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Building Your First Million-Dollar Sales Pipeline

A guide to building a predictable sales pipeline that works (even if you hate selling).



Marshall Hargrave

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3 min read · Apr 17, 2025



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...

The secret? A systematized approach that takes the mystery (and anxiety) out of sales.

First, let's bust some myths:

- You don't need to be naturally "good at sales"
- You don't need an expensive sales team
- You don't need complex CRM systems (yet)

What you need is a simple, repeatable system that works.

The biggest mistake founders make is treating sales like an art when it's a science.

Here's the exact system, broken down into five key components:

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ospect Profile (PPP)

hing, you need to know exactly who you're selling to. for creating your PPP:

Ideal Customer Profile Template:

- Industry:
- Company Size:
- Annual Revenue:
- Key Pain Points:
- Decision Maker Title:
- Budget Authority:
- Technology Stack:
- Trigger Events:

Pro Tip: Fill this out based on your best current customers, not who you think you should be selling to.

2. The Value Matrix

This simple but powerful tool maps your product's features to specific customer pain points:

Pain Point | [Customer Problem]

Feature | [Your Solution]

Benefit | [Tangible Outcome]

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Long Sales Cycle | Manual Data Entry

Automated Follow-up | API Integration

40% Faster Closes | 15 Hours Saved/Week

Case Study A | Customer Quote



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Engine

sequence that generates a very solid response rate:

Subject: Quick question about [specific pain point]

Hi [Name],

I noticed [company] is [specific observation about their business].

We help [similar companies] [achieve specific outcome] by [unique approach].

Would you be open to a quick conversation about how this might help [company]?

Best,

[Your name]

Day 3: Follow-up Email

Subject: Re: Quick question about [specific pain point]

Hi [Name],

Just floating this to the top of your inbox. Would you be interested in learning how [similar company] achieved [specific result]?

Best,

[Your name]

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ouch
e study, article, or insight

Break-up email with a clear call to action

4. The Qualification Framework

We use this simple BANT+ framework to qualify prospects:

Budget:

- Has allocated budget for this type of solution
- Can access emergency budget for right solution
- Has recently invested in similar tools

Authority:

- Direct decision-making power
- Part of the decision-making committee
- Strong influence on decision makers

Need:

- Experiencing acute pain point
- Actively looking for solutions

- Clear cost of inaction

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- Defined project timeline
- Budget cycle alignment

Plus (+):

- Cultural fit
- Technology compatibility
- Growth potential



Photo by [Luke Chessier](#) on [Unsplash](#)

5. The Close Sequence

Our winning close sequence has three key components:

The Proposal Template:

Executive Summary

Current Situation

Proposed Solution

Expected Outcomes

Investment & ROI

Next Steps

Social Proof

2. The Objection Matrix:

- **Objection | Response | Evidence | Alternative**

“~~-----~~” | Value narrative | ROI calc | Alternative package

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Urgency driver | Case study | Pilot program

ne” | Cost of delay | Competitor data | Phased approach

3. The Follow-up Sequence:

Day 0: Proposal sent

Day 1: Check receipt

Day 3: Value-add follow-up

Day 5: ROI reminder

Day 8: Deadline reminder

Day 10: Break-up email

Bottom Line

Avoiding focusing on volume over quality. Once you've got the basic system working, create process playbooks, build template libraries, set up email sequence automation, and implement meeting scheduling tools.

The key to sales success isn't natural talent or aggressive tactics — it's having a systematic approach that you can execute consistently.

Salesforce Development

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