powerful words, phrases, questions, and scripts that I’ve learned for closing deals, qualifying buyers, and for helping them make the decision to buy from you.

I have collected and developed these scripts over the duration of my SaaS sales and sales leadership career. They helped me make a meaningful contribution to growing Gong from \$200k to \$200M, earn well into seven-figures in personal income, and grow my own business - pclub.io - into a multi-million dollar company before we hit our first anniversary.

But let me tell you this: **It was not easy getting here.**

When I began as an Account Executive, I had a lot of fear and nervousness around not only closing deals – I had fear about even talking to buyers. This is embarrassing to admit, but for my first year selling, I refused to turn

on my webcam. I wanted the safety of “not being seen”. Hiding, in that way, made me feel more in control of something I felt I had no control over.

My mind was constantly “darting” in the middle of sales calls. I had read so many books on selling, that I became confused. In the middle of a discovery call with a buyer, my mind would race from tactic to tactic: should I ask an implication question? Should I challenge them? What should I say next?

I was not “in the moment” and it showed. Not that I was failing miserably. I wasn’t. **But I was inconsistent.** One quarter I’d do very well: 150% of my number. Followed by a “miss” of only 70%.

I HAD to find success. But it eluded me.

Doing okay, but inconsistent.

Hit my number half of the quarter. Fell short the other half.



Hitting the Gong after closing my first ever SaaS deal in 2013. Simple times!

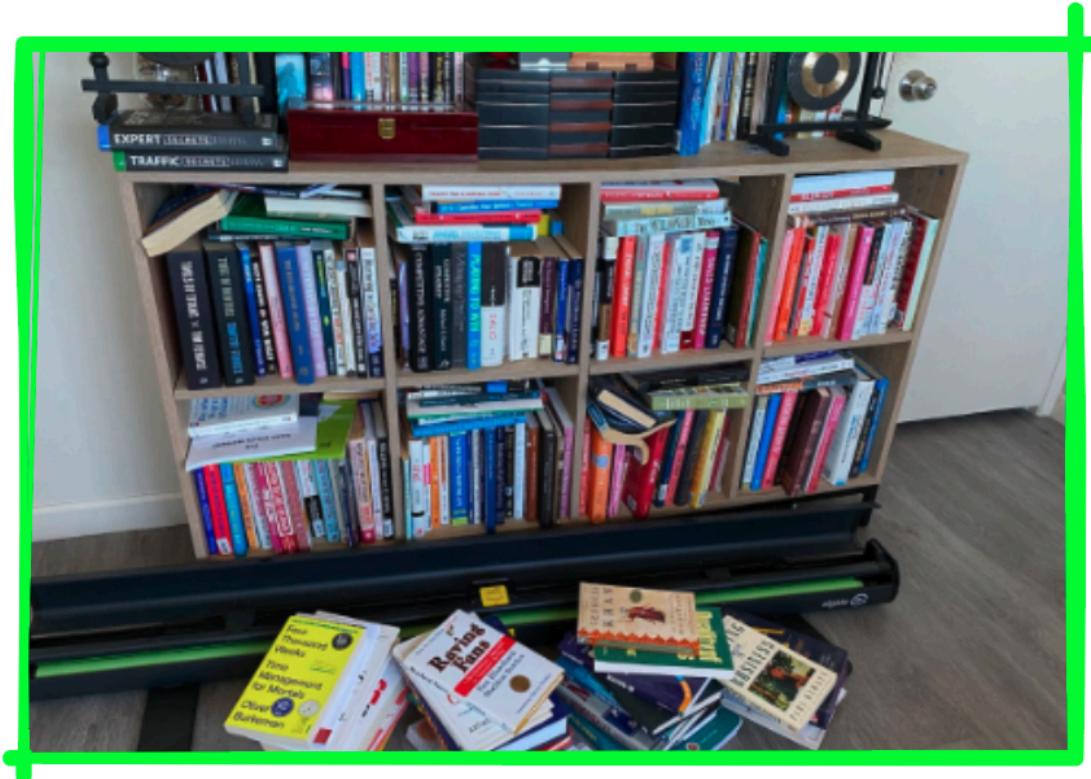
Ever struggled with that before?

That cycle went on for a year or two, until a mentor of mine finally pulled me aside. He said “Chris, your problem is **you’re doing random acts of sales**

tactics. You don't have a "system." You've read so many sales books that you're just spouting out whatever tactic pops up in your mind next."

Ouch.

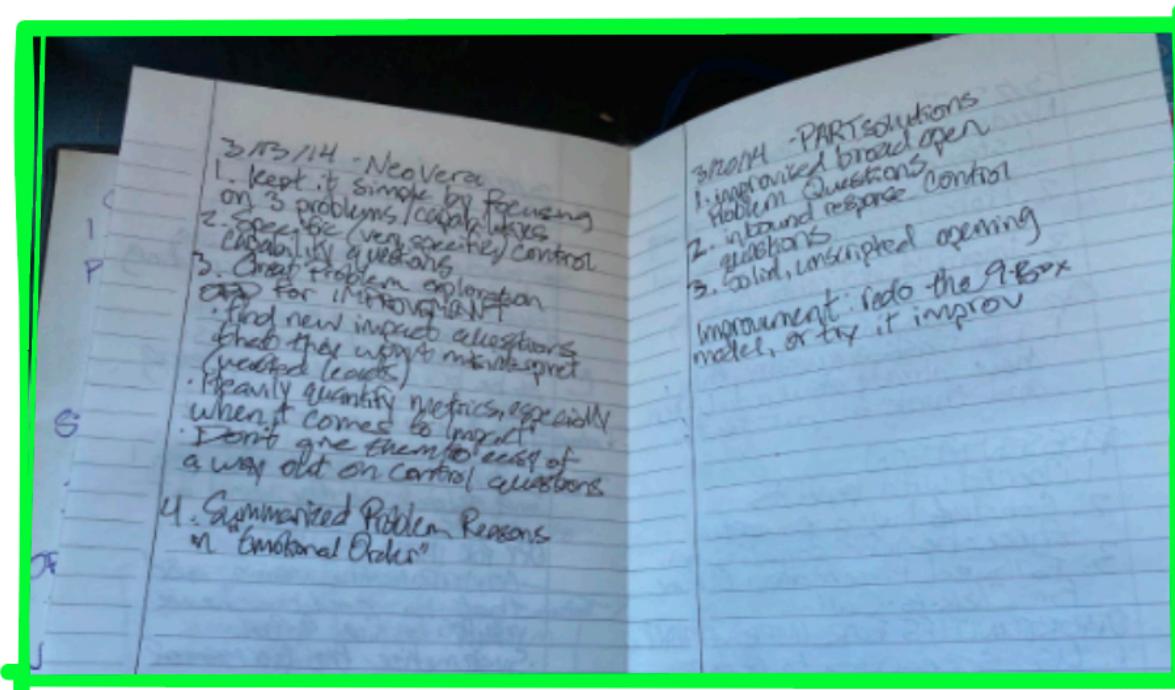
Even though that hurt, he was right: "**System**" was the key. And finding a **repeatable selling system** became my mission. I continued to read and consume books... but this time with a different purpose. I wasn't reading to find the next hot tactic. I was reading to make sense of what it takes to find consistent, repeatable success. I was looking for patterns. And over the next 10 years, I read over 500 business books (not *all* of them about sales - another lesson for another day):



My Personal Bookshelf

But that's not all I did.

