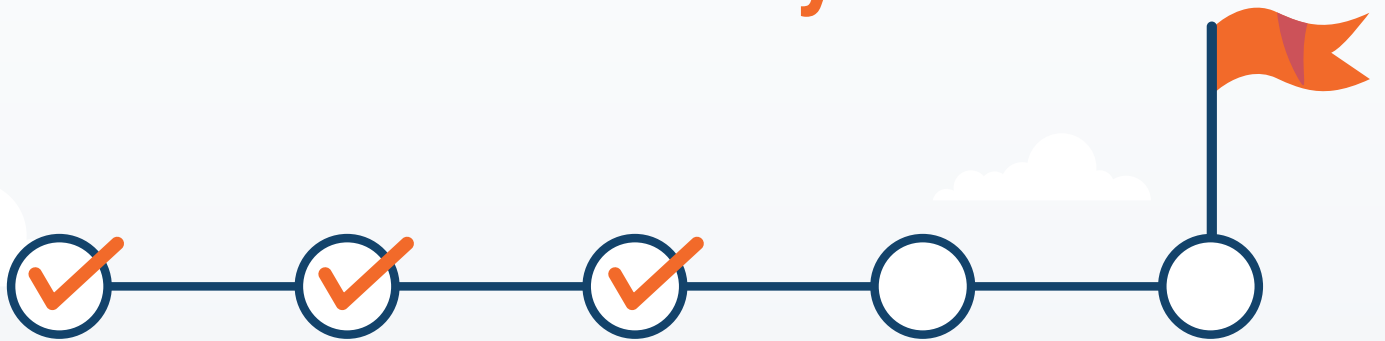


Sales Prospecting

5 Strategies to Qualify Customers Profitably



THE BROOKS GROUP



Sales Prospecting

Chasing unqualified prospects who will never close is one of the biggest wastes of a seller's time and effort.

Your sales team should be able to assess whether a prospect is qualified quickly—so they can move on to the next lead if necessary.

Five straightforward steps can help you develop a well-defined lead qualification process:

- 1 Apply a consultative sales process**
- 2 Identify your ideal customer**
- 3 Define the characteristics of a qualified prospect**
- 4 Eliminate unqualified prospects quickly**
- 5 Treat qualification as an ongoing process**

See how this process can improve forecasting accuracy, save time and resources, and allow your sales professionals to focus their attention where it has the greatest impact.

5 Steps for Sales Prospecting

Follow these steps to enable your sales team to qualify prospects the right way.



Apply a Consultative Sales Process

Effective sales teams follow a customer-centric **sales process**. Research shows simply having a series of steps isn't enough. Your process should reinforce a consultative selling approach that puts customer needs first and sets your sellers up to become trusted advisors.

A consultative sales process typically starts with an "investigate phase", during which sellers research prospects and prepare for a first meeting. Your sellers need to know it's essential to qualify a lead before moving on to the next step.



1

Identify Your Ideal Customer

Make sure your sales professionals know exactly what your ideal customer looks like. You can identify the characteristics of your target buyer persona by looking at your current customers and determining who is the best fit for the solutions you offer.

2

Take these criteria into consideration:

Demographics**Industry****Size of Company****Pain Points****Job Role**

3

4

5

You may have multiple buyer personas, and that's okay. Just keep it to a few (and get as detailed as possible) so your sales professionals can easily target prospects and recognize those who may not be a great fit.

Not every qualified prospect will match your ideal customer profile 100%, but they should all meet basic criteria you define in advance.



Define the Characteristics of a Qualified Prospect

A **qualified prospect** should match your internally defined criteria and exhibit these five characteristics:

1

2

3

4

5



Awareness of Need

Your qualified prospect may not know about your solution, but they should be aware that they have a problem.



Ability to Buy

Before you invest time and energy in a prospect, make sure you've reached a decision-maker who can commit to or influence the decision-making process.



Sense of Urgency

A prospect without a timeline is a prospect who will waste time. Train your sales professionals to create a sense of urgency if the prospect doesn't display one.



Trust

A hesitant prospect is likely to drag their feet and delay the purchasing decision. Train your sales professionals to develop and maintain trust throughout the sales process.



Willingness to Listen

The prospect should be open to hearing what your seller has to say and to engaging in a two-way communication about potential solutions.



1

Eliminate Unqualified Prospects Quickly

2

Make sure your sales professionals have the right sales prospecting skills and tools to identify good leads. Spending time with unqualified leads is like throwing money in the trash.

3

Train your sellers to ask **open-ended questions** that quickly eliminate poor leads before they invest too much time in them. Then train sellers to let go and move on to the next prospect.

4

5



1

Treat Qualification as an Ongoing Process

2

Qualifying leads before they become opportunities is critical for saving time and increasing forecast accuracy. But don't stop there.

3

Train your sales professionals to use a **consultative selling strategy** throughout the sales process to maintain alignment with prospects and confirm they are still qualified and worthy of your sellers' time.

4

Just because you can sell to someone doesn't always mean you should. Consider alignment with the buyer relative to the value of your offerings to determine whether you can sell and service the account profitably.

5

Sales Training for Effective Prospecting

Time is your team's most valuable resource. Streamline your team's daily workflow by training them on a straightforward sales process that makes it clear who your most profitable customers are. When you train your team with a proven process, you set them up to achieve consistent, predictable results.

Find out how **The Brooks Group IMPACT Selling®** sales process helps sellers qualify the best prospects and build long-lasting customer relationships.

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About The Brooks Group

Put your team on the path to trusted advisor. The Brooks Group is the leading sales training and development company empowering sales professionals to build profitable customer relationships.

We believe salespeople excel when they use a consultative approach that puts customer needs first. Notable clients include Airbus, Avita Medical, Bobcat, Hitachi Energy, Mack Trucks and Volvo Trucks, SANY Americas, Texas Instruments, and United States Air Force.

Learn more about our suite of sales training and development programs, assessments, coaching, and reinforcement tools at brooksgroup.com.



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