

Winning Moments of Truth



Commoditization, Compressed Selling Time, and Consensus Decision Making. They are the Three Deadly Cs. And they've completely killed selling as you've known it. Moments of truth can make all of the difference now.

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SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The way buyers behave today is completely different than it was, even just a few years ago.

You'd think that sellers would have changed the way they sold, to keep up. They haven't. How you sell, who you sell to and who you staff, it's all been upended by the **Three Deadly Cs**: Commoditization, Compressed Selling Time, and Consensus Decision Making.

In this lesson, you'll learn:

- **The Three Deadly Cs** of modern sales and why they're harmful to your success
- The phases of the buyer's journey from unaware to convinced and closed
- How moments of truth live within different phases in the buyer's journey



How to optimize your success at each stage of that journey



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THE 3 DEADLY Cs



Since the advent of the internet, three new pressures have been put on sellers...

...the Three Deadly Cs.

We call them the **Three Deadly Cs**: Commoditization, Compressed Selling Time and Consensus Decision Making.

Commoditization



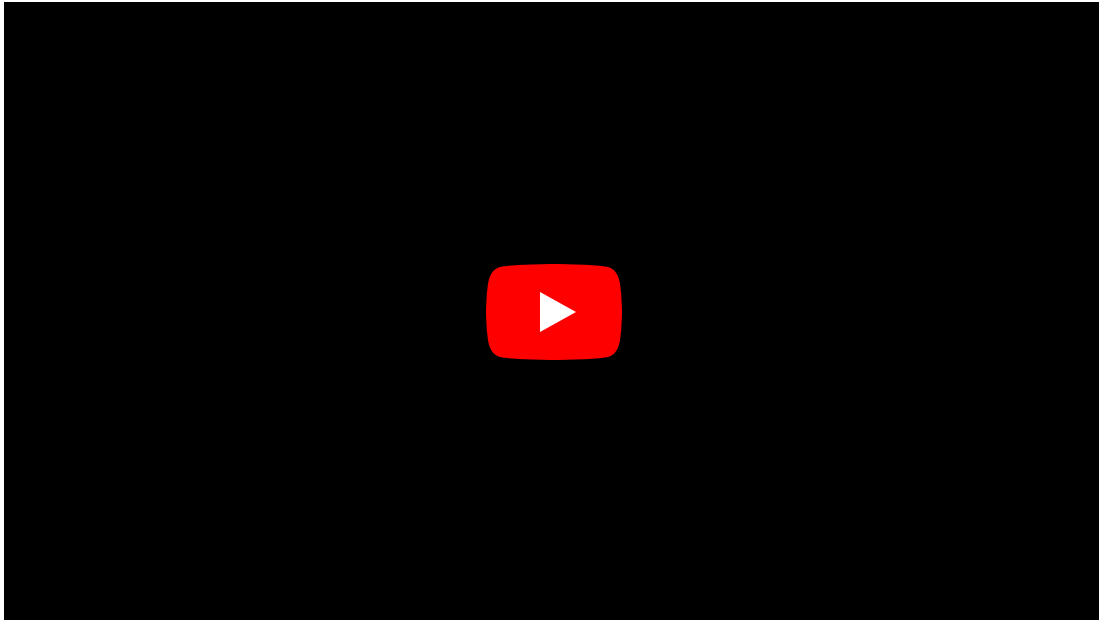
Now that your prospect can search for you, they can also find every last one of your competitors. Most of the time, competitors are hard to tell apart because of the way they talk about themselves.

It doesn't help that search engines use their own language to find their results, so they tend to get exactly what they ask for. The more they read, the more difficult it is to tell you apart from your competition.

If they think they have many options, and all of these options can solve their problem, then all of them are the same. If they're all the same, choosing on price seems like the best bet because it allows the brain to keep the decision in the primitive brain.

Listen as Bryan Gray speaks about the dangers of Commoditization.

 **YOUTUBE**



Commoditization with Revenue Path Group

Featuring Bryan Gray, RPG wants you to know about commoditization and how it's effecting your company, right now!