I spent 20 minutes debriefing every. single. discovery call. I have journals upon journals with my notes from discovery calls I've run over the years, documenting what worked, what didn't, and how I can improve the next one:



One of my man "sales call journals"

It took me a lot of trial and error, a lot of study, and a lot of experience to discover and combine these scripts into the system you see here.

And I'm happy to share that eventually, I **cracked the code**. Things "clicked". I found the consistent, repeatable sales success I had been craving all those years.

Eventually, I used this system to contribute to the growth of Gong. I joined the company at less than \$200,000 in ARR (\$178,000 to be exact). By the time I left five years later, we were doing well over \$200,000,000 in annual revenue. And I had succeeded in one of my lifelong dreams: Earn over one million dollars a year.

This is what happened when I “cracked the code” and moved from “random acts of tactics” to on a repeatable system.

1 Attach Sch. B if required.	Wages, salaries, tips, etc. Attach Form(s) W-2	1 1,639,982.
2a Tax-exempt interest	2a	2b
3a Qualified dividends	3a	3b
4a IRA distributions	4a	4b
5a Pensions and annuities	5a	5b
6a Social security benefits	6a	6b
7 Capital gain or (loss). Attach Schedule D if required. If not required, check here		7
8 Other income from Schedule 1, line 10		8 0.
9 Add lines 1, 2b, 3b, 4b, 5b, 6b, 7, and 8. This is your total income		9 1,639,982.
10 Adjustments to income from Schedule 1, line 26		10
11 Subtract line 10 from line 9. This is your adjusted gross income		11 1,639,982.
12a Standard deduction or itemized deductions (from Schedule A)	12a 25,100.	12b
b Charitable contributions if you take the standard deduction (see instructions)		12c 25,100.
c Add lines 12a and 12b		13
13 Qualified business income deduction from Form 8995 or Form 8995-A		14 25,100.
14 Add lines 12c and 13		15 1,614,882.
Taxable income. Subtract line 14 from line 11. If zero or less, enter -0-		

For Disclosure, Privacy Act, and Paperwork Reduction Act Notice, see separate instructions.

Form 1040 (2021)



My personal W2 / annual income

But I didn't stop there. I continued to perfect my system in a quest to make it benefit others, as it had so richly rewarded me..

I used the scripts you're going to learn in this guide to train my 30-person sales organization at Gong. We struggled at first, but eventually, we became the #1 attaining sales segment in the company and created a **record-breaking number of President's Club winners** (fun fact: that's where pclub.io - gets its name. It's short for "President's Club" :).

Here's a few of us in Punta Mita, Mexico and the last President's Club I attended before moving on:



But again, the journey didn't stop there. I **had to make sure this selling system worked for everyone in SaaS or B2B tech sales**. Not just me. Not just my reps at Gong. And not just people who sell sales technology to VPs of Sales.

Everyone.

So I took these scripts and started teaching them to different SaaS markets. I taught those that sold HR tech, martech, fintech, DevOps tools, Cyber Security, K-12, and more.

After more trial, error, and refinement, I **cracked the code on a repeatable selling system that just about anyone selling SaaS to businesses can use to achieve repeatable sales success**.

The “system” is what was missing for so many other tech sellers

"Chris, have to say: I was extremely surprised. **I've watched MANY courses that promise a lot. I've gotten much more simple and actionable information from yours**



Zach Bromberg

Account Executive
Samsara

"Too many sales courses are too high level and too complex... all without letting you **walk away with concrete tactics you can use right away**. Discovery Masterclass is completely tactical and doesn't just explain the concepts in an easy to understand manner, but actually walks you through how to execute them.



Mark Baskin

Account Executive
Hubspot

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"I finished my quarter at 152%"

*"Hey Chris, I just wanted to send you a note thanking you for your posts, courses, and other content. **I finished my quarter at 152% and my half at 104% - largely due to your teachings** and learning from your experiences."*



Jasi Johnson

Account Director
LinkedIn

While I can't teach you the FULL SYSTEM in this short guide, my intention with these scripts is to give you a simple, conversational tool that feels natural when used in real conversation with buyers.

=> **IMPORTANT:** As beneficial as these scripts are, they're still just tools, and like any tool, **they require practice** and application to yield the best results. I've included them in this guide for you to learn, adapt, and incorporate into your own selling style.

However, wouldn't it be even more rewarding to **know how to put these scripts into action** in a repeatable selling system, to have real examples of how they've been employed by the world's top SaaS sellers (and created tremendous success and income for them)?

Well, here's your chance to do exactly this.

=> **For those reading this guide,** you have the unique opportunity to join almost 10,000 other SaaS salespeople in *SaaS Discovery Masterclass* at only \$99 per month (which you can cancel at any time). Not only does that get you instant Access to *SaaS Discovery Masterclass*... **But you also get *FREE ACCESS* to every single pclub.io online course while you're a subscriber** (each one sells for around \$297 a piece – ranging from topics like cold emailing, multi-threading, selling to power, creating deal-closing business cases, and more).

SaaS Discovery Masterclass is where I teach the **full repeatable selling system** to find business pain that MONEY follows, create urgency from "thin air," and close more deals (even in a downturn).

I want you to join us.

This is the world's most popular SaaS sales success course, and I guarantee it's like no other. You can click here to join for only \$99 per month (and get free access to all other pclub.io courses):

=> Claim SaaS Discovery Masterclass (And 20+ Online Courses For FREE) For \$99/Month By Clicking Here.

For those of you who aren't ready, that's ok.

Let's dive into these scripts

Use these to close more deals and reach the level of sales success you've been craving.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Orlob". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the "C" and "O" being particularly prominent.

Chris Orlob

10 Deal-Closing Discovery Call Scripts

First, I'm going to give you the "overview" of these ten scripts. Then we'll dive into each one in life-threatening detail.

These generally appear in "order" of how a typical discovery call progresses.

- **Script #1:** *The Single Best Way to Open the Discovery Call (So You're Setup for Success)*
- **Script #2:** *How (and Why) to Get 'Buy In' On the Rules of Engagement*
- **Script #3:** *What to Say to 'Earn the Right' to Ask Discovery Questions (Even With Buyers Who Seem "Cold")*
- **Script #4:** *How (and Why) to Uncover the 'Need Behind the Need'*
- **Script #5:** *How (and Why) to Diagnose the Root Cause of the Problem*
- **Script #6:** *How to Quantify Value With One Simple Question*
- **Script #7:** *How to Transition Topics Seamlessly, Buy Time, and Make Your Buyer Feel Understood*
- **Script #8:** *Three Questions to Build "Negative Impact" (Without Being "Salesy" or Manipulative)*

- ***Script #9: How to Make Your Buyer Want Your Product (Before You Even Show It to Them)***
- ***Script #10: How Top Income Salespeople Secure Next Steps (The “What, Who, Why” Method).***

Ready?

Let's do this!

SCRIPT #1

The Single Best Way To Open the Discovery Call (So You're Setup For Success)

"I'm glad we found the time to meet today."

Within the first couple minutes of a new discovery call, those are the words that should float out of your mouth.

They seem simple. Maybe too simple. And they are. But they solve **two problems most salespeople face on new calls**.

The First Problem This Script Solves:

First, most salespeople thank their prospect for their time. That might not seem like the *worst* thing in the world to do. But it *subtly positions you as "less than" your prospect*.

