

GET INSIDE THE MIND OF YOUR PROSPECT: WHY ARE THEY SEARCHING FOR A PRODUCT?

Before you begin a presales evaluation with new prospect, make certain that you know why they are searching for a product. It is usually one of two reasons:

1. Solving an immediate pain point, or
2. Proactively evolving their business.

#1 → SOLVING AN IMMEDIATE PAIN POINT

Companies looking to solve an immediate pain point are either dealing with:

- A deficiency, or
- An inefficiency

Sales cycles are more straightforward when a prospect has a deficiency than when they have an inefficiency. A deficiency must be removed or their business cannot continue to operate.

In contrast, their business can continue to operate 'as is' with an inefficiency, just not optimally. An inefficiency might be causing pain, but it is not a 'must solve' situation for them.

PAIN POINT: SOLVING FOR A DEFICIENCY

A prospect with a deficiency needs to fill a gap in their existing technologies, business processes,

or regulatory compliance. In this case, it is not a matter of if they will buy a product; it is a matter of which product they will buy. It is also not a matter of when they will buy, because they must buy something at some point.

Impact on your Evaluation Plan:

[Focus more on your product than on your prospect.](#)

- We know that this statement is sales blasphemy! You are in a special type of sales cycle. Your prospect is trying to solve an immediate pain point and that pain point is a specific deficiency. In this special case, your product needs to be the star.
- You do not need to convince your prospect of the 'why' nor the 'when'.
- You can focus on the 'how', and the 'how' is your product.

Create an Evaluation Plan that is laser-focused on how your product solves their deficiency.

- A focused Evaluation Plan proves that your sales engineers understand your prospect's deficiency and that they are singularly focused on solving it.
- The more you add to your Evaluation Plan, the more you distract your prospect. Your product begins to look more complicated than it needs to be. Your prospect begins to feel 'sold to' and no one likes that.

Promote all of your other features without distracting from the Evaluation Plan.

- While the evaluation plan should be laser-focused, you do not want to lose an opportunity to showcase how you can help your prospect in other ways. Just don't let this 'other stuff' become a distraction.
- Share this information in the form of white papers, blog posts, case studies, and customer reference calls.

PAIN POINT: SOLVING FOR AN INEFFICIENCY

Inefficiencies are a more difficult sale. Your prospect's business can operate without solving the inefficiency using your solution or anyone's solution. That is a big risk to your sales cycle. It makes it easier for your prospect to reduce their level of participation in the evaluation process or stop their search altogether if they get busy or if executive support for the project starts to wane.

Impact on your Evaluation Plan:

Reinforce the Business Case regularly.

- Talk to your prospect early on about their internal business case for solving the inefficiency. You need to know the value that they are associating with fixing it and from where that value is coming. If your prospect does not yet have a business case, help them build one.
- Keep your prospect engaged in the evaluation by reinforcing the business case, the operational improvements, and the financial impacts over and over.

Create an Evaluation Plan that gets you to a 'technical win' as quickly as possible.

- Time is of the essence. With this type of pain point your prospect is more easily distracted with other initiatives, so you need to move them through the evaluation before that happens.
- Identify the specific evaluation scenarios that show exactly how your product removes the inefficiency. This is not a time to showcase everything that your product can do. Keep it focused on those specific scenarios.

The financial impacts are your best friend.

While your prospect's management team and project sponsors might care about the operational inefficiency, they really care about

financial impacts of that inefficiency. Help your prospect communicate with their management team and project sponsors in the language that they understand best. Focusing on the financial impacts of solving the inefficiency can save your prospect's project from losing priority or budget.

#2 → PROACTIVELY EVOLVING THEIR BUSINESS

Prospects searching for a product because they want to evolve their business, and not because of a deficiency or an inefficiency, are aspirational.

They believe that a new technology is key to helping them advance their business in a new direction or according to a new strategy.

This sales cycle is similar to solving for an inefficiency because evolving their business is not necessary. The tone of the two sales cycles is quite different however. Whereas solving an inefficiency has a negative tone, evolving a business has a positive and excited tone.

Impact on your Evaluation Plan:

[Tap into your prospect's excitement.](#)

- Keep up your excitement level throughout the evaluation to keep your prospect engaged. If you mirror their excitement back to them, they will look forward to talking with you. An excited prospect will collaborate to build the Evaluation Plan with you. They will

want to show you the progress that they have made in the Evaluation Plan each time you meet.

[Create an Evaluation Plan that 'thinks big'.](#)

- Your prospect is already thinking big, so identify evaluation scenarios that show how your product can facilitate big change and achieve big results.
- Use your Evaluation Plan to get your prospect to think even further into future, beyond their current needs.
- Show the 'art of the possible' and give your prospect a path to get there.

PRO TIP: Share your Evaluation Plan with your prospect to boost engagement. Presales platforms like Homerun allow your prospect to mark shared tasks, activities, and test scenarios as In Progress, Completed, or Blocked, upload related files (for example, a data set or log file), and message directly with your presales team. Sharing your Evaluation Plan also enables your presales team to detect early warning signs about 'deal health', for example if your prospect's progress through the Evaluation Plan is lagging or stops altogether. Your presales can intervene to get the evaluation back on track before you lose the deal.