VIEW ON YOUTUBE >

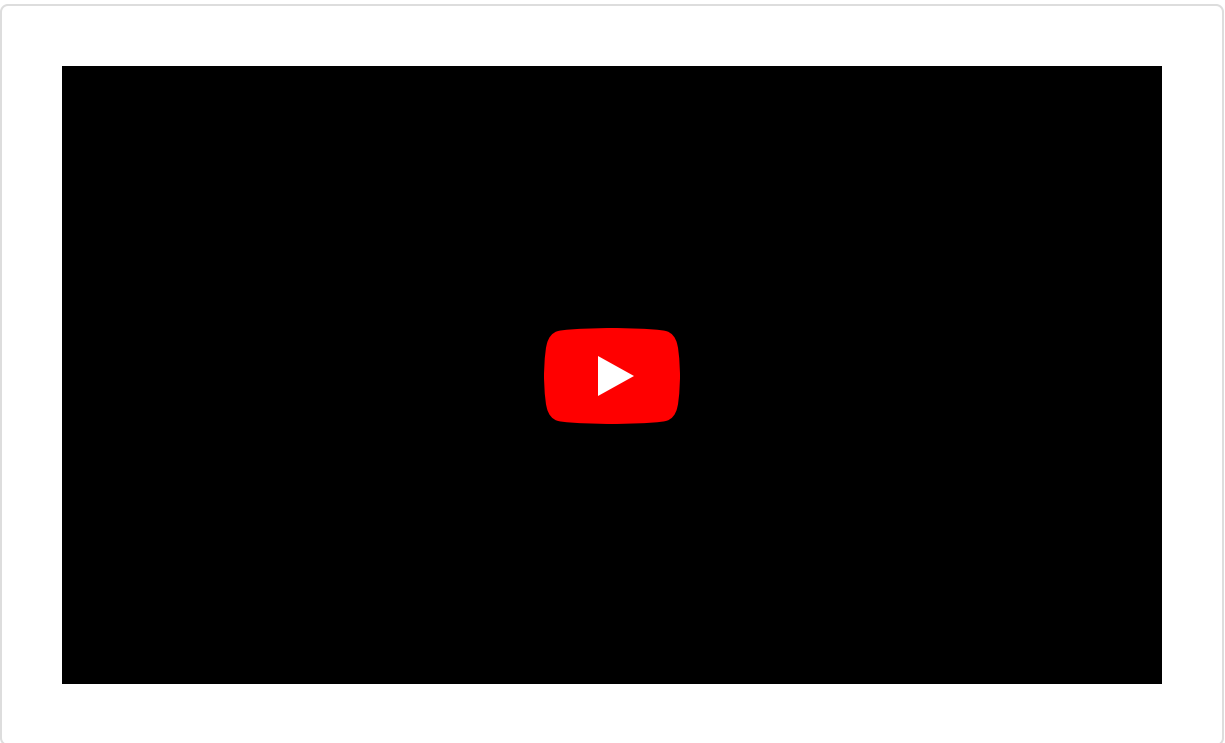
Compressed Selling Time

Before the internet, the primary and best way to gather information was through sales reps. This allowed sellers to have many touch points, and to know early on that the prospect was “in the market” for what they sold. The internet changed this.