I wish the world didn't work this way, but it does: **Humans are "status oriented" creatures**. Have you ever heard of the concept of a "pecking order?"

Funny enough, it's a concept that originated from studying CHICKENS! I'm laughing as I write this. Researchers found that there is a natural "status order" that emerges when you put a bunch of chickens into the

same environment. They quickly *organize themselves* into a rank of status. Who's the highest status? Who's next? Who's lowest on the totem pole?

Lower status chickens, apparently, get "pecked" (literally) by those higher than them. Hence the term "pecking order."

For better or worse, humans are wired in the same way. We're just more civilized about it (read: we don't "peck" those lower on the status hierarchy on the head with our beaks! We play slightly more subtle status games, like buy Porsches, take pictures of our perfect lives on Instagram, and choose when to laugh or not laugh).

Why is this important? **Because if you are perceived as lower status than your buyer, you won't be able to persuade them.** You carry ZERO influence with someone who perceives you as lower status than them. If you do get lucky enough to win a deal in that position, it's for that exact reason: **Luck.** No one gets into sales to rely on luck. We want to control our destiny.

That's the bad news.

But here's the good news: You can do subtle things with your language, words, and non-verbal mannerisms to position yourself as equal (or greater) "social status" than your buying counterpart (without being obnoxious about it).

And one of the key things to avoid to position yourself as lower status is thanking your buyer for their time. Of course, you don't want to be

arrogant and go overboard with something like “YOU SHOULD BE THANKING ME!”

But... **don't give away your power.** Don't seek approval. Be a kind, normal person. But don't cowtail.

The words “I'm glad we found time to meet today” position you as equal or greater status than your buyer. Powerful people say phrases like that. This phrase plays a (very small) role in positioning you as high status.

That's the first “problem” this script solves.

Here's the Second Problem This Script Solves:

In short, it answers the question, *should I build rapport with this buyer or jump straight into business?*

Some buyers want a little small talk and warming up. Some want to get straight to the point. When you make the statement “Glad we could find the time to meet” and then SHUT UP and see how they respond, it usually tells you whether you should “linger” on small talk for a few minutes, or jump straight to business.

Some buyers will respond with something like “Yeah, me too, eager to see what you have.” That person means business. Time to talk agenda and to get right to the point.

Other buyers will respond with something like “For sure, how’s your day going?” That person can probably stand a few minutes of rapport building or small talk. In fact, **jumping straight into business in THAT situation can feel jarring to the other person.**

So, **this simple 9-word phrase** helps you align with what your buyer wants to talk about, right out of the gate.

“I’m glad we found the time to meet today.”

Start using it and let’s move onto the next.

SCRIPT #2

How (And Why) To Get ‘Buy In’ On the Rules of Engagement

Ok.

Here's the deal.

Most salespeople “get” the idea behind setting the agenda for a call. But most salespeople still get it wrong. They either overdo it with a weird, overly scripted upfront contract. Or, they don’t set the agenda at all, jumping straight into asking questions, only to be met with:

“Can you just show me the product?”

Ouch.

So, I’m going to give you a simple “script” to perfect the first 5 minutes of every new discovery call... all so you can **control the conversation**. But more importantly: Get your buyer “bought in” to the rules of engagement of the call **so you can eliminate friction in the call**.

With me?

Great, here’s how it works.

Here's where we start:

"Great discovery starts with expectation management and alignment with your buyer on the agenda and the objective."

-Taught in [SaaS Discovery Masterclass](#)

That's because **what you say in the first 5 minutes of a discovery call influences the success of the next 25 minutes.** There are things you can say and do at the beginning of the call to reduce the odds of that call going south.

That's the best way I can say it. When you become great at setting the rules of engagement (which is what I'm about to teach you), **it won't automatically help you close more deals. But! It will prevent you from losing deals that you could have otherwise closed.**

That's the value. You gotta stop losing before you can get on with winning. The skill you are about to grow here is called 'gaining buyer alignment.'

"These are the Three Keys to the First Five Minutes of a Discovery Call"



First, **align on the objective of the call**. What is the *outcome* you and your buyer are trying to mutually achieve with this meeting?

The most common example of a solid discovery objective is “*The objective of this meeting is to learn enough about each other to decide whether it makes sense for us to have a second meeting.*”

There are other objectives you can set (you should think through what this looks like for YOUR business). But when in doubt, that above objective works great (it also has a nice side-benefit of easing the pressure and sales resistance from the call - if you’re giving your buyer the impression that you’re not going to shove product down their throat, but rather find out if a next step even makes sense, you’ll loosen up otherwise sales-resistant buyers).

Second, **align on the agenda of the call**. This is different from the objective. The agenda is the set of *line items of discussion you’ll use to SERVE the objective you defined*.

Read that again to make sure you “get” it.

Third, **align on the decision you and your buyer will make at the end of the call.** In other words, at the outset of the call, you want to get a commitment from your buyer that both of you will make some sort of *decision* on what to do next at the *end of the call*. This is a great way to guarantee - in advance - that you'll solidify next steps (assuming it makes sense to).

Now that you get the framework for setting the rules of engagement, let's start to talk through...

Word-for-word scripts for this.

After the first few minutes of the call, when you sense it's time to transition into "talking business" (see Script #1), here's how you transition into a business discussion:

"Can we talk about the agenda?"

This is your transitional phrase from 'small talk' to 'business talk.' It's a frictionless way to transition that doesn't feel jarring.

So, now it's time to put those **three steps to work**: To set the objective, the agenda, and the decision to be made at the end of the call.

The key to success here is making your buyer FEEL like they're in control. You can't be overbearing. You can't steamroll them and TELL them "here's what we're talking about, like it or not." You've got to make a "strong suggestion, loosely held." In other words, make a

suggestion on the rules of engagement, and give them the right to modify it if they see fit.

Here's Exactly How To Do That

The goal is to *phrase* your rules of engagement suggestion in a way that **gives your buyer a sense of autonomy and control over how you're both approaching the call together** (read that again, it's *that* important).

A great way to do that is to use “softening language” when you’re suggesting the rules of engagement. Here’s an example:

“Here’s what I’m thinking in terms of an agenda. Let me know if you had something else in mind...”

Notice you’re giving your buyer “veto power” with that kind of language. That makes them feel comfortable and in control (when in reality, you’re the one making the original suggestion, so ultimately, you are the one most often with control).

At this point, now is the time to explain the objective, agenda, and decision to be made.

Simply fill in these blanks:



Now.

You're not done yet.

Once you've filled in those blanks and made your suggestion, **you've got one more power-phrase to use to tack on to the end of your talk track.** Here's it:

“Does that feel fair?”

That phrase accomplishes a couple of things. First, if they say yes, now they are “bought in” to the rules of engagement you've proposed. You are now officially set up for success on this call. Second, it maximizes your odds of getting them to agree to everything to begin with. It is very hard for people to disagree with something you position as “fair.” Everyone wants to be perceived as fair. That word “fair” carries a lot of persuasive power. Use it sparingly. This is one of the few places to use it.

Ok:

Let me show you how this all comes together.

Here's what this entire script would sound like if I were selling [pclub.io for business](#) to a VP Sales.

After a few minutes of small talk and warming up the call, I'd say this:

"Mind if we discuss the agenda?"

