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## What really matters in B2B selling

Well worth a read – if you're interested, I'd be pleased to [present these findings to your team](#)?

### ***Customer Expectations of their Vendors' Salespeople***

You don't have the time to read 36 pages of "golden bullet" information. But, you think you may have a problem with your sales process and wonder continually how and what you can do to improve your chances of the majority of your team making 100% and more.

We've done some work for you – speed-read the highlighted sentences of [customer/vendor expectations](#) analysed in a newly released report which is attached;

Précis:

1. **(on why vendors fail)** deficits in the B2B sales process strongly impact vendors' chances of success
2. **(on a sales process)** key questions are how good it is, how well it is used, and how it benefits the organisation.
  - a. systematically analyse wins and losses
  - b. (on losing) considerable resources are wasted pursuing sales opportunities with a low probability of success
  - c. (on losing) lack of contact with the real decision makers
  - d. (on a formal win/loss process) Learning from wins and losses is the best way to improve the sales process and prevent mistakes from being repeated.
  - e. (on understanding the sales cycle) Relationships with the right people are often an issue of timing – late entry into customer's evaluation cycle is quoted by 47% of vendors as a reason for losing.
3. **(Customers say)** salespeople's subject matter expertise now tops their list of expectations.
  - a. knowledge of their own offering, and the understanding of the customer's business
  - b. greatest need for improvement is in salespeople's understanding of their customer's business, industry and specific needs.
  - c. Salespeople without sufficient expertise about their products cannot address customer needs
  - d. Brevity and clarity on solution and price
  - e. Ensuring customers actually get what they buy
  - f. (on listening) vendors dramatically underestimate the importance of how well the customer feels understood during the meeting.
  - g. (on presenting a solution) potential questions and objections should be prepared in advance and incorporated into the presentation to prevent them being raised at all.
  - h. (on gaining attention) "frequently" grant a first meeting if the vendor can refer to a concrete need
4. **(on CRM)** maximum return-on-investment from many CRM systems has not been realised.
5. **(CSF for success)** that project team members are not involved in the sales process or that their advice is not taken into account.
6. customers say that the most frequent reason for refusing a vendor's proposal is the superior solution offered by their competitor
7. **(on Managing Strategic Accounts)** The customer's experience with a vendor during contract fulfilment heavily influences their desire to entrust the vendor with more business.
  - a. (on exploiting success) value propositions are mainly used as a sales tool for winning business, but are rarely shared with or reviewed by the operations staff that are responsible for delivering them.
8. The customer is a company, not an individual. Vendors who lack the skills to contact the real decision makers have difficulty tailoring their offering to meet the specific needs of each individual.



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- a. **(on Winning Complex Sales)** selling to a company involves a number of decision makers, each of whom must be convinced of the advantages of the same product or solution. Decision makers at different levels do not necessarily have the same needs and requirements.
  - b. **(on influencing the buying process)** correctly identifying and potentially influencing the decision criteria should play a more important role in the vendor's sales process.
  - c. **(on the importance of a "relationship")** a factor effectively beyond the vendor's control is rated higher than factors they can influence, such as understanding customer needs, proposal quality, presentation, and references.
9. **(why move vendors?)** The number one reason customers feel motivated to move away from their existing supplier despite a longstanding relationship, is a superior solution offering from a new vendor.
- a. (on changing vendors) customer's impression that their current supplier's product or service is not up-to-date