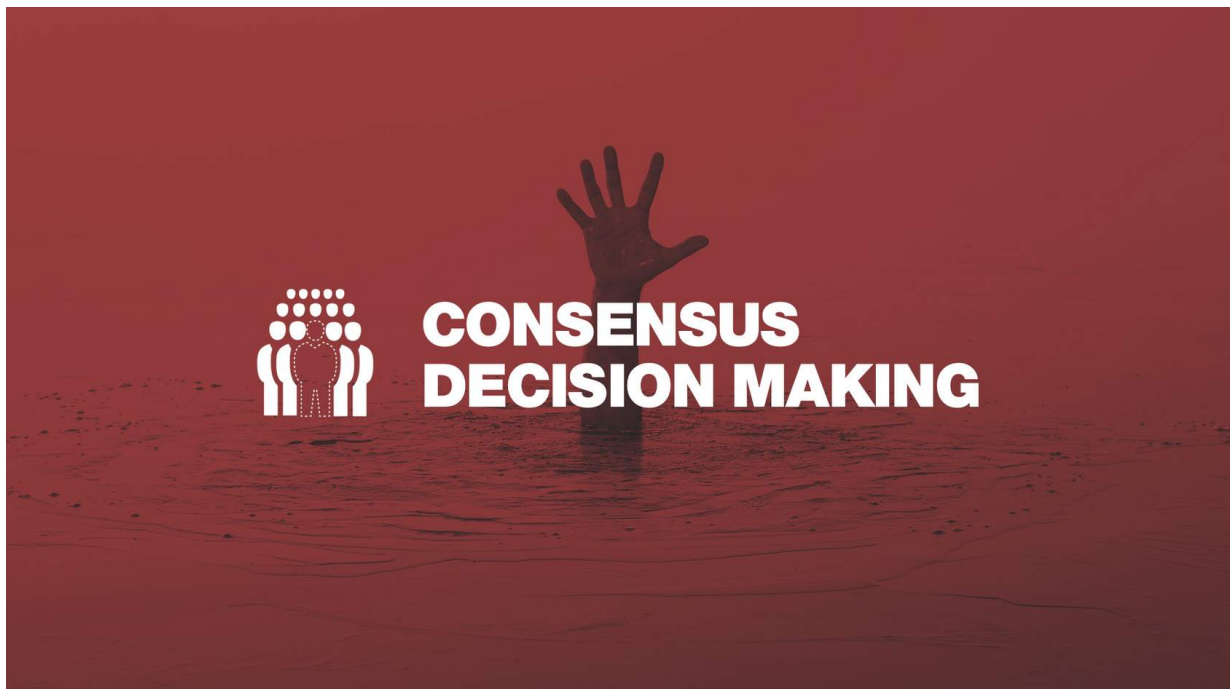


Today's buyer travels the majority of the sale without involving reps, up to 80% of the journey in many B2B sales. That means sellers have less time than ever to accomplish the same amount of work. This compression ramps up the pressure to achieve while giving the salesperson fewer opportunities to connect, correct misconceptions and drive the sale forward.

Listen as Bryan Gray discusses how Compressed Selling Time may be impacting your sale.