"Great. Here's what I have in mind. Let me know if you're thinking something else:

"First, the objective of this meeting in my mind is simply to determine if we should have a next step. Obviously I don't expect us to do business on this call. So let's just learn enough about each other to determine whether the next logical step even makes sense."

"Fair?"

"Great. Now here's the agenda I'm thinking that will help us get there:

"First, let's spend most of our time getting clear on the skill gaps you're seeing in your sales organization.

"Once we're clear on that, I can explain what and how we do what we do at pclub.io so we can jointly decide whether we schedule a demo."

"Does that agenda feel fair?"

"Great... [transition to discovery]."

One last thing before we move on from this script:

Don't overcomplicate it. Try to get it down to 30 seconds or less. I see a lot of salespeople who, learning this concept for the first time, *way* overdo it with a bloated, convoluted talk track.

When in doubt, keep it simple.

SCRIPT #3

What to Say to ‘Earn the Right’ To Ask Discovery Questions (Even With ‘Cold Buyers’)

In this script, I’m going to teach you a tactic that helps you earn the right to ask discovery questions... so your buyers don’t kick you in the teeth or get annoyed with your questions.

But first...

An Important Disclaimer:

This serves a purpose. That purpose is s: to get a “cold” buyer “warmed up” so they are willing to engage in a discovery conversation with you and answer some of your questions.

The implication here is that if your buyer *is already loosened up and bought in on answering a few questions...* **SKIP THIS TACTIC!** It no longer serves a purpose. Don’t force a tactic into a situation where it has no use.

That being said... Let me ask you this:

Have you ever been here before?

Years ago, I was running a discovery call with a COO and his head of operations.

After my third or fourth discovery question, the COO stopped the meeting cold and spat:

“Just stop. I don’t have time for this generic line of questioning.”

That hurt.

As a funny side note, after he stormed out of the room, the Director of Operations looked at me and said:

“I’m about as confused as you are. We train our reps to ask the same questions you just did.”

Even been in a similar spot?

What went wrong here (and more importantly, how do we prevent that from ever happening again)?

For buyers who are not actively willing to engage in a discovery conversation with you (read: answer your questions), there’s a “script” to get them ‘bought in’ and warmed up.

I call it the “Discovery Promter”.

How to “Peer Into Your Buyers’ Soul” (And Get Them Talking).

One of the agenda items you may want to consider suggesting (See Script #2) is *telling a story of the challenges you’re seeing in the market*. This technique is called a “Discovery Promter”. And adding it to your agenda

items as you set the “Rules of Engagement” can get skeptical buyers more bought in (“Thank heavens... this sales rep is actually going to give me some *information* before bombarding me with a bunch of questions...”)

Here’s how the Discovery Prompter works.

Early on in your discovery call... right after setting the rules of engagement (but before getting into discovery and asking questions), you tell a short (2-5 minute) ***narrative that showcases the pain you typically solve for your customers.***

The goal is to tell a narrative about pain and problems that your potential buyer can “see themselves” in. This usually takes one of two forms: one, a customer story where you focus on the problems and pain that customer was experiencing prior to working with you –or two, a pain-oriented sales deck that illustrates what you typically solve.

Both of those work fine. But the point is to make the narrative about buyer *pain*... rather than you or your company.

Now.

Once you’ve walked them through this short narrative, then you simply **pass the torch with this phrase:**

"Anyway. Enough about the challenges we typically solve. Help me understand YOUR challenges when it comes to [XYZ area]?"

And here’s the kicker:

If your discovery prompter *resonated*... they will typically “pour out their heart.” They’ll open up. They’ll tell you their pain. Here’s why:

“When you can articulate your buyer’s pain better than they can, they will automatically assume you have the right solution for them.”

The process is automatic.

They will *automatically* trust you.

They will *automatically* think you have the right solution.

They will *automatically* share their pain, challenges, and problems.

But.

Only if your discovery prompter is “on the money.” Only if it resonates. Only if they can see themselves in the narrative you’re telling.

So to get this right, here’s a structure you can use. But fair warning: You’re going to have to test this out *many* times to get it right. Tweak it. Modify it. But when you finally do get YOURS right... **you’ll hit paydirt. Trust me.**

Here’s the narrative structure to use:

-  One of the customers we worked with was dealing with [insert pain statement]."
-  Before working with us, they were struggling with [expand on the customers' pain]."
-  In fact, it was such a struggle that [describe negative ramifications].
-  The short story is we helped them [achieve desired future state]
-  But enough about our customers... tell me about the key challenges YOU are facing when it comes to [your area]"

That might sound like this:

"Before we get into your situation, let me tell you a quick story about the challenges we typically solve, so you have context for the rest of the conversation. Does that feel right? Great..."

"**One of the customers we worked with** in your space was dealing with low close rates.

"**Before working with us**, their close rates in the enterprise had dipped down to 19%. They were in the mid 20s a year prior to that. They found that their salespeople did not have the skills to sell through a 'down economy.' They were struggling with uncovering and quantifying pain. They were struggling with multi-threading and creating champions. They were struggling with selling low and accessing power. They were struggling with feature dumping and valueless product demos."

"In fact, it was such a struggle that their customer acquisition costs (CAC) had soared. Their lifetime value of a customer compared to their costs to acquire used to be 3:1. It had dipped down to 2:1, which wasn't sustainable. And their CFO pulled the plug on all new AE hiring plans until they could get their efficiency back in order."

"The short version of this story is we helped close almost all of the skill gaps I mentioned. While their close rates aren't yet back in the mid 20s, we've managed to get them to 22% and we're trending back in the right direction."

"Anyway. Enough about our customers and their situations... help me understand YOURS. What challenges are showing up in your business?"

When I'm talking to our ideal customer profile, most of them stare at me in silence with utter amazement of how well I understand their problem.

They see themselves almost exactly in that story.

And as a result, they trust me. Instantly. And they tell me everything about their challenges.

The easy part of the script is the structure. The hard part is **getting to the point where you know your customer so well, you can tell a story that peers into their soul.** And that takes work.

But when you get to that point, you will wake up to a very different life.

And boy is it fun.

Go create your own discovery prompter. Practice it a few times. And do the work required to make it hit paydirt.

SCRIPT #4

How (And Why) To Uncover the 'Need Behind the Need'

Pay close attention.

Because if there were a silver bullet to sales success (there isn't), this would be it:

Uncovering, and selling to, the 'need behind the need.'

You *think* you are 'digging deep enough' when it comes to discovery, **but you're probably not.** How do I know that?

Let me tell you a story.

Years ago, I was having a discovery meeting with one of my reps at Gong, and two potential buyers: a sales enablement manager, and his SVP of Sales.

Here's how the conversation unfolded:

Us: So. What motivated you to look into exploring Gong?

I want you to notice something. Even though we had two people in the Zoom room with us (SVP and Enablement Manager), notice that the Enablement Manager (i.e. NOT the person of power) took over the conversation:

Them: We need visibility into our team's sales conversations so we can coach our people better.

Now here's a question for you, dear reader. Read what they said again.

*Is that a **problem**? Or a **solution**?*

Right. It's a solution. "Visibility" and "better coaching" are both solutions. But to what underlying problem? So The conversation continued...

Us: I see. What's driving you to crave that visibility to begin with?

Them: Our reps are struggling to access power. They're stuck with mid level managers. We need to coach them up in a variety of skills so they can access power better. Business acumen, strategic discovery, insight selling, you name it. We've got to start selling higher.

