2025

inflexion-point
Outcome-Centric Selling®

Introducing the Outcome-Centric Selling® Toolkit

01: Introducing the Outcome-Centric Selling® Toolkit

Overview

This guide has two intended audiences: firstly, it is aimed at **existing users** of the Outcome-Centric Selling® system - helping you to understand when, how and where to use each of the tools to their best effect.

Secondly, it is aimed at **sales leaders** who are considering implementing the Outcome-Centric Selling® system within their own organisation - helping you to assess how the approach can enable you to achieve the improvement in sales performance that you are looking for.

Either way, we hope that this guide will help you to achieve your objectives.

Now, let's start at the beginning - with **targeting**.

Contents

02: Outcome-Centric Targeting Tools

There are four key considerations when deciding where we can most effectively target our prospecting energies:

1. What are the **key business issues** that we can address more effectively than any other option?
2. What are the common characteristics of the **ideal customers** that are most likely to be motivated to address the issues we have chosen to target?
3. What are the **key roles** within these organisations that are most likely to be responsible for dealing with these issues?
4. What are the **key trends** and **trigger events** that are likely to cause these potential prospects to conclude that they have to urgently address the issue?

The **first three factors** help us to identify our **long-term prospects**: the **fourth factor** helps us to determine which of these prospects are likely to turn into **short-term opportunities**.

Key Targeting Tools:

02.1 Key Business Issue Worksheet

Our targeting process must start by identifying the **key business issues** (*as opposed to functional needs*) that our organisation is particularly **expert at addressing -** preferably backed up by positive references and case studies.

These issues must be **common** (and **important**) enough across our target markets to make them worth focusing our energies on **-** there is little value in targeting uncommon or low-priority issues.

The **key business issue worksheet** enables us to identify and describe our prospective customer's top-three common addressable business issues:

- How would our prospective customers **describe** the issue?
- Is the issue something they need to **fix**, **avoid**, or **achieve**?
- What are the typical **symptoms** and **indications**?
- What is the likely **impact** of the issue on both the organisation and the key stakeholders?
- What **better outcomes** are they looking for?

Outcome-Centric Selling® | Key Business Issue Worksheet

Offering:

Target Market/Audience:

Issue	Type	Symptoms/Indications	Impact	Expected Outcomes
	?			
	?			
	?			

When, how, and where to use this tool:

- As an essential input into our **territory** and **account planning** processes
- To help us develop our **prospecting** priorities, messages, and campaigns
- As a high-level **initial qualifier -** does a potential opportunity suffer from any of the issues we have chosen to target?

02.2 Ideal Customer Profile Worksheet

Our **ideal customer profile** (or profiles) must capture the **common characteristics** of the organisations that are most likely to be suffering from the **business issues** we have chosen to target.

Our ideal customer profile will typically start with the typical demographic indicators of **size**, **sector**, and **location**, but to be effective it also needs to reflect:

- Key **structural factors**, such as organisational structure, their go-to-market model, their market focus, the systems they have in place, their strategic vendor relationships, the functions or departments we are targeting, and so on ...
- **Cultural/behavioural factors**, such as the way they make buying decisions, their relationship with suppliers, appetite for innovation, willingness to buy best-of-breed solutions, position on the adoption curve (early adopter, early majority, mainstream, laggard) and so on ...
- **Current Priorities**: their most important current strategic programmes and initiatives - for example, cost reduction, revenue growth, market share growth, digital transformation and so on ...

Outcome-Centric Selling® | Ideal Customer Profile Worksheet

Context:

Category/Factor	Perfect Fit	Acceptable Fit	Avoid/Disqualify
Demographic - Size/Growth			
Demographic - Sector			
Demographic - Location			
Structural			
Cultural/ Behavioural			
Current Priorities			

When, how, and where to use this tool:

- As an essential input into our **territory** and **account planning** processes
- To help us research and build our **target account** and **prospect lists**
- As a high-level **initial qualifier -** how closely does a potential opportunity reflect our **ideal customer profile**?

02.3 Key Roles Worksheet

Once we have established the **key business issues** we are going to target, and identified our **ideal customer profiles**, we then need to identify the **key roles** within these organisations that are most likely to be responsible for addressing the targeted issue(s).

These **key project sponsors** are likely to be senior business executives with operational responsibility for the departments or functions that are most affected by the issue(s). We need to identify their typical **job titles**, and anticipate their likely ...

- **Primary responsibilities** and **key priorities**
- **Common business challenges**
- **Key internal relationships** and **influences**
- **Key external influences**

... particularly as they relate to the **business issues** we have chosen to target.

We also need to be clear about how we **deliver valuable outcomes** to these key stakeholders.

Outcome-Centric Selling® | Key Roles Worksheet

Context:

Factor	Potential Ultimate Approver(s)	Potential Executive Sponsor
Typical titles		
Primary responsibilities		
Key priorities		
Common challenges		
Internal influences		
External influences		
How you deliver valuable outcomes		

When, how, and where to use this tool:

- As an essential input into our **account** and **opportunity planning**
- To help us research and build our **target account** and **prospect lists**
- As a high-level **initial qualifier -** do our current contacts have the potential to play a key role in the customer's decision and approval processes?

02.4 Key Trends and Trigger Events Worksheet

The final consideration when it comes to targeting are the key **trends and trigger events** that are likely to cause our potential customers to recognise that they **need to change -** and to **act sooner rather than later**.

There are three key categories of event:

- **Internal trigger events -** such as new senior appointments, new strategies, new initiatives, new investments, new product launches, and so on
- **External trigger events -** such as new legislation or regulation, new competitors, new technologies, one-off events and so on
- **Unavoidable trends -** these are typically long-term, profound changes in the business landscape whose impact can no longer be ignored or avoided

These trends and trigger events are the **catalysts** that cause prospective customers to recognise that they can no longer continue on their current path and that **urgent action is required**.

Outcome-Centric Selling® | Key Trends and Trigger Events Worksheet

Context:				
Factor	Example	Symptoms/Indicators	Who is affected?	How are they affected?
Internal Trigger Events				
External Trigger Events				
Unavoidable Trends				

When, how, and where to use this tool:

- To identify key internal and external events that are affecting our target and existing customers and that we need to **monitor** and **respond to**
- To prioritise where our **short-term pipeline building** activities should be focused
- As a high-level **initial qualifier -** is there a powerful trend or trigger event that is driving the opportunity?