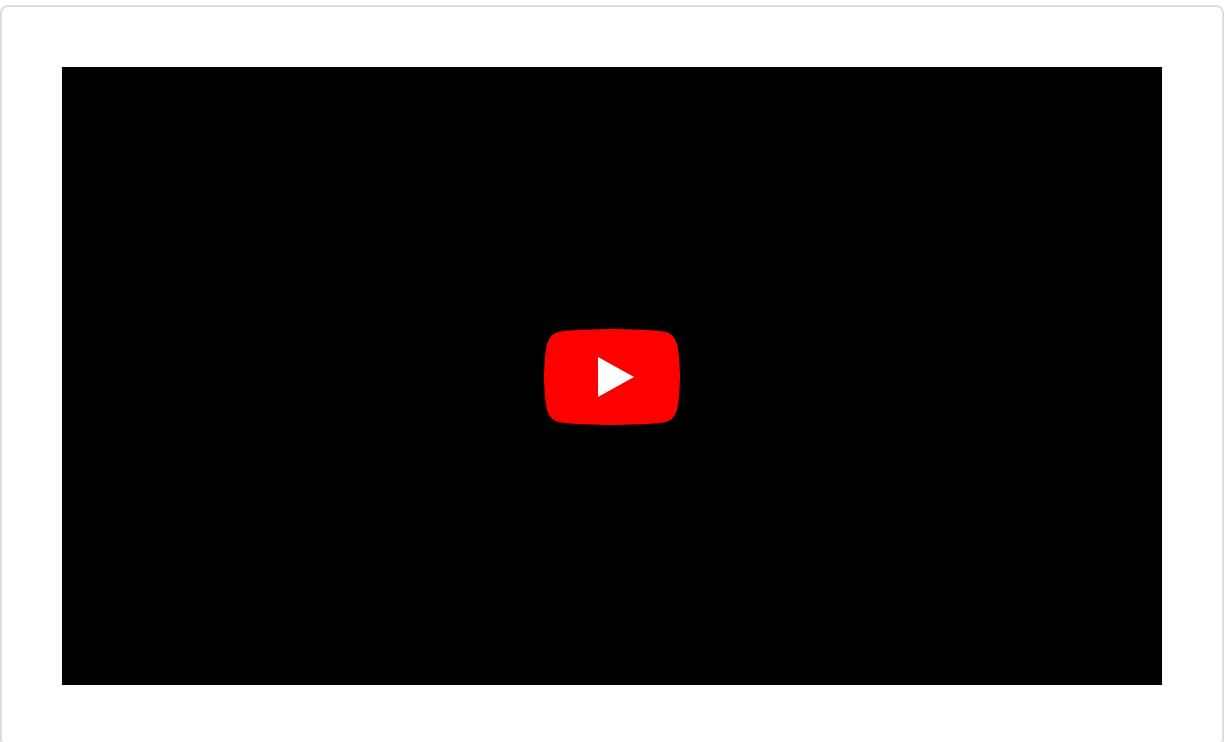
Consensus Decision Making

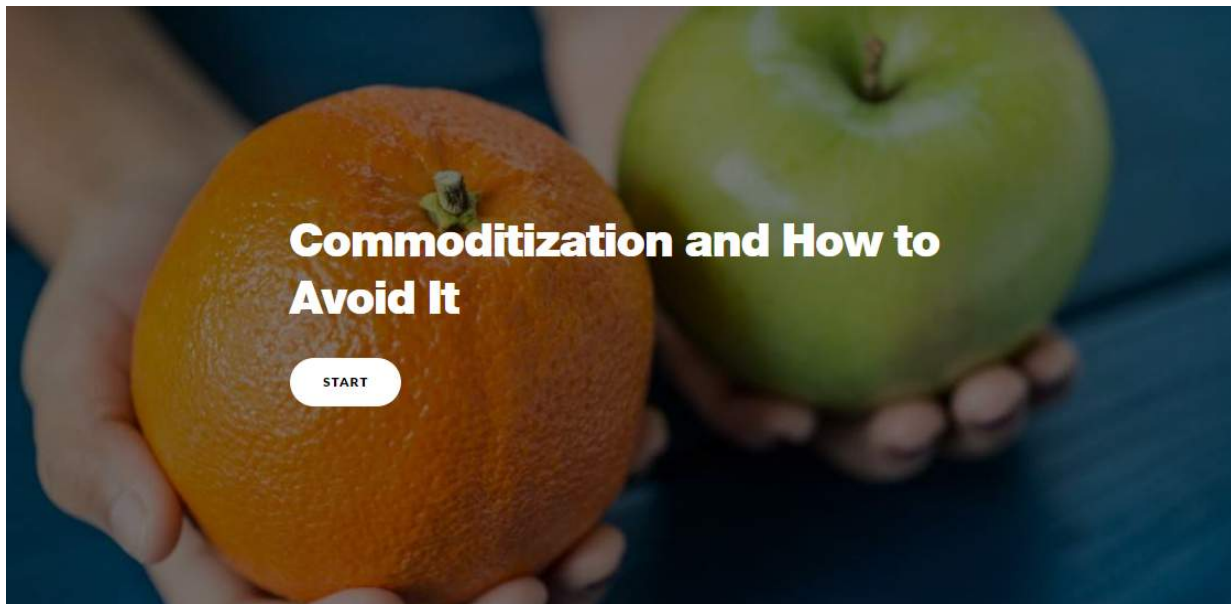


Today's buyer isn't just a buyer, it's several people. Whether they're formally assigned or loosely responsible, every purchase these days seems to involve a committee of buyers, each with competing agendas and requirements.

Sellers today have to make each sale not once, not even two or three times. On average, there are at least 6.8 people responsible for a purchase in today's B2B sale. It's no wonder that most sales you lose aren't going to competitors. Rather, they're lost to prospects choosing nothing at all.

Listen as Bryan Gray discusses the threat of Consensus Decision Making.





For a deeper dive into the topic of commoditization, check out our [Commoditization](#) course and additional materials accessible in the course catalog.

These **Three Deadly Cs** have been putting pressure on sales organizations for many years now, and things are only getting harder, faster. Understanding how your buyer is buying can start to unlock positive responses and proactive behaviors to help overcome them.

Let's Practice.

Sort the examples below into the correct **Three Deadly Cs** categories.

Commoditization

"Which one costs less?"

"The options are basically the same."

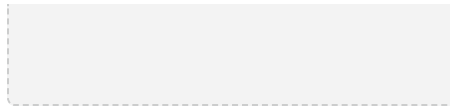
**"I'm putting it out to bid.
Sharpen your pencil."**

Compressed Selling Time

**"I've researched it online and
am ready to pick."**

**"I've done all the research
before I called you. I just need
to order it now."**

Consensus Decision Making



**"I have to take this to the
committee."**

"Let me ask my bosses first."