Ok. Now we're getting somewhere. But... most salespeople would stop here! They would conclude they 'found the problem.' They'd show up to forecast meetings. And when asked about the problem they're solving for this deal, they'd feel confident that they have it. But we're still not where we want to be yet.

So we continued...

Us: "That makes a ton of sense. Aside from simply observing your reps talking to mid level people, is there something going on in the business that tells you selling too low is the issue? In other words, how is this showing up in the business right now?"

Them: Great question. It's showing up in the length of our sales cycle. That's the real problem. Accessing power is how we believe we'll solve it.

Right now, our sales cycle is clocking in at about 9 months. Yet, we firmly believe it should only be six months. We don't sell mega deals. Yes, we sell low six figure deals, so you might call us an "enterprise shop", but it's not the crazy-complex enterprise you'd find with seven- and eight-figure deals. Our annual operating plan and board approved a six-month sales cycle. And we think that's eminently achievable."

Would you look at that?

How much more powerful is knowing that compared to stopping at "we need visibility for better coaching"?

But there's still more work to do...

Us: Alright. I'm following along. Can I ask what's going to seem like a redundant question? [Yes.] We get why reducing your sales cycle is valuable. But why focus on that among everything else you could solve? I have to imagine if you're like any other sales organization, there are a dozen or more problems you could be solving. And yet I sense that there's some energy behind solving *this*. What's going on that makes this such a top priority?

Now here's where we hit paydirt. This is where the magic happens.

At this point in the conversation, the SVP Sales ('Power') took over and started answering our questions – a common dynamic when you really start getting to the strategic issues...

Them: This is important because it's affecting the cash flow of our company. When we close a deal, it takes us 60 days to collect payment. With a 9 month sales cycle, that means we have an 11 month delay from

the time we begin a sales cycle, to cash actually hitting our bank account. And that puts us in a cash crunch. When we forecast our cash flow 18 months out, we are very likely going to have to raise dilutive capital if we don't solve this within the next calendar year.

-

Do you see what I mean by uncovering the 'need behind the need'? Are you starting to understand the true power of being able to do this consistently?

You'll uncover BIG problems. And when you uncover BIG problems, it leads to BIG dollars.

Little problems get you little dollars (if anything). BIG problems get you BIG dollars.

So now that you understand the power behind this...

Let's translate this into your world:

While I can't tell you the exact thing to say to YOUR unique customers, I can point you in the right direction.

As you are uncovering the "surface level" of your buyer's challenges during your discovery call, ask them a variation of this question:

"What's going on in your business (or organization, if they aren't a business) that's driving this challenge to be a priority?"

Presumably, they've already begun to share a challenge with you. So this isn't the **first** discovery question you ask. It's a follow up question.

You'll notice that when you ask this, almost half of the time, buyers sort of "chuckle" before they answer. That's because they are thinking about the much bigger issue going on in their company or organization that they're trying to address.

That helps you go from little problems to big problems.

Which helps you go from little dollars to big dollars.

Go try it.

SCRIPT #5

How (And Why) To Diagnose the “Root Cause” of Your Buyer’s Problem

I’m going to make a bold statement:

**Unless you know the root cause of the buyer’s problem, you cannot sell.
You can only hope.**

Now let me tell you why this is true.

Years ago, I was running a discovery call at Gong. It was with a VP Enterprise Sales. And similar to my last story, she had pain around sales cycle length.

But we made the mistake of stopping there with our discovery and moving into the demo.

As we did, my rep made the point during the demo:

“So as you can see, Gong gives you visibility into when your reps fail to discuss “next steps” on their calls. In fact you can even set alerts when they forget to so you can coach them to always secure next steps. Which in turn, will help you reduce your sales cycle.”

We paused.

Crickets.

"What do you think of that?" my rep asked in desperation to get some engagement from the buyer during this quickly-failing demo.

"I think you don't understand my problem," the VP Enterprise Sales said.

"We have a long sales cycle because we're selling too low. We're great at getting next steps. That's not the issue. The issue is we are selling to the Director of IT too often and not the CIO. So our sales cycles drag on with someone who can't help us get a deal done."

Ok.

Let's think about this together for a minute, shall we?

We got kicked in the teeth on this call.

But it wasn't because we didn't have pain. We had that in spades. She made that clear.

It was because we didn't understand **what was causing that pain!** And therefore, **we did not align our solution's capabilities to the root causes!**

Think about it this way:

Let's say you're driving your car down the road and it breaks down.

Question: What are you going to buy to fix the car?

Answer: You don't know until you know the root cause of the breakdown.

Was it...

- An engine failure?
- A transmission failure?

- A blown-out tire?
- A dead battery?
- Out of gasoline?

The cause of the problem dictates the solution that buyers purchase.

Pain by itself isn't enough.

Pain, plus aligning your solution's capabilities with the root cause of the problem, gets deals done.

So here's the script. After you've surfaced the problem (and uncovered the need behind the need), simply ask your buyer:

"What's your opinion on why this is happening?"

People *love* giving their opinion. If they trust you (which they will if you've done the first few scripts well), then **they will give you very long, rich, valuable answers to this question.**

And their answers will help you sell and close the deal.

Because you'll align your solution with those perceived root causes.

And your solution is much more likely to be "the perfect fit" for what they're looking for.

The Underground Discovery Scripts

SCRIPT #6

How to Quantify Pain With One Simple Question

I have a confession to make.

I'm embarrassed at how long it took me to figure this next script out.

Most salespeople have been told it's important to 'quantify the value' of the problem you're solving for your customer.

Most salespeople have no idea how to do that. I used to be one of them.

Back in 2017 at Gong we were struggling with how to guide our customers to build business cases to buy our product. I know it sounds obvious today, but back then, we had no clue (and neither did they).

One day I was at a tradeshow, when a woman came up to me and asked:

"I'm in the middle of a sales cycle with one of your reps. And I really want to make this work! But I'm struggling to figure out how to build a business case to convince my CFO. Any advice?"

She was a frontline sales manager at a small company. So I asked her "Well, how much time do you think it will save you coaching manually? And can you turn that into 'savings' based on your salary?"

She stared at me blankly.

"My CFO will never buy that," she said.

She was right.

So in a moment of frustration (and a little enlightenment), I simply asked her:

"Well ok. Tell me this then. You said your problem is that your reps selling skills need a lot of work, and you plan on using Gong to coach them up. **But what metric in your world is suffering as a result of their selling skills not being up to par?**"

"Close rates," she said.

Then she went on:

"Our close rates are only at 19% right now and I'm convinced that's because we hired a lot of high potential, but ultimately very green reps who haven't learned how to sell."

"What are you trying to increase your close rates to?" I asked.

"Our C-Suite wants to get them to 22% by the beginning of next year. If we can do that, we can show investors the sales efficiency we need to raise our next round of funding."

We spent the next few minutes quantifying the financial value of a three-point bump in close rates. It was to the tune of hundreds of thousands of dollars per year. All for a \$20k price tag for Gong.

I know all that sounds obvious. Like I said, it's almost embarrassing.

But here's what to take from this story:

You can start the "value quantification" process by asking your customers this:

"What metric is suffering as a result of the challenges you're sharing with me?"

Or, if you want a more positive version of the same question, try this:

"What metric would improve the most if you solved the challenges you've been sharing with me?"