03: Outcome-Centric Planning Tools

Our Outcome-Centric Selling Toolkit offers simple, effective easy-to-keep updated frameworks for **two key levels** of sales planning:

- An easily-sharable one-page overview of how you plan to **maximise the potential** of your **territory** that establishes the core principles and can be supported by whatever level of additional information is necessary
- An easily-sharable one-page overview of how you plan to **maximise the potential** of each **key account** that can be supported by whatever level of additional information is necessary

Unlike many traditional approaches to these types of planning, which are often done as a once a year exercise and rarely revised afterwards, both frameworks are intended to be **reviewed** and **updated** on a **regular basis** to reflect the inevitable changes in both the territory and account environment - as well as our own shifting priorities.

Key Planning Tools:

03.1 **Territory Planning**

03.2 **Account Planning**

03.1 Territory Planning

Our approach to territory planning is to summarise the most important elements **on a single page**, each of which can then be expanded as necessary.

- First, of course, we need to clearly **define the boundaries** of the territory - which might include geography, vertical market, product line, go-to-market-model, or any other relevant factors
- Then we need to accurately summarise - backed by evidence - our **strengths**, **weaknesses**, **opportunities**, and **threats** in the territory
- Based on this analysis, we then need to clearly articulate our **top three objectives**, **strategies** and **tactics**, and **pipeline building initiatives**
- We then need to identify our **top three existing** and **target accounts** in the territory, and our **most important measurable objectives** for each of them
- This needs to be supported by the work we have done to identify our **key target issues**, **ideal customer profile**, **key roles**, and **key trends and trigger events**

Outcome-Centric Selling® | Territory Plan Worksheet

Territory	Salesperson	Sales Year	Updated

Territory Definition	Current Situation

Key Strengths	Key Weaknesses	Key Opportunities	Key Threats
☐ Key Business Issues Worksheet	☐ Ideal Customer Profile Worksheet	☐ Key Roles Worksheet	☐ Trends and Trigger Events Worksheet

Top 3 Objectives for Territory	Top 3 Strategies and Tactics	Top 3 Pipeline Building Initiatives
1:	1:	1:
2:	2:	2:
3:	3:	3:

Top 3 Existing Accounts and Objectives		Top 3 Target Accounts and Objectives	
1:		1:	
2:		2:	
3:		3:	

How, when, and where to use this tool:

- At the **start** of every **new sales year**, to align everyone around our focus and priorities
- Whenever **circumstances change**
- To help plan and prioritise our **territory** and **pipeline development activities**

03.2 Account Planning

Our approach to account planning is - once again - to **summarise** the most important elements on a **single page**, each of which can then be expanded as necessary.

- In addition to providing a **brief account overview**, the worksheet explores the alignment against the demographic, structural and cultural/behavioural aspects of our **ideal customer profile**
- We then go on to explore our **importance** to **them**, their **importance** to **us**, and our **relationship** with their **executive leadership**
- We then capture the account's **top three business priorities** and how we contribute to them
- We then **contrast** our **presence** in the account against our key competitors, as well as identifying our **opportunities/potential** and our **threats/risks**
- In the light of the above, we then summarise our **SMART objectives** for the account, together with our **key strategies and tactics**

This can then be supported by **further details** including a stakeholder map, active opportunity plans, revenue analysis/ projections and a tactical timetable.

Outcome-Centric Selling® | Account Plan Summary Worksheet

Account:	Account Overview:	
Owner:		
Last Updated:		
Demographic Fit vs ICP	Structural Fit vs ICP	Cultural/Behavioral Fit vs ICP
Our current importance to them [select one]	Their current importance to us [select one]	Our current relationship with their executive leadership
☐ LEVEL 0: We are not currently a supplier to them ☐ LEVEL 1: We are one of many suppliers or options in our space ☐ LEVEL 2: We are one of a few preferred suppliers in our space ☐ LEVEL 3: We are their primary or exclusive supplier in our space ☐ LEVEL 4: We are their long-term strategic partner in our space	☐ LEVEL 0: They are not a current customer, but we are targeting them ☐ LEVEL 1: They are one of many similar existing customers ☐ LEVEL 2: They are one of our more significant customers ☐ LEVEL 3: They are one of a handful of our most strategic accounts ☐ LEVEL 4: They are a critical must-retain strategic account	☐ LEVEL 0: We have no relationship with their executive leadership ☐ LEVEL 1: We have occasional contact with their exec leadership ☐ LEVEL 2: We have regular conversations with exec leadership ☐ LEVEL 3: We have easy and frequent access to their execs ☐ LEVEL 4: Their exec leadership relies on us as trusted advisers
Evidence for your rating/future potential/action required:	Evidence for your rating/future potential/action required:	Evidence for your rating/future potential/action required:

Their Top 3 Priorities and Initiatives	Our Potential Contribution
1:	
2:	
3:	

Our Presence	Competitive Presence	Opportunities/Potential	Threats/Risks

What are our S-M-A-R-T Objectives for this Account?	What are our Key Strategies and Tactics?
Current Year: 3-5 Years:	

Key Supporting Documents	☐ Stakeholder Map	☐ Active Opportunity Plans	☐ Revenue Analysis/Projection	☐ Tactical Timetable

When, how, and where to use this tool:

- When taking over responsibility for a **new account**
- At the **start of each new sales year**, and **reviewed** on at least a **quarterly** basis thereafter
- Whenever **anything significant changes**
- To help **plan** and **prioritise** our **account development** activities

04: Outcome-Centric Opportunity Management Tools

Our Outcome-Centric Selling Toolkit includes a number of carefully-crafted **building blocks** that are specifically designed to help salespeople assess and manage their significant sales opportunities:

- An **opportunity review checklist** designed to focus attention on the key things salespeople need to know and do in order to give themselves the best possible chance of winning the opportunity
- A continuously updatable **opportunity qualification worksheet** based on the **MEDDPICC++ framework** - an evolved version of MEDDIC
- A continuously updatable **stakeholder management worksheet** designed to help salespeople identify, engage, and assess every key player in the decision and approval process
- A **mutual success plan framework** designed to help salespeople and key customer stakeholders to collaborate to ensure that the prospect's desired outcomes are clearly understood and successfully achieved

Key Opportunity Management Tools

04.1 Opportunity Review Checklist

Our **opportunity review checklist** seeks to capture the current status of some of the most important factors that have been proven to have a significant impact on the outcome of every sales opportunity.