**I have to pass you to
purchasing. You'll need to
convince them too."**



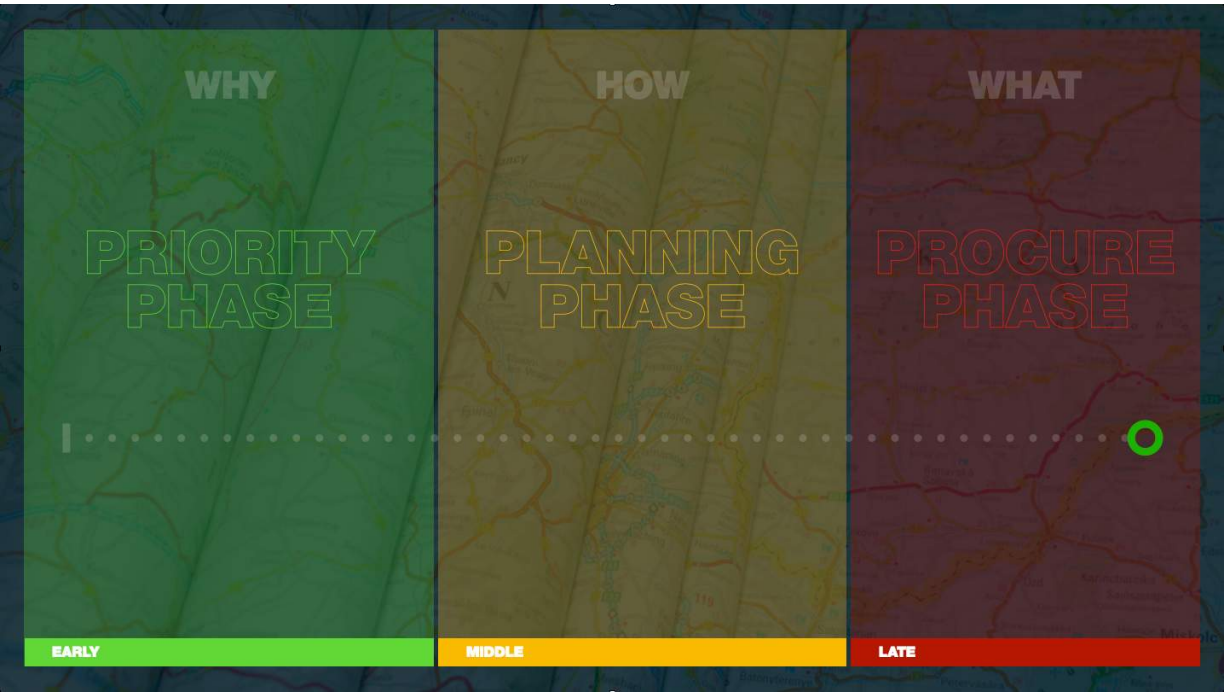
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THE THREE PHASES OF THE BUYER'S JOURNEY

Let's stop thinking about what we do to sell for a moment... and instead think of the journey from the buyer's perspective. The buyer will traverse three distinct phases.

Sometimes, they accomplish these almost entirely on their own. Other times, a seller is with them the whole way.

Sometimes, prospects will travel these phases quickly, in a matter of days or even hours. Other times, the phases take months, and the prospect may even move backward more than once.



The point is that even though these journeys are very different, there are still three distinct phases that every seller must be able to identify, assist with, and help win moments of truth within, in order to win a sale.

PRIORITY PHASE	PLANNING PHASE	PROCUREMENT PHASE
<p>The Priority phase is where organizational threats are addressed and committed to. It is when a prospect is trying to identify whether the problem they're attempting to solve is a priority or not. This will help them decide whether pursuing a solution of any kind is worth their time and effort.</p>		



PRIORITY PHASE

PLANNING PHASE

PROCUREMENT PHASE

The Planning phase is when an organization is allocating resources and determining if the money, time and resources to pursue a priority are aligned. During this phase, the prospect is deciding between competing priorities and competing offers in an attempt to understand what life will be like during and after the purchase.



PRIORITY PHASE

PLANNING PHASE

PROCUREMENT PHASE

This is when the prospect has named the solution they prefer and is attempting to find suitable arrangements on scope and price.