Now don't get me wrong: their answer isn't going to automatically flesh out an entire business case. You'll still have work to do.

But this will start the quantification process in the right direction, which is often the hardest part.

Give it a try.

SCRIPT #7

How to Transition Topics Seamlessly, Buy Time, And Make Your Buyer Feel Understood

Summarizing what your buyers say, **in their exact words**, may be the most underrated ‘tactic’ in sales. I’m not kidding, and I’m not beyond hyperbolic.

Most people walk through life never *really* truly feeling understood. Or if they do, they can count on one hand the number of times they have believed another person truly “gets” them **in a way that makes them emotionally exhale**.

If you can become the person who does this for others, you will carry exceptional power to influence them. Not just in your sales career or business life. But in your life in general. Your family life. Your social life. Your relationships. Everything.

I can already *hear* your skepticism: “You’re exaggerating Chris. I use summaries in my sales calls and I don’t have this exceptional super power you speak of. What gives?”

Here’s what’s probably going on: **You’re summarizing with your own words, not your buyer’s exact words**. I’m not sure where this came from, but many of us learned that we should paraphrase. That we should summarize what our buyer said “in our own words.”

Wrong move.

The right words carry tremendous power. Buyers don't resonate with your words. They resonate with *their* words. And when you parrot their words back to them exactly (especially emotional words), they perk up. They lean in. And sometimes, they emotionally exhale.

Now. That's only *one* of the incredible benefits that accrue to you when you get 'summarizing' right.

Here's the Second Incredible Benefit:

Great summaries at the right time "grease the wheels" of sales calls and remove friction. They buy time and prevent you from wearing out your welcome (especially when you have a lot of questions).

Have you ever felt like you were interrogating your buyer during a discovery call? You asked question after question after question, and after your sixth or seventh question... you could **sense that your buyer was getting impatient with the volume of your questions you're asking...?**

Ever been there?

Of course you have (we all have).

Summaries help prevent this from happening.

Instead of asking seven questions in a row, imagine this:

You ask three questions. You surface the business challenge. Peel back the onion a little. **But then, before continuing with more questions, you summarize:**

"Ok. Let me see if I have this right so far [insert a summary of their situation using their words, not yours]. Did I get that right?"

At this point, if you did it well, your buyer exhaled emotionally... even if just a little bit. **And just as importantly, you bought yourself time and you can now continue your discovery questions without wearing out your welcome:**

"Ok, great. Thanks for confirming that. Now that we have your challenge established, what are the ripple effects this issue is having across the business?"

Do you see the difference that could make? Imagine if you jumped to the next question *without* summarizing first. You just pummeled your buyer with question, after question, after question.

Of course you'll be met with irritation!

But instead, if you summarize what you've heard every three to five questions (or whatever, it's not an exact science), **and then use the summary as a springboard to continue into a new thread of questions**, you will have a much, much better time.

Here's the Exact Script Structure You Can Steal For Powerful Summaries:

"Let me summarize what I've heard so far..."

[Insert your understanding of the business problem, using many of the same words your buyer used to describe it]

"Did I get that right?"

An example might sound like this:

"Let me summarize what I've heard so far..."

"You're looking to upskill your account executive team. They are struggling with a number of critical skills, including:

- Struggling to build champions early in the deal.**
- Getting stuck with one contact instead of multithreading and expanding their footprint in an account.**
- Struggling to uncover and quantify business pain in a way that generates a sense of urgency.**
- Struggling to access power and build a productive relationship with senior execs.**

"When you look at how this is showing up in the business, it comes down to close rates. They're sitting at 18% where you used to enjoy a 23% close rate. While much of that can be attributed to the down economy, it's also clear that your reps could use help with skills that will help them close deals despite an economic downturn..."

"Did I get that right?"

Assuming that matches what my buyer shared, that's a powerful summary. You have an opportunity to do the same.

If you do, you'll watch your influence with other people grow.

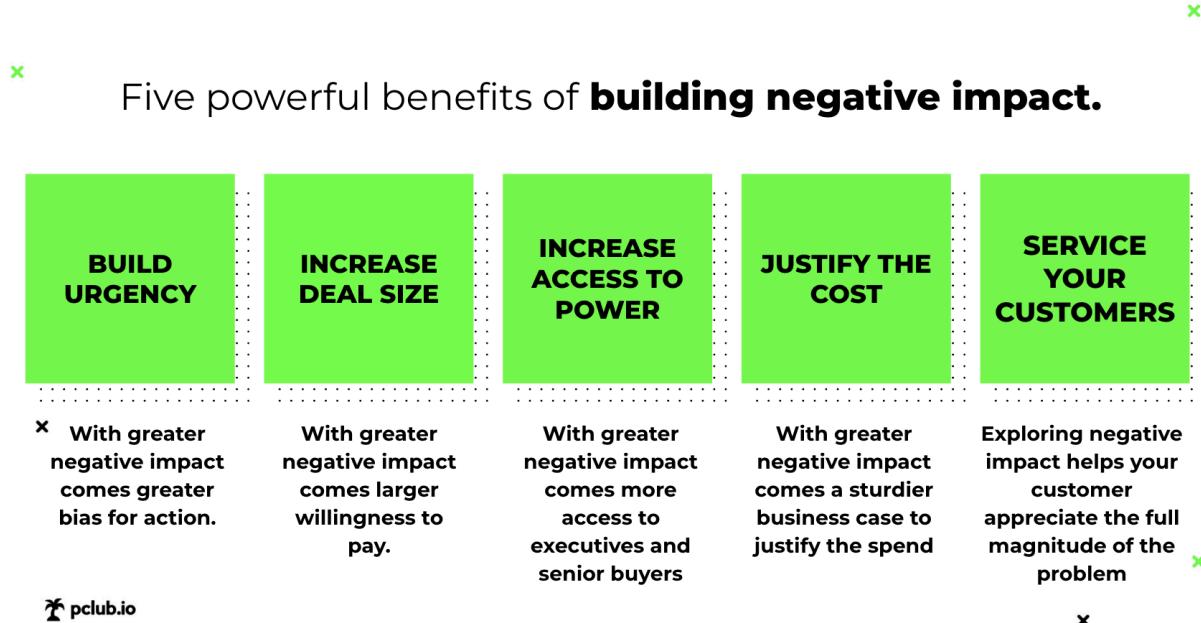
The Underground Discovery Scripts

SCRIPT #8

Three Questions to Build Negative Impact (Without Being ‘Salesy’ or Manipulative)

Most salespeople I know are *torn* on this topic.

On the one hand, they “get” the value of surfacing the negative impact and consequences of the buyer’s problem. In case you need an overview, there are **five incredible benefits of building and exploring negative impact and the consequences of your buyer’s problem:**



That’s some powerful, deal-closing stuff. Building negative impact like this increases the feeling of urgency, and leads to all five of those benefits when done masterfully.

On the other hand, most salespeople are apprehensive about asking “impact” questions. They feel like they are being cheesy, salesy, manipulative, and self-serving when they ask questions like:

“How is this problem impacting you personally?”

News flash: You SHOULD feel cheesy about asking a question like that.

There's a better way.

A few months ago, I was training a group of account executives at a big marketing technology SaaS company. As I was teaching the benefits of asking negative impact questions, one of the reps chimed in with a concern:

“I struggle with this concept. On the one hand, I get the value from a sales perspective. On the other hand, I feel like I’m being obvious and cheesy and salesy when I ask these questions. How do I handle that, Chris?”