It highlights what the salesperson **does and doesn't know**, and what they **have and haven't done**, and includes:

- The **evidence** behind the **close date**
- The nature and status of the customer's **buying decision journey**
- The current status of **qualification** and **stakeholder engagement**
- The current status of the **customer-specific value proposition**
- The salesperson's **strategy** for winning the opportunity
- Potential **risks** and **mitigations**
- Any other **key information**
- Key **next steps**

Outcome-Centric Selling® | Opportunity Review Checklist

Customer:		**Opportunity**:
Value:	**Close Date**:	They **MUST** commit by this date ☐ They **WANT** to commit by this date ☐ We **HOPE** they will commit by this date ☐
Evidence for **close date**:		
What is the current **phase** of their **buying decision journey?**: Concerned ☐ Exploring ☐ Defining ☐ Selecting ☐ Verifying ☐ Confirming ☐		
Evidence for current phase of their journey:		
What is **their primary business issue?**		
Why do they need to **act** (and what makes this **urgent**)?		
What is the **relative importance** of this project? It's the organization's **most urgent priority** ☐ It's **one** of their **top priorities** ☐ It's **one of many** potential projects ☐		
What is the **evidence** for the above assessment?		
Is this a **discretionary** ☐ or an **inevitable** ☐ **purchase**?		Are they on a **familiar** ☐ or an **unfamiliar** ☐ **buying decision journey?**
What other **options** are they considering?		
Is the **IMPACCT qualification workbook** up to date? ☐		Is the **stakeholder assessment workbook** up to date? ☐
What **steps** are you taking to **fill in any gaps** in the above workbooks?		
How complete is their **customer-specific value proposition**? Not yet started ☐ Somewhat complete ☐ Mostly complete ☐ Finished ☐ Verified with customer ☐		
What **steps** are you taking to **complete and verify** their value proposition?		
Summarise your **strategy** for winning the opportunity:		
What was the most recent **meaningful advance** (and when)?		
What **next meaningful advance** are you aiming for (and when)?		
How do you **plan** to achieve this next advance?		
What are the potential **risks**, and what are you doing to **mitigate** them?		
Do you have any other **observations**, **concerns**, etc., relating to this opportunity?		

When, how, and where to use this tool:

- As soon as an opportunity is **first registered**, to ensure we have a deep understanding of the circumstances
- To help us recognise what we **still need to find out** or **confirm**, and what we **still need to do**
- Whenever the customer's **circumstances change**
- **Before advancing** the opportunity to the next stage

04.2 MEDDPICC++ Opportunity Qualification Worksheet

Our MEDDPICC++ opportunity qualification framework is based on an extended and updated version of MEDDIC - today's most widely adopted qualification framework for complex B2B sales.

MEDDPICC++ addresses **10 key qualification factors**:

- **Key Metrics**
- **Economic Buyer**
- **Decision Criteria**
- **Decision Process**
- **Paper Process**
- **Identify Pain**
- **Champion(s)**
- **Competition**

\+ ***Ideal Customer Profile Fit*** [NEW]

\+ ***Close Date Confidence*** [NEW]

Salespeople are expected to **justify** their assessment of each factor and provide the **evidence** to support it.

Outcome-Centric Selling® | Opportunity Qualification Worksheet

Last Updated	Organisation				Opportunity	Score
12-Mar-25						0
Factor			**Status**	**Definition**	**Justification/Evidence**	
ICP FIT		How closely does the organisation fit our Ideal Customer Profile for the relevant solution offering	**Unknown**	You do not yet know enough to confidently qualify this factor		0
M	**Key Metrics**	What are the specific measurable outcomes your customer needs the project to deliver?	**Unknown**	You do not yet know enough to confidently qualify this factor		0
E	**Economic Buyer**	Who is the person or group with final decision authority over whether and how the project goes ahead?	**Unknown**	You do not yet know enough to confidently qualify this factor		0
D^C	**Decision Criteria**	What are the criteria that the customer will use to decide between their potential solution options?	**Unknown**	You do not yet know enough to confidently qualify this factor		0
D^P	**Decision Process**	What is the process the customer will follow when deciding which option to choose?	**Unknown**	You do not yet know enough to confidently qualify this factor		0
P	**Paper Process**	What is the process the customer will follow when deciding whether or not to go ahead with the project?	**Unknown**	You do not yet know enough to confidently qualify this factor		0
I	**Identify Pain**	Is the customer's current or anticipated pain intense enough to ensure that they will take urgent action?	**Unknown**	You do not yet know enough to confidently qualify this factor		0
C^H	**Champion**	Do you have a clear and enthusiastic champion, and are they powerful enough to persuade other stakeholders?	**Unknown**	You do not yet know enough to confidently qualify this factor		0
C^O	**Competition**	What are their credible alternative solution options, and how do you compare against them?	**Unknown**	You do not yet know enough to confidently qualify this factor		0
	Close Date Confidence	How has the close date been established, and what is your confidence in achieving it?	**Unknown**	You do not yet know enough to confidently qualify this factor		0

When, how, and where to use this tool:

- Review all factors soon as a potential opportunity requires **initial qualification**
- Reassess all factors whenever our or the customer's **circumstances change**
- Reassess all factors **before advancing** any opportunity to the next stage

04.3 Stakeholder Management Worksheet

The stakeholder management worksheet is designed to help salespeople **identify**, **engage**, and **assess every key player** in their prospective customer's **decision and approval process**.

In addition to each stakeholder's name and title, the worksheet guides salespeople in assessing:

- Their **primary role** in the decision process
- Their **primary perspective -** and how to best communicate with them
- Their **influence** over the decision
- Their **attitude** towards **us** as a vendor
- Their **attitude** towards the **project** as a whole
- How easy it is to **access** them
- The single most important thing they need to **fix**, **avoid**, or **achieve**
- The single most important way in which we **create value for them**

Salespeople are expected to rely on **evidence**, and not hope or assumption, when assessing each stakeholder.