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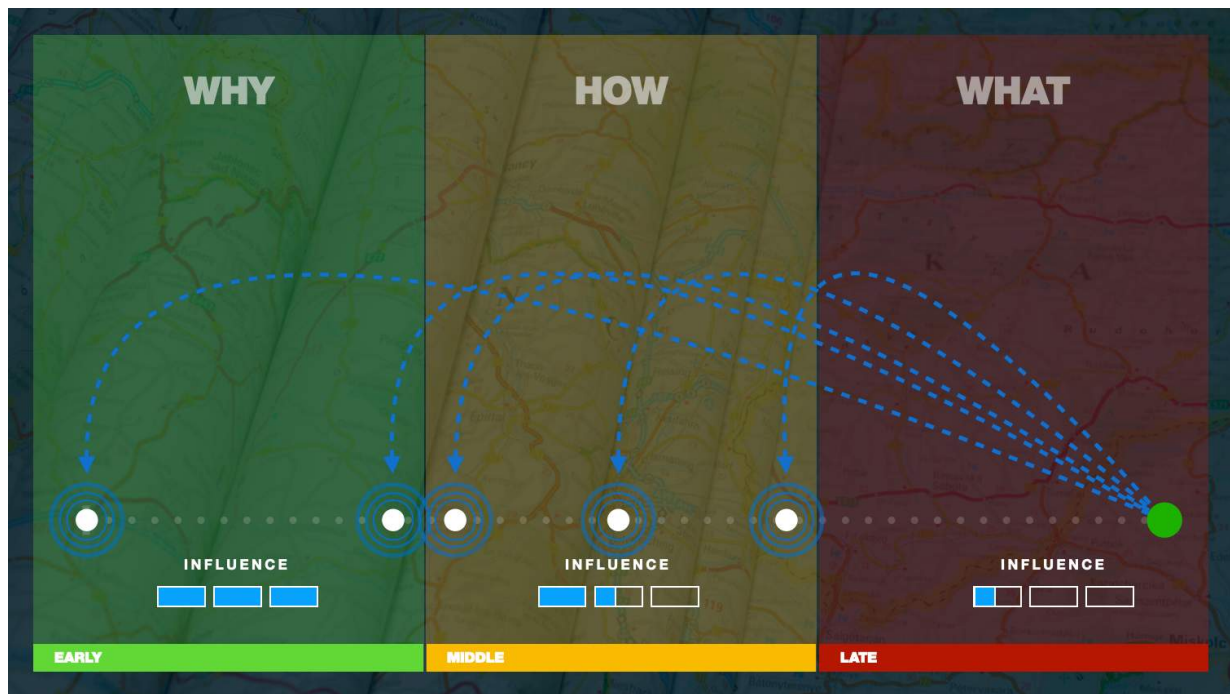
MOMENTS OF TRUTH

Every impression, every time, is an opportunity to advance or set back your sale.

Every interaction with a prospect is a moment of truth.

These moments either advance or set back your sale. Sales that are set back even once, no matter how minor, rarely, if ever become deals.

If this seems like it puts a lot of importance on every single interaction, it does. The sooner you can think of every email, every meeting, every interaction as a moment of truth, the sooner you'll be more effective at advancing the sale.



When moments of truth advance a sale

They get the prospect to take action that makes the end of the sale more likely, and closer.

This could be actions such as:

- Providing more information
- Doing more research to find answers for you
- Providing access to other members of the buying committee

- Scheduling new meetings
- Signing the deal

When moments of truth set back a sale...

They don't connect to a pain or a threat and get no promise of future effort. In the worst cases, they provide reasons for the prospect to say no. At best, they make winning the deal far less likely.

What you need to win every moment of truth depends in large part on when, where, and how you enter the sale, what phase the buyer is at in their journey and how long you've been with them. We'll explore those factors in subsequent lessons.

There are, however, some universal things that apply to winning every moment of truth. **Flip each card below** to explore the actions you can take.



Mentally Prepare

Know your preferred outcome before you go in, and have a plan to get there.

Control Your Emotions

Understand and correct your emotional response to the unexpected. Remain in control.

Be Consultative

Listen. Ask hard questions.
Help the buyer understand
what will happen next.

Sell Value

Focus on how your solution
eliminates their pains and threats,
how it connects to their priority.

Qualify the Lead

Plan the next steps. Where
will the budget be found?
Who will get in the way?



Complete the content above before moving on.

PRIORITY PHASE



Entering at the **Priority Phase** represents your best chance to create greater influence, greater margin, and win the sale.

But it's also the hardest place to gain access.

Your Influence

You, the seller, have the most influence possible during this stage. That's why it's imperative that you are able to gain access during this phase. But, why would being with the prospect before they even want to purchase anything do any good? Is it even possible?