I could see in the Zoom gallery all of his colleagues nodding in agreement.

I love this question because it tells me **you get the strategy but you're confused on the tactical execution**. There are a few pieces of advice (and scripts) I gave this group to **build negative impact without being slimy**.

Tip #1: Give a reason for the question.

In his seminal book *Influence*, Robert Cialdini talks about how humans crave reasons... even if they aren't necessarily good reasons.

He discusses a research study that had to do with how likely a stranger could successfully cut in line at a copy machine.

In one experiment, the “cutter” simply asked the people in line “hey can I cut in line?” As you can imagine, most people wouldn’t let them.

But in another experiment, the “cutter” asked people if they could cut in line, **but then gave a reason for it:** “Hey can I cut in line ***because I'm in a hurry?***”

Simply giving the *reason* helped them get far more “cuts” than the people who did not give a reason. Most people let them cut in line when they simply said the word “**because.**”

You are more likely to meet success when you give *reasons* behind the hard (and sometimes awkward) questions you ask. Here’s what that might sound like:

“Hey I have a somewhat obvious question for you. The reason I’m asking this is, if we get far enough down the road where we decide we want to do business together, your CFO is probably going to want an answer to this: What are some of the negative ramifications you’re seeing [insert problem they shared] have on the business?”

Imagine how much better that sounds than just asking “what are some of the negative ramifications...” without giving a reason for asking. When you give a reason, people are more likely to buy-in.

Tip #2: Phrase your questions with better language.

Asking “how does this impact you?” sounds cheesy. It sounds like you’re a salesperson.

But try asking this:

“What are the ripple effects this challenge is having across the business?”

Even though it’s fundamentally the same question, the phrasing “signals” a higher level of business acumen, competence, and sophistication. And you’re more likely to get a positive response as a result.

Try that phrase and see how it goes.

SCRIPT #9

How to Make Your Buyer WANT Your Product (Before You Even Show It To Them)

If you've used all of the scripts up until this point, you've accomplished a few things. Namely, you've uncovered deal-closing pain, diagnosed it, and amplified its urgency. All without friction.

But I have bad news:

That's still not enough.

Why?

Because there's this pesky thing called "buying criteria."

What is "buying criteria"?

Buying criteria is a list of desired capabilities that a buyer *thinks* they need to solve their problem. A "shopping list" of features, so to speak. Some buyers have this formalized in a document. But most just have a vague idea of **what they think they need** floating around in their head.

Now here's the kicker:

If they think they need something *different* than what you provide, you still won't close the deal.

Here's an example:

A few weeks ago I had a *great* discovery call with an SVP Sales.

He originally reached out to me because he's looking for a SKO (sales kickoff) speaker, which I occasionally do. But I asked him if he'd be open to learning about the pclub.io skill transformation platform in addition to that, and he said yes.

So we spend our 30 minute discovery call getting clear on his top problems and specific skill gaps in his sales team. Turns out, his enterprise team's close rates were dismal. Below 20%. And they all had skill gaps that lined up perfectly with the learning paths we offer with pclub.io.

Next, we schedule a demo. He seemed luke warm the whole time. Not disinterested, but not enthusiastic. It was hard to get a read on him.

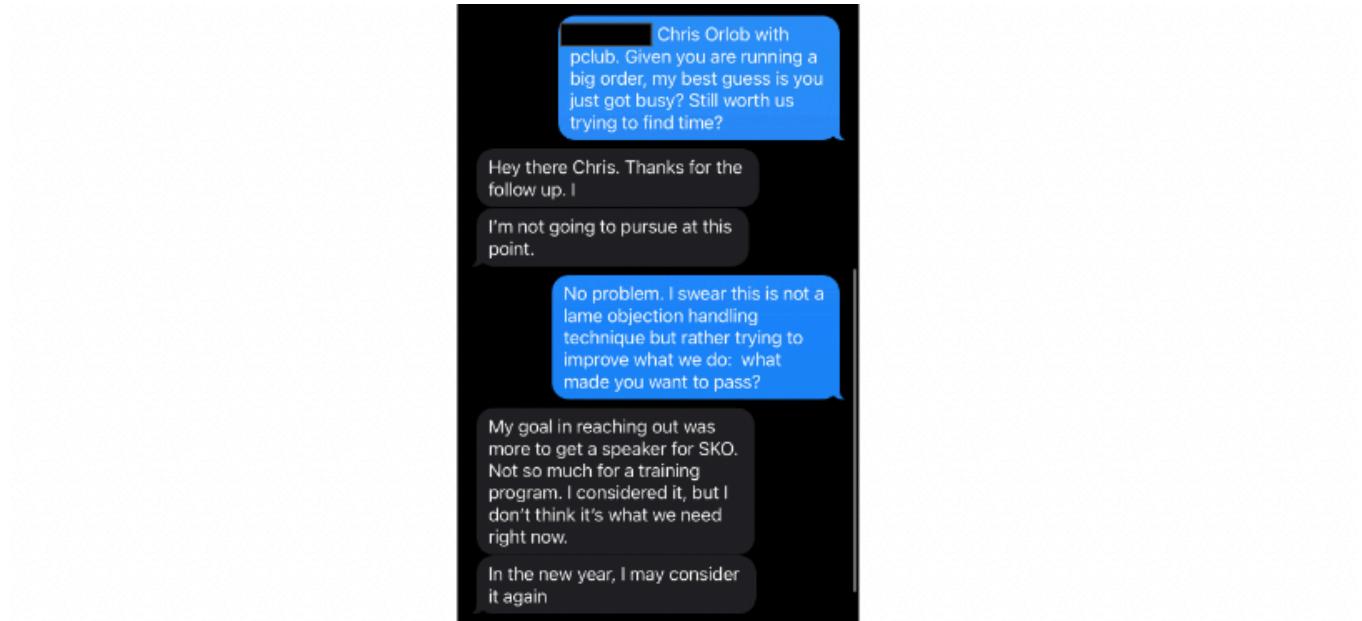
We agreed to meet the following week to discuss next steps.

He no-showed.

I followed 2-3x.

Crickets.

Finally, I found his phone number and texted him. Here's what he said:



See what I mean?

Pain? Check.

Quantified value? Check.

Diagnosed root cause? Check.

But he had different buying criteria than what I was selling. Whether he's right or wrong, in his mind, he wasn't looking for a skill transformation program as the solution. He was looking for a SKO speaker.

So I lost this one. Because I forgot to take my own advice (hey, I'm not perfect! I'm learning right there alongside you).

So before you can win, you've got to understand how your buyer is thinking about a potential solution, so you can either:

- a) Align your product with those perceptions, or

- b) Change their perceptions to better align with your product's capabilities.

Here's the first part of the script that will help you do that:

As you've finished "fleshing out" the business problem with your buyer, trying asking this question:

"What do you think you need in a solution to solve these challenges?"

Their answers will be incredibly telling.

They *might* rattle off a list of features that align exactly with what you sell!

But... they might not. They might be thinking of a different *category* of a solution entirely different from you sell... as this gentleman did in the story above.

Odds are, they are going to be somewhere in between those two answers. Point is: You've got to know where you're starting. And that question helps you do it.

So how do you then *influence their thinking to favor YOUR product?*

That's something we discuss extensively inside *SaaS Discovery Masterclass*, which you can [access in a monthly subscription to the pclub.io skills platform](#) to learn more.