Outcome-Centric Selling® | Stakeholder Management Framework

Organisation				Situation				
Name	**Title**	**Primary ROLE**	**Primary PERSPECTIVE**	**INFLUENCE on Decision**	**ATTITUDE Towards Us**	**Ease of ACCESS**	**Single most important thing they need to Fix, Avoid or Achieve**	**Single most important way in which you create value for them**
		INITIAL CONTACT	UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	NOT YET ATTEMPTED		
		UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	NOT YET ATTEMPTED		
		UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	NOT YET ATTEMPTED		
		UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	NOT YET ATTEMPTED		
		UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	NOT YET ATTEMPTED		
		UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	NOT YET ATTEMPTED		
		UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	NOT YET ATTEMPTED		
		UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	NOT YET ATTEMPTED		
		UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	NOT YET ATTEMPTED		
		UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	NOT YET ATTEMPTED		
		UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	NOT YET ATTEMPTED		
		UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	NOT YET ATTEMPTED		

When, how, and where to use this tool:

- Seek to identify and start to assess all the **key stakeholders** soon as a potential opportunity requires **initial qualification**
- Continue to **reassess** and better understand the already-identified stakeholders and **seek out additional stakeholders** throughout the lifecycle of the sale

04.4 Mutual Success Plan Framework

Our **mutual success plan framework** is designed to help salespeople and key customer stakeholders to collaborate to ensure that the prospect's desired outcomes are clearly understood and successfully achieved.

In addition to capturing the customer's **primary desired outcome**(s) and **success metrics**, the mutual success plan:

- Identifies the **key members** of both organisation's **outcome realisation teams**
- Tracks the **current stage** of the **customer's decision journey**
- Identifies and monitors the **mutually agreed steps** towards achieving the desired outcomes, **who** is responsible for them, and **when** they need to be accomplished

Note: the example on the right is a simple shared spreadsheet-based approach, but a growing range of ***on-line mutual success plan platforms*** *are now available -* ***ask us for recommendations****.*

MUTUAL SUCCESS PLAN BETWEEN [COMPANY] AND [CUSTOMER]

CUSTOMER'S PRIMARY DESIRED OUTCOME(s)	CUSTOMER'S PRIMARY SUCCESS METRIC(s)	Achieve by

[COMPANY] OUTCOME REALIZATION TEAM		CUSTOMER OUTCOME REALIZATION TEAM	
Role	Name(s)	Role	Name(s)
Sales Lead		Executive sponsor	
Executive Sponsor		Persona #1	
SE		Persona #2	
Solution Consultant		Persona #3	
Customer Success		Persona #4	
Value Engineering		Persona #5	

Key Stages, Milestones and Measures	Complete by	Visibility	Status	Owners	Notes/comments
PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION	dd-mmm-yy	MIXED	COMPLETED		
Business issue identified and agreed	dd-mmm-yy	SHARED	COMPLETED		
Potential sponsor engaged	dd-mmm-yy	SHARED	COMPLETED		
Agree to advance to discovery/qualification	dd-mmm-yy	SHARED	COMPLETED		
DISCOVERY/QUALIFICATION	dd-mmm-yy	MIXED	DELAYED		
Initial discovery session	dd-mmm-yy	INTERNAL	COMPLETED		
Champion/coach identified and engaged	dd-mmm-yy	SHARED	COMPLETED		
Agree to advance to validation	dd-mmm-yy	SHARED	DELAYED		
VALIDATION	dd-mmm-yy	MIXED	STARTED		
Link established between issues, outcomes and proposed solution	dd-mmm-yy	SHARED	STARTED		
Value story verified	dd-mmm-yy	SHARED	STARTED		
Mutual success plan updated	dd-mmm-yy	SHARED	STARTED		
Agree to move to securing/confirming	dd-mmm-yy	SHARED	?		
SECURING/CONFIRMING	dd-mmm-yy	MIXED	?		
Post-sales delivery plan established	dd-mmm-yy	SHARED	?		
Deal score updated	dd-mmm-yy	INTERNAL	?		
Agree to move to close	dd-mmm-yy	SHARED	?		
CLOSE	dd-mmm-yy	MIXED	?		
Post-sales delivery plan confirmed	dd-mmm-yy	SHARED	?		
Win/loss review completed	dd-mmm-yy	INTERNAL	?		
Mutual success plan updated	dd-mmm-yy	SHARED	?		
Move to adopt phase	dd-mmm-yy	SHARED	?		
ADOPT	dd-mmm-yy	SHARED	?		
Usage metrics monitored and reviewed	dd-mmm-yy	SHARED	?		
Mutual success plan updated	dd-mmm-yy	SHARED	?		
Move to outcome realization phase	dd-mmm-yy	SHARED	?		
OUTCOME REALIZATION	dd-mmm-yy	MIXED	?		
Initial desired outcomes confirmed as achieved	dd-mmm-yy	SHARED	?		
New opportunities added to pipeline	dd-mmm-yy	INTERNAL	?		
Proceed to problem identification of new opportunity	dd-mmm-yy	SHARED	?		

When, how, and where to use this tool:

- **At the start** of the sales process/buying decision journey, to ensure **alignment around outcomes**
- **Throughout** the sales process/buying decision journey, to ensure that we **remain on track** to achieve the agreed outcomes

05: Conversation Management Tools

Our Outcome-Centric Selling toolkit provides a range of support to help salespeople to **plan**, **prepare** and successfully **manage** value-creating customer conversations - and to leverage these conversations to progressively craft **compelling value propositions** that are **specific to each customer**'s circumstances.

The building blocks include:

- A **customer-specific value proposition framework** that will ultimately provide the basis for the **executive summary** of your **proposal**
- A **conversation planning workbook** designed to create meaningful value for every participant
- A **SPINCycle questioning framework** designed to ensure that every question we ask is valuable
- A **frequently asked questions workbook** designed to help salespeople prepare to answer the customer's common predictable questions
- A **shareable anecdote framework** designed to help create a pool of **compelling, relevant stories**