It does a world of good. Walking the path to priority alongside your prospect puts you in a position to help them solve it, with your solution. It also builds a high degree of trust. It's possible to join prospects at this stage, but not easy. You must connect with their beliefs, using insights to capture their initial attention.

Be proactive, helping them see things they currently can't see. **Be prescriptive**, showing them the way to solving their threats. This can be done with a single contact at first, building a champion for you and your solution for the rest of the sale.

Your goal during this phase is to help them connect your solution to their priority. You can tell you've successfully entered this phase of the sale when:

- There aren't any solutions on the table yet.
- They're trying to find the cause or causes of a problem they're having.
- They can't fully articulate the problem, and cannot name a solution to the problem, yet.

Entry and Exit Criteria for Priority Phase



Entrance: Your prospect enters this phase when they realize a pain or threat that they'd like to eliminate.



Exit: Your prospect exits this phase when they have decided to take action to solve it.

Watch the video below to see what it looks and feels like to engage with your prospect correctly in the **Priority Phase**. [Click Play to start the animation.](#)



Thumbnail



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PLANNING PHASE

There are still wins to be had when you enter in the middle of the sale.

But you'll have to work hard to stand out from the crowd.



Your Influence

You, the seller, have diminished influence when you enter the sale in the **Planning Phase**, and you'll have to work fast to establish trust and become a part of the planning they're doing.

To do this, you'll need to be **diagnostic** at first, and then **highly prescriptive**. Help them assess the issue with tools and consulting. They should already know the problem, but may have possibly misdiagnosed or only partially diagnosed the causes. Relentlessly align your solution to their priority. This will be the separation you need to become the front-runner.

When you've successfully become a part of their planning, you're in a position to help them scope the solution. Being able to separate the nice-to-haves from the deal breakers is an important advantage to gain during your time with them in the **Planning Phase**.

You can tell when you've entered this phase when:

- The prospect can tell you what they hope to accomplish with a solution like yours.
- They do not have a complete list of requirements.
- They're evaluating solving this problem against solving other, unrelated pains and threats that they've been thinking about.

Entry and Exit Criteria in the Planning Phase






Entrance: Prospects enter the planning phase when they've decided to work on finding a solution to a problem they've fully identified.



Exit: Prospects exit this stage when they've made a commitment to a plan of action.

Watch the video below to see what it looks and feels like to engage with your prospect correctly in the **Planning Phase**.

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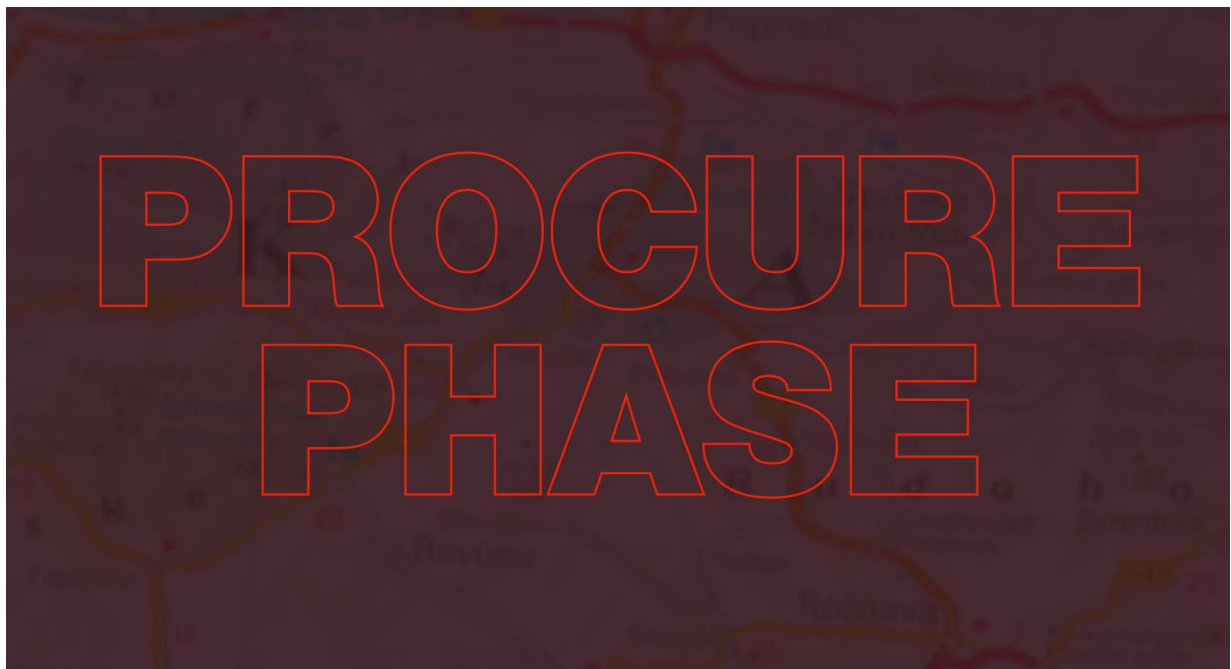