SCRIPT #10

How Top Earning Salespeople Secure Next Steps (The **What, Who, and Why** Method)

I have zero data or proof that what I'm about to say is true. But It's something I've observed through observation:

Every (and I mean every) rep I've ever managed that failed at their job had one thing in common: They did not take a *leadership* posture when it came to recommending next steps with their customers.

They would say things like "So what do you think we should do next?" And they were often not sure what they should do next. Customer's could smell that lack of certainty on them, I'm sure.

On the other hand...

Every (and I mean every) rep I've ever managed that overperformed had one thing in common: They *did* take a leadership posture when it came to recommending next steps with their customers. They carried a sense of certainty on what to do next (even if they changed their minds with input from the customer).

What does this leadership posture look and sound like?

The best reps were always clear on **three things** when it came to next steps: The **What**, The **Who**, and The **Why**.

- **What** should be the next steps? Great salespeople never go into a sales meeting without having a point of view on what the next steps should be at the end of the call. That's not to say they are always *right* on what the next steps should be. But they *always* have a strong point of view, loosely held.
- **Who** should be involved in those next steps? Great salespeople always have a point of view on who to include (and who not to include quite yet). Both on the buyer's side, and on the seller's side.
- **Why** are we recommending *those* next steps, and **why** should the people mentioned be involved? Great salespeople can always explain the 'why' behind their recommended next steps. That's not to say they explain them every time, unasked. But if they are challenged on their point of view, they have reason to defend it. They can explain "the why."

This is worth writing down and remembering:

Selling is an act of leadership.

Yes, dear salesperson, YOU are a leader. You're leading your **buyers** through a transformation.

Why?

Well, think about *who should be leading who...*

YOU have sold your product dozens (maybe hundreds) of times. **You've seen this movie before.** A lot. So therefore, you should have a perspective on how these projects unfold.

YOUR BUYER has never bought your product before. Or if they have, it's only been once or twice (compared to your dozens or hundreds of times selling it).

So if YOUR experience is 10x (or more) greater than your buyer's in this area, **you have the burden of leadership.**

And the way that shows up is having a clear point of view on what to do next at any given time during a deal.

Here's the script that top salespeople use to secure next steps.

"Looks like we're coming up on time. Should we talk about next steps?"

"Great. You know your company better than me. So if you have a different idea than this, let me know."

"But based on what you told me today, what I recommend we do next is _____."

"It would be helpful if we could include John and Sally in that meeting too to get their perspective."

"Does that feel fair?"

Of course, you don't have to say this word for word. You can tweak it to fit your style and personality. The principles are what matter. You're a leader. Yes, you are willing to hear their ideas on next steps (and even modify your own ideas if you like theirs better). But you always start with a point of view on **what** to do next, **who** to involve, and **why**.

Speaking of recommending next steps, as we come to the end of this guide...

Here's What To Do Next

First off, I want to thank you for reading this far! That act alone puts you in the top 10% of skill-stackers in your field. And skill stacking *truly* is the magic bullet of sales success, if there ever was one.

But.

I have ONE more question for you...

And I want you to think about the ramifications of this question seriously:

Do you want to grow your skills faster than you ever have, so you can grow your income, career, and revenue to life-altering levels?

I know that sounds obvious. But before you say yes, I want to make something clear: what I'm about to share with you is not for everyone.

It's only for those who think of themselves as a "skill stacker." In other words, what I'm going to share is only for people who believe you're not **years** away from your dream life or dream income, but rather you're **skills** away from your dream life and dream income.

The faster you build your skills, the faster your dreams will run to you.

If that's you... then what I have to share with you next will help you wake up to a completely different life.

That leads me to inviting you to join the pclub.io Platinum Passport at a special rate of only \$99 per month, which you can cancel at any time.

=> Grow Your Skills With a Monthly Subscription to pclub.io Here

Now I won't go over *everything* inside the Platinum Passport...

But here's how it works:

With this \$99 monthly subscription, you get instant access to all of pclub.io's sales success courses... plus, you get instant access to every new course we release totally FREE, which is usually about two new courses per month.

That means you get to learn directly from the top 0.01% of B2B tech sales practitioners on the planet. We go out and find the very best in the world to teach an online course for every skill so that you can utterly break the curve on your personal growth and turbocharge your success. In fact, we're so stingy with who we let become a course author that it's **easier to get into MIT or Harvard than it is to become a pclub.io course author.**

Now I want you to imagine something:

Imagine what your life, or career, or business, or income would look like if you had the opportunity to learn revenue-generating skills like

deal-closing discovery, winning demos, selling to power, and advanced negotiation from the most successful revenue practitioners on the planet.

Imagine that for a second. It's a powerful thought.

You'll be in a completely different league from your peers.

If you're a seller, you'll grow your income, revenue, and career progression faster and easier than ever before. **You'll truly write your own check.**

If you're a leader, you'll have the skills to grow your business and revenue to new levels.

I want to invite you to take advantage of this one-time offer. Normally we offer this for \$997 per year. **But on this page, you can get it for just \$99 per month, and you can cancel any time you want.** So click that link right now, and join the monthly subscription for just \$99 a month.

Like I said, I'm not going to go into every detail. But if you take me up on my invitation here, you'll receive instant access to over 20 tech sales and sales leadership courses. Here are just a few of them:

First, SaaS Discovery Masterclass.

A four hour course that teaches the five-step discovery method that over 10,000 SaaS reps use to find business pain that MONEY follows,

create urgency, and sell. Normally \$297 on our website, but [included for FREE in your \\$99 per month subscription.](#)

Second, Cold Email Conversion Machine.

Taught by one of the world's top experts in outbound cold email, Florin Tatulea teaches a 3 hour course on how to turn cold prospecting into paying customers. Normally \$197 on our website, but [included for FREE in your \\$99 per month subscription.](#)

Third, Killing the Maybe.

This is an advanced course on how to systematically “dismantle” your buyer's status quo bias, so you stop losing deals to “no decision.” Again, this course sells for \$297 on our website, but [you get it free in your monthly subscription.](#) Suffice to say that we have over 20 and counting sales success courses for tech salespeople, SDRs, and frontline sales managers... **over \$30,000 worth of courses and programs to turbocharge your sales success, income, and revenue...** For just \$99 per month.

So let's get started! [Click on the link and join the community of Platinum Passport subscribers now.](#) And just remember, you can cancel any time if you decide it's now for you.

At this very moment, you stand at a crossroads. There are two paths ahead of you, and the choice is yours.

Option 1: You bet on yourself. You click the button and embark on a transformational journey that holds the potential to revolutionize your sales success. The rewards are powerful - higher income, better career choices, the white-hot envy of all of your colleagues.

Option 2: You close this guide and stay in the same spot. Just like in business and in life, hesitation and inaction leads to regret. The potential breakthroughs, success, and income growth that all could have been yours... vanish.

To make this decision easier for you, we made the *monthly* subscription to pclub.io only \$99, which you can cancel any time.

The world isn't going to wait for you to catch up. **Your dreams of success, your ambitions, your goals... they deserve to become a reality.** So, let's not delay it anymore. Let's start your transformation today.

Now or never. **[Go here to begin your sales transformation for only \\$99 per month, cancel any time](#)**, and I look forward to watching you make your dreams of success, goals, and ambitions a reality.