Key Conversation Management Tools

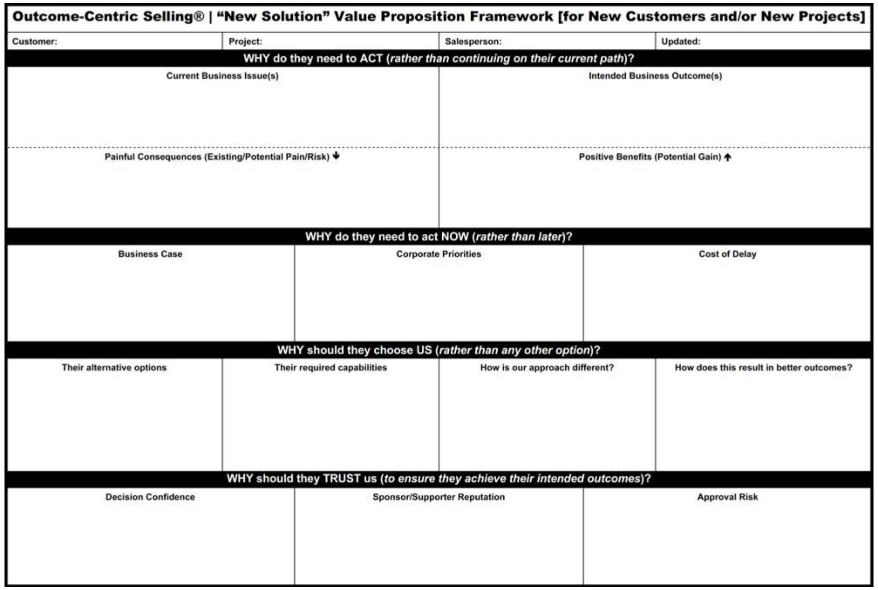
05.1 Customer-Specific Value Proposition Framework

When organisations refer to their “value proposition”, this typically takes the form of a **generic message** aimed at a **wide target market**. Whilst these can be useful in initiating an **early-stage conversation** with a prospective customer, their generic nature makes them **progressively less useful** as the sale evolves.

If we are to **win the customer’s business** and **deliver the outcomes** they are looking for, we need to craft **specific responses** to the **4 key questions** every customer **asks themselves**:

- **Why** do we need to **change**, *rather than continuing on our current path*?
- **Why** do we need to act **now**, *rather than later*?
- **Why** should they choose **us,** *rather than any other option*?
- **Why** should they **trust** us **-** *to ensure that their desired outcomes are achieved*?

For as long as our customer is **less-than-completely satisfied** with **any** of the answers, they are likely to “**do nothing**” and **stick with the status quo**.



Outcome-Centric Selling® | “New Solution” Value Proposition Framework [for New Customers and/or New Projects]

Customer: | Project: | Salesperson: | Updated:

WHY do they need to ACT (*rather than continuing on their current path*)?

Current Business Issue(s) | Intended Business Outcome(s)

Painful Consequences (Existing/Potential Pain/Risk) | Positive Benefits (Potential Gain)

WHY do they need to act NOW (*rather than later*)?

Business Case | Corporate Priorities | Cost of Delay

WHY should they choose US (*rather than any other option*)?

Their alternative options | Their required capabilities | How is our approach different? | How does this result in better outcomes?

WHY should they TRUST us (*to ensure they achieve their intended outcomes*)?

Decision Confidence | Sponsor/Supporter Reputation | Approval Risk

When, how, and where to use this tool:

- **Early on** in the sales process/buying decision journey, to establish the **current strength** of each of the answers
- **Progressively** throughout the sales process, to develop and test the strength of the answers
- As the foundation for the **executive summary** of our **formal proposal**

05.2 Value-Creating Conversation Workbook

If a conversation is worth having, then it is worth **preparing** and **planning** for **-** and it will be most productive for all participants if it follows an **appropriate framework** (whilst allowing all points of view to be heard).

The **essential building blocks** of a value-creating conversation include:

Before the conversation

- **Preparing the ground**

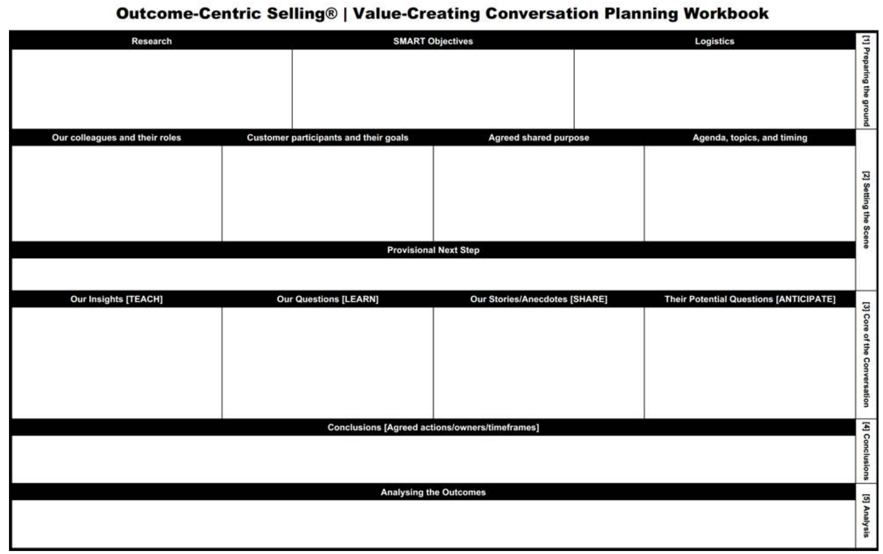
During the conversation

- **Setting the scene**
- **The core of the conversation**
- **Agreeing the conclusions**

After the conversation

- **Following up/analysing the outcomes**

The **value-creating conversation workbook** offers a **structured** yet **flexible framework** for planning, preparing, and managing productive customer conversations that leaves every participant thinking "**that was a good use of my time**".



When, how, and where to use this tool:

- As a **visual checklist** and **reminder** prior to **every** customer conversation
- As a **written plan** prior to **particularly significant conversations**, particularly where **colleagues** are expected to participate, and you need everybody to be "**on the same page**"
- As a **guide** to running a productive meeting or conversation

05.3 SPINCycle Questioning Framework

No prospective customer enjoys being asked a series of often **irrelevant-to-them** “**discovery**” questions that merely demonstrate that the salesperson has **failed** to **respect the prospect** or **prepare** properly for the conversation.