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PROCUREMENT PHASE

When you enter at the **Procurement Phase**, you've got to play perfectly to get a real win.

And by "real" win, we mean at the margin you wanted, on the timeline you wanted. They're tricky, and you've got your work cut out for you. But these deals can be worth working on.



Your Influence

You, the seller, have little to no influence when you enter this phase of the sale. Often, you're being asked to show up and sell on price, not value. You have very little time for anything else, and your work is cut out for you.

Yet most B2B sellers enter here more than any other stage, competing via RFP or taking leads from their website from folks who typed into Google the thing they're looking for. This is what ultimately causes the highest degree of **Commoditization**, and puts the most pressure on price, causing a race to the bottom among vendors.

You can consider one of three strategies to compete for these late-stage deals:

Strategy 1

Cut out your margins to compete on price ...

... hoping for greater future engagement. This is dangerous because you won't often be able to charge more for the same scope in the future, so this strategy usually only works when you have additional future sales that you're confident you can make.

Strategy 2

Attempt to reconfigure the scope entirely ...

... by showing them something they missed in the **Planning Phase**. When successful, this helps you unlock new priorities that you can position your solution toward. When unsuccessful, the prospect decides to abandon the priority altogether.

Strategy 3

Position your sale as the true low-cost solution.

This is dangerous because while it may win the deal today, you're subject to ever-lower offers from competitors in the future that will take away your business. This usually only works in the few industries in which repeat business is a non-factor.

You can tell you've entered the sale in this phase when:

- The prospect can hand you a list of requirements or a scope.
- The prospect asks for pricing in the first contact.
- The prospect can tell you who else has been invited to the table.
- They ask the Three Ugly Questions: *Can you do it? Do you want it? How much?*

Entry and Exit Criteria in the Procurement Phase




Entrance: Prospects enter this phase when they have named a solution to solve their problem.



Exit: Prospects exit this phase by choosing a solution or choosing not to address it at all.

Watch the video below to see what it looks and feels like to engage with your prospect correctly in the [Procurement Phase](#).

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KNOWLEDGE CHECK

Based on each of the following first contacts from a prospect, identify which stage of the sale you've entered.

Question

01/09

“We’re having this really specific problem that we’re trying to solve. Do you guys help with that?”

- ☐ Priority
- ☐ Planning
- ☐ Procurement

Question

02/09

"I never thought of it that way, what do you think might be happening?"

- ☐ Priority
- ☐ Planning
- ☐ Procurement

Question

03/09

"Here's the scope. Can you do it?"

- ☐ Priority
- ☐ Planning
- ☐ Procurement

Question

04/09

"Here's the scope. Do you want to bid on it?"

- ☐ Priority
- ☐ Planning
- ☐ Procurement

Question

05/09

“Here’s the scope. How much would you charge for it?”

- ☐ Priority
- ☐ Planning
- ☐ Procurement

Question

06/09

"I saw something on your website about why we're not more successful. Can you tell me more?"

☐

Priority

☐

Planning

☐

Procurement

Question

07/09

"How have other companies like us solved this problem?"

- ☐ Priority
- ☐ Planning
- ☐ Procurement

Question

08/09

"If we add this to the scope, how does that change implementation?"

- ☐ Priority
- ☐ Planning
- ☐ Procurement

Question

09/09

"Something you said described us perfectly. Can we talk?"

- ☐ Priority
- ☐ Planning
- ☐ Procurement

SUMMARY

Congratulations!

You've successfully completed this course.

Your progress has been marked as complete. Please feel free to [close your browser tab](#), or [click any lesson title in the menu](#) to review that course content.