The **SPINCycle questioning framework** helps to ensure that the customer has **space to speak**, interwoven with intelligently chosen insights, anecdotes, and a **thoughtful blend** of **relevant value-creating questions**:

- Minimising the number of **situational** questions by ensuring salespeople do their research in advance
- Uncovering the **problems** the customer is suffering from, with a focus on **business issues** and not just functional needs
- Exploring the **impact** and **implications** of the issues the customer has acknowledged
- Helping the customer to recognise for themselves the **need and value** of addressing the issue
- Asking **commitment** questions that help to confirm the **agreed next steps**

Outcome-Centric Selling® | SPIN+Cycle Question Workbook

Use this workbook to plan and prepare the most relevant **SPIN+Cycle Situational**, **Problem**, **Implication**, **Need-Value** and **Commitment** questions for each of your most common customer situations and scenarios - such as targeted issues, and specific product or service offerings

Situation/ Scenario	
Potential Situational Questions to Ask	
Potential Problem Questions to Ask	
Potential Implication Questions to Ask	
Potential Need-Value Questions to Ask	
Potential Commitment Questions to Ask	

When, how, and where to use this tool:

- As a **collective exercise** across sales and marketing to come up with the most appropriate and powerful questions to ask in common sales situations/scenarios
- To come up with an appropriate and relevant **balance of questions** to ask when preparing for a given customer conversation
- To **avoid** asking questions the customer is likely to regard as irrelevant, disrespectful, or patronising

05.4 Frequently Asked Questions Workbook

The most experienced salespeople have usually worked out **how to best answer** their customer's common or predictable **potentially-tricky questions** through a combination of insight, empathy, trial-and-error, and personal experience.

Unfortunately, their less-effective and less-experienced colleagues often **struggle to respond** to these same questions and can find that their progress ends up stalling as a result.

That's where a collectively-sourced frequently-asked questions workbook can prove invaluable - it reflects the **accumulated wisdom** of the entire sales organisation, and not just each salesperson's individual experiences.

This is one of a number of examples - the SPINCycle questioning framework is another obvious one - where salespeople can **learn from each other**.

The resulting collection of frequently asked questions can be hosted on the organisations' **sales enablement system** or **shared file repository**.

Outcome-Centric Selling® | Frequently Asked Questions Workbook

Use this workbook to anticipate your prospective customers' frequently-asked yet potentially tough-to-answer questions and prepare appropriate responses

Context:

Predictable, potentially tough to answer questions	Who is likely to ask?	How should we respond?

When, how, and where to use this tool:

- As a **collective exercise** across sales and marketing to come up with the most effective answers to our customers' most predictable questions
- To **prepare** for an upcoming conversation by reviewing the potential best answers to the prospective customer's most likely questions

05.5 Shareable Anecdote Framework

It’s often observed that many **top salespeople** are also amongst the **most effective storytellers**.

Rather than “pitching”, they **build rapport** and **gain the confidence** of their prospects by **sharing relevant anecdotes** that **reflect the experiences** of other **similar customers**.

Fortunately, this is a **skill that can be learned**, and when salespeople share their favourite anecdotes with their colleagues the whole organisation benefits.

The key elements on an **effective anecdote** include:

- A **customer situation** and **experience** that the listener can relate to
- A **recognisable complication** that had been preventing that customer from achieving their desired outcomes
- A **turning point** that took advantage of our unique approach and perspective
- A **positive resolution** and **outcome**, plus an **unanticipated** or **unexpected benefit**

Outcome-Centric Selling® | Anecdote Framework

Use this framework to capture and share the key elements of your customer anecdote

Customer	
Industry	
Offering	
Use Case	
Situation	
Complication	
Turning Point	
Resolution / Outcome	
Unexpected Benefit	
Customer Testimony/Quote or Reaction	

When, how, and where to use this tool:

- As a **collective exercise** across sales and marketing to capture and share the most powerful customer stories and anecdotes
- To **prepare** for an upcoming conversation by familiarising ourselves with the **anecdotes** that could **most effectively support** the **messages** we are trying to convey

06: Sales Process Design Tools

When many sales organisations talk about their "sales process", they are typically referring to a series of **linear, non-reversible steps** each salesperson is expected to follow in order to convert a prospect into an order - often including stages based on a specific sales activity such as "qualifying".

But in the real world, the customer's actual buying decision journey is **far more complicated**. They are more likely to think in terms of (for example) "selecting" or "verifying". More importantly, their journey is **rarely linear -** from any point, they can move **forwards**, **backwards**, go **around in circles** or **abandon the journey** altogether.

And their **buying journey** also looks very different depending on whether they ultimately actually buy anything is **inevitable** or **discretionary**, and whether they are embarked on what they see as a **familiar** or an **unfamiliar** decision process.

Rather than a single **rigid sales process**, sales organisations need a **flexible framework** to accommodate all these variations.

Key Sales Process Design Tools

06.1 Customer Decision Journey Checklist

Traditionally, most sales organisations have defined their “sales process” in terms of a **linear one-directional sequence** of stages and/or actions that salespeople are expected to follow when managing a sales opportunity.

Recently, more enlightened sales organisations have decided to reflect the **customer’s buying decision journey** in their approach to opportunity and pipeline management.

This involves defining pipeline stages in terms of the **key phases** in the **buying journey**, recognising that the process can go backwards as well as forwards, and seeking to anticipate and observe:

- What the prospective customer is likely to be **thinking** and **doing** during each phase
- What the salesperson needs to **know and do** during each phase
- Typical **customer indicators/verifiers**
- **Phase-relevant qualifiers**
- **Progress milestones** and **exit criteria**

Outcome-Centric Selling® | Customer Decision Journey Checklist

Key phases in the customer’s buying decision journey (up to the point of commitment to action)								
Customer Phase	**Status Quo**	**Concerned**	**Exploring**	**Defining**	**Selecting**	**Verifying**	**Confirming**
What is our prospective customer likely to be thinking and doing?	They appear to be unconcerned about any of the issues we could help them address	They have become aware of an issue as a result of an internal or external trend or trigger	They are actively investigating the issue and researching credible potential solution options	They are assembling their decision team and defining their decision criteria and process	Evaluating short-listed options and seeking consensus regarding a single preferred option	They are eliminating any remaining reservations and negotiating best possible terms	The project sponsor is submitting internal business case for final internal approval
What are the key things we need to be doing?	Systematically raising awareness of the issues we are targeting and their implications	Identifying and engaging concerned prospects as early as possible in their buying decision journey	Determining whether the opportunity is real, winnable, and worth winning	Influencing their desired outcomes and decision criteria, and facilitating their decision process	Convincing the decision team that our approach will deliver their best possible outcomes	Identifying and dealing with any remaining concerns and securing a mutually acceptable deal	Ensuring the project and our proposed approach has the highest possible chance of approval
Typical customer indicators/verifiers		– They show initial signs of interest	– Customer engages in ongoing conversation – Customer confirms issue(s)	– Customer shares more detailed information – Customer reveals decision process	– Customer issues RFP (if appropriate/necessary) – Customer evaluates short-listed options	– Customer is actively negotiating – Customer requests references/proof points	– Approval process, criteria and timetable shared – Internal business case finalised and submitted
Qualifiers (*partial list*)	ICP – Organization matches Ideal Customer Profile	ISSUES/IMPLICATIONS – Does prospect have an issue we can address? – Are the implications potentially significant? TIMING/URGENCY – Where did our “close date” come from?	MONEY/METRICS – Do the metrics justify action? – Are the economics clear favourable? PROCESS/CRITERA – Is their decision process clear? – Are their decision criteria clear? AUTHORITY/INFLUENCE – Who are the decision-makers/approvers? *Requalify previous factors*	CHAMPION(S) – Who is championing the **project**? – Who are **our** champions? COMPETITION – What are their other options? – What other projects are competing for approval? TIMING/URGENCY – What’s driving their urgency (if anything)? *Requalify previous factors*	PROCESS/CRITERIA – Is their decision process favourable? – Are their decision criteria favourable? AUTHORITY/INFLUENCE – What is our relationship with key stakeholders? CHAMPION(S) – Are we being actively championed? COMPETITION – Do we have a clear advantage? *Requalify previous factors*	PROCESS/CRITERIA – What is their approval process? AUTHORITY/INFLUENCE – What is our relationship with key approvers? CHAMPION – Do our champions have power over legal/procurement? COMPETITION – Are all competitive vendors eliminated? *Requalify previous factors*	PROCESS/CRITERIA – When is the project due to be finally approved? COMPETITION – Which other projects are we competing against, and where do we stand? TIMING/URGENCY – Why do they need to approve and implement urgently? *Requalify previous factors*
Key things we need to know or do (*partial list*)	– Issue-based outreach to key roles in organizations that match our ICP	– Initiate a conversation – Start to qualify – *Is this an inevitable or discretionary purchase?* – *Familiar or unfamiliar decision process?*	– Explore their situation – Continue to qualify – Identify key stakeholders – *What triggered their search for a solution?* – *Is our initial contact a potential champion?*	– Continue to qualify – Engage key stakeholders – *How can we create or amplify their FOMO?* – *How have they tried to address issue before?* – *What are their desired outcomes (organisational and personal)?*	– Continue to qualify – Get shortlisted – Focus on outcomes – Differentiate our approach – Establish urgency – *Who has REALLY got the power?*	– Continue to qualify – Identify and eliminate remaining risk or doubt – *What are their remaining concerns?* – *How can we establish trust/eliminate FOMU?*	– Continue to qualify – Ensure they trust us to deliver – *What stands in the way of final approval?*
Progress Milestone/Exit Criteria	– We detect evidence of a trigger event	– Customer agrees to actively engage	– Customer passes initial qualification and agrees to advance to next phase with us	– Customer establishes decision criteria and process and agrees to advance with us	– Customer informs us we are their preferred option and agrees to advance with us	– Customer agrees all relevant terms and conditions and submits project for final approval	– Customer places a bookable order with us

When, how, and where to use this tool:

- As a catalyst for developing a **customer-journey-centric sales process** that includes customer-activity-based milestones
- To help salespeople to anticipate what their prospect’s priorities are likely to be during **each phase** of their buying decision journey

06.2 Buying Behaviour Guidelines

Each customer's buying decision journey looks very different depending on whether the decision to buy something is **inevitable** or **discretionary**, and whether they are embarked on what they see as a **familiar** or an **unfamiliar** decision process.

When a purchase is **inevitable**, then the salesperson can focus on promoting the **advantages of their approach** over all other options **-** but when the purchase is discretionary (i.e., it may never happen), then the salesperson must **also sell the need for change**.

When the customer regards their decision process as being **very familiar**, they are likely to think that they do not need to engage vendors directly until late in the process, but when they recognise that they are entering **unfamiliar territory**, they are more likely to be open to seeking advice earlier in the process.

These two dimensions have a huge impact on how the customer **manages their buying decision journey**, and on how salespeople should **seek to engage with them**.

Outcome-Centric Selling® Checklist | Matching our Sales Strategies and Tactics to our Prospect's Buying Behaviour

Discretionary Purchase + Familiar Decision Process: "Marching into the Unknown" **Key indicators:** ❑ At the end of the exercise, customer **may** or **may not commit** to **take action, AND** ❑ They have indicated that they believe their **buying decision process** will be a **familiar** one **Situation:** Our prospect may end up **doing nothing** - so (*assuming they are otherwise well-qualified*) we must **help them to decide** to **do something**, to **act now**, and to **choose us**. **Key things we need to know and do:** ❑ **Confirm** that this is in fact a **discretionary** purchase combined with a **familiar** buying process ❑ Understand their current **buying decision process and criteria** and if necessary suggest some refinements and improvements ❑ Help them to answer the key questions associated with this type of buying decision journey: ☐ **Why** do they need to **act**, (*rather than continuing on their current path*)? ☐ **Why** should they choose **us**, (*rather than any other option*)?, and ☐ **Why** should they **trust** us (*to ensure that they achieve their intended outcomes*)? ❑ Convince them that they **need to act** before trying to persuade them to choose and trust us ❑ Create **FOMO**[1] by exploring their **issue(s)** and the associated **implications** (including the costs and consequences of **inaction**) and trying to persuade them of the **need to act**, and the **need for urgency** ❑ Eliminate **FOMU**[2] and **establish trust** by demonstrating how our approach and capabilities will ensure that they achieve the **best possible outcomes**	**Discretionary Purchase + Unfamiliar Decision Process:** "Running in the Fog" **Key indicators:** ❑ At the end of the exercise, customer **may** or **may not commit** to **take action, AND** ❑ They have acknowledged that their **buying decision process** will be a **unfamiliar** one **Situation:** Every aspect of our prospect's buying decision journey is open to influence: they are **unsure how to decide what to do** and may end up **doing nothing** - so (*assuming they are otherwise well-qualified*) we must **help them to decide what to do**, to **do something**, to **act now**, and to **choose us**. **Key things we need to know and do:** ❑ Establish our credibility as a trusted adviser by coaching them on the key things they need to **know** and **do** to make the **best possible decision for them** (*even if that is a decision to do nothing*) ❑ Help them to establish their **decision group** and define their **buying decision process and criteria** ❑ Help them to answer the key questions associated with this type of buying decision journey: ☐ **Why** do they need to **act**, (*rather than continuing on their current path*)? ☐ **Why** do they need to act **now**, (*rather than later*)? ☐ **Why** should they choose **us**, (*rather than any other option*)?, and ☐ **Why** should they **trust** us (*to ensure that they achieve their intended outcomes*)? ❑ Be prepared to politely **disqualify** and **disengage** if we cannot be sure we can help or if we cannot offer the best option ❑ Create **FOMO**[1] by exploring their **issue(s)** and the associated **implications** (including the costs and consequences of **inaction**) and trying to persuade them of the **need to act**, and the **need for urgency** ❑ Eliminate **FOMU**[2] and **establish trust** by demonstrating how our approach and capabilities will ensure that they make the **best possible decision** achieve the **best possible outcomes**
Inevitable Purchase + Familiar Decision Process: "Painting by Numbers" **Key indicators:** ❑ The customer has confirmed that they **must commit to action** no later a **specified date, AND** ❑ They have indicated that they believe their **buying decision process** will be a **familiar** one **Situation:** Our prospect is **bound to do something** - so (*assuming they are well-qualified*) we must **help them to decide** to **act now** (rather than later), and to **choose us** (*rather than any other option*). **Key things we need to know and do:** ❑ **Confirm** that this is in fact an **inevitable** purchase combined with a **familiar** buying process ❑ Understand their current **buying decision process and criteria** ❑ Help them to answer the key questions associated with this type of buying decision journey: ☐ **Why** do they need to act **now**, (*rather than later*)? ☐ **Why** should they choose **us**, (*rather than any other option*)?, and ☐ **Why** should they **trust** us (*to ensure that they achieve their intended outcomes*)? ❑ Establish the **need for urgent action** before trying to persuade them to choose and trust us ❑ Amplify **FOMO**[1] by exploring their **issue(s)** and the associated **implications** (including the costs and consequences of **delay**) and seeking to convince them to **act sooner rather than later** ❑ Eliminate **FOMU**[2] and **establish trust** by demonstrating how our approach and capabilities will ensure that they achieve the **best possible outcomes**	**Inevitable Purchase + Unfamiliar Decision Process:** "Orienteering" **Key indicators:** ❑ The customer has confirmed that they **must commit to action** no later a **specified date, AND** ❑ They have acknowledged that their **buying decision process** will be a **unfamiliar** one **Situation:** The customer is **bound to do something -** but they are not completely sure **how to buy, who to buy from,** and **when to act** - As well as promoting why us, we need to address why now and work with our customer to become a trusted adviser and to influence their requirements, buying criteria and decision process... **Key things we need to know and do:** ❑ Establish our credibility as a trusted adviser by coaching them on the key things they need to **know** and **do** to successfully manage their buying decision process ❑ Help them to establish their **decision group** and define their **buying decision process and criteria** ❑ Help them to answer the key questions associated with this type of buying decision journey: ☐ **Why** do they need to act **now**, (*rather than later*)? ☐ **Why** should they choose **us**, (*rather than any other option*)?, and ☐ **Why** should they **trust** us (*to ensure that they achieve their intended outcomes*)? ❑ Amplify **FOMO**[1] by exploring their **issue(s)** and the associated **implications** (including the costs and consequences of **delay**) and seeking to convince them to **act sooner rather than later** ☐ Eliminate **FOMU**[2] and **establish trust** by demonstrating how our approach and capabilities will ensure that they make the **best possible decision** and achieve the **best possible outcomes**

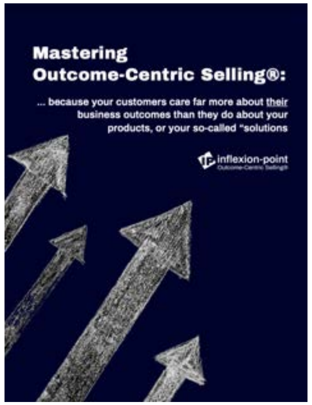
[1]: **FOMO** = The **Fear of Missing Out** (i.e., the bad things that could happen if they fail to take action) | [2]: **FOMU** = The **Fear of Messing Up** (i.e., the bad things that could happen as a result of a poor buying decision)

When, how, and where to use this tool:

- To help salespeople to **diagnose** the specific nature of each customer's buying decision journey
- To guide salespeople in how they need to **manage the different types** of buying decision journey

07: eBooks/Guides

Mastering Outcome-Centric Selling

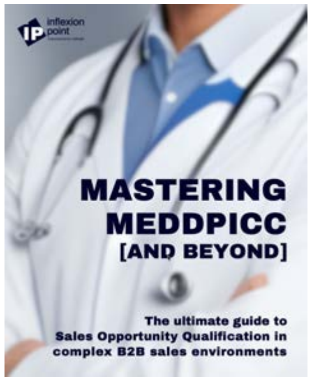


Let's face it - B2B buying journeys are inevitably complicated. Your customer's decision process is rarely straightforward or linear. Multiple stakeholders are typically involved, often with widely different perspectives and priorities. Without strong internal project sponsorship, consensus is unlikely and without consensus, action is unlikely.

Our fully updated guide to Outcome-Centric Selling sets out a thoroughly modern approach to mastering these challenges - one that focuses on facilitating your customer's buying decision journey and not just on driving a "sales process".

Get your copy here: **https://www.inflexion-point.com/mastering-ocs**

Mastering MEDDPICC [And Beyond]



This guide introduces our modernised and extended version of MEDDIC - **MEDDPICC++**

We've revised and updated the definitions of the 8 existing MEDDPICC qualification factors to reflect today's rapidly-evolving B2B buying and selling environments, as well as adding 2 new ones that have a major impact on your ability to accurately assess and qualify opportunities:

- **Ideal Customer Profile Fit**
- **Close Date Confidence**

Get your copy here: **https://www.inflexion-point.com/mastering-meddpicc**

08: In Conclusion

We hope that this guide has helped you to better understand and appreciate the **power** and **potential** of both the outcome-centric selling approach and its supporting sales toolkit.

If you are an **existing** individual or corporate customer of Inflexion-Point, you are entitled to have direct access to the relevant sales tools in a customisable format that allows you to tailor each tool to your organisation's specific circumstances and requirements.

If you are a **potential** individual or corporate customer, we would be pleased to explain your options for licensing the sales toolkit and the associated training programmes.

To find out more, please email us at info@inflexion-point.com or book a zoom call here: **https://www.inflexion-point.com/book-a-zoom-call** - I look forward to our conversation.

Bob Apollo | Chief Outcomes Officer

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