

MASTERING MEDDPICC+

**The ultimate guide to
Sales Opportunity Qualification in
complex B2B sales environments**

June 2026

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Why Bother Qualifying?

The quality and accuracy of opportunity qualification is widely acknowledged to be a key predictor of future sales success - and a critical differentiator between the best salespeople (and the most effective sales organisations) and the rest.

Today's top salespeople have too much respect for their own time to waste it on "opportunities" they have little or no chance of closing - while their less-effective colleagues often appear to hold on to dead or dying opportunities like shipwrecked sailors clinging on to soggy pieces of driftwood.

When we analyse relative sales performance, the benefits are obvious: the effort that top salespeople invest in qualification is more than repaid in terms of **shorter sales cycles**, **greater average deal values** and **higher win rates**.

Sales leaders that have implemented consistent opportunity qualification frameworks see similar benefits across their entire sales organisation, together with **dramatically improved forecast accuracy**.

This practical guide - drawn from the experiences of some of today's most effective B2B sales organisations - will show you how to implement a consistent, robust and scalable approach to opportunity qualification across your own sales organisation that will inevitably **improve sales outcomes** and bring **confidence** and **consistency** to your revenue forecasts.

A brief history of opportunity qualification

The earliest attempt to implement a disciplined approach to opportunity qualification in B2B sales environments was initiated by IBM, with their BANT (Budget, Authority, Need and Timeframe) approach.

BANT was subsequently adopted by a wide variety of sales organisations and is still in use in some more traditional sales environments today.

BANT asks four key questions:

- **Budget:** Has the prospect allocated a budget to the project and is it sufficient?
- **Authority:** Do we have access to the decision-maker?
- **Need:** Does the prospect have a clearly articulated business need?
- **Timeframe:** When does the prospect intend to implement a solution?

Whilst all significant sales opportunities are likely to satisfy all four tests at some point in their development, relying on BANT as the initial or primary means of opportunity qualification has **serious flaws** in today's complex B2B buying environments.

BANT might appear to be an effective means of qualification for familiar, repeat purchases (for example when a customer is buying a new batch of raw materials) but it is far less effective when the customer is engaged in an unfamiliar and often discretionary buying journey that involves a significant learning curve.

The BANT parameters imply that salespeople should seek out formally defined, already funded projects and disqualify those that aren't. But by the time any project is fully "BANT qualified", the customer will already be a long way into their decision-making process. They will have already researched their options and have started to form their opinions.

BANT also assumes that there is a single decision-maker - but Gartner's latest research suggests that there are **7-10 or more significant stakeholders** in the typical complex B2B buying journey. It's clear that a literal implementation of BANT is an over-simplistic approach to qualifying today's complex sales opportunities.

Given that other research by Forrester, Gartner and others proves that salespeople who engage early with the prospect and help to shape their thinking have a far greater chance of winning than salespeople who only manage to engage when the prospect's buying decision journey is already well-developed, the idea of rejecting leads that are not fully BANT qualified is **completely counterproductive** in today's complex B2B sales environments.

Enter MEDDIC

MEDDIC - together with its evolutionary variants - has emerged as the most widely-adopted basis for opportunity qualification for complex B2B sales, particularly where companies are selling high-value solutions that involve complex buying journeys and which have the potential to drive transformational changes in the customer's organisation.

The original six MEDDIC qualification criteria were Metrics, Economic Buyer, Decision Criteria, Decision Process, Identify Pain and Champion. These represented a significant improvement over BANT in identifying the key factors that enable salespeople and their managers to accurately assess the quality of their sales opportunities.

The definition of each of these factors has evolved over time to reflect changes in the B2B buying environment:

- **Metrics [M]** are now best defined as the specific measurable business outcomes your customer requires the project to deliver - and how change will be justified
- **Economic Buyer [E]** is the person or (increasingly) the group of people with final decision authority over **whether** and if so **how** the project goes ahead, how it will be funded, and whether they **trust** our organisation and our proposed approach
- **Decision Criteria [D^c]** are the criteria that the customer will use to decide whether action is required and to choose between their potential solution options
- **Decision Process [D^p]** are the processes and timetables the customer will follow when deciding which option to choose, which stakeholders will be involved, and what role(s) they will play
- **Issues and Implications [I²]** (aka Identify or Implicate Pain) is best defined as the customer's current or anticipated business issue(s) and the associated implications and pain that will cause them to take urgent action
- **Champion [C^H]** is about whether we have managed to cultivate one or a number of powerful and enthusiastic champion(s) who are capable of promoting both the project and our approach - and whether they **trust** us enough to stick their neck(s) out in front of their colleagues when doing so

If **any** of these six factors are **unknown** or a **weak** fit, our chances of winning the opportunity will be significantly reduced. The failure to accurately understand any one of these factors should cause a red flag to be raised. Multiple weaknesses or uncertainties, unless they can be resolved, should generally result in the opportunity being downgraded or disqualified.

The adoption of MEDDIC represented a significant advance over the various flavours and variations of BANT, but in addition to redefining the original factors it has since spawned additional variants which involve important **additional considerations** that add further clarity and precision to the qualification process in complex B2B sales environments ...

The Evolution of MEDDIC

MEDDIC has spawned a number of evolutionary variants:

MEDDICC

MEDDICC added a seventh important qualification factor – **Competition [C^o]**. This was initially confined to how we stand against the other **solution options** being considered by the customer, but this definition now needs to be expanded to include all the **other projects** that are currently competing for attention and funding.

MEDDPICC

MEDDPICC added yet another valuable qualification factor when dealing with **high-value, complex** opportunities - the customer's so-called "**Paperwork Process [P]**". Although the term itself is something of an anachronistic throwback to a pre-digital age, this involves understanding and successfully navigating all of the contractual, legal, approval, compliance and vendor onboarding checks and processes our customer needs to complete before they can confirm their order.

Introducing MEDDPICC+ ("MEDDPICC PLUS")

The addition of Competition and Paperwork Process represented valuable further refinements in the qualification of complex B2B sales opportunities. But we believe that today's B2B buying environment requires that we also consider **two additional factors**:

Ideal Customer Profile Fit [ICP]

Your Ideal Customer Profile(s) - or ICPs - define the common characteristics of your most valuable potential customers. Today's most effective ICPs might start with demographic factors such as size, sector and location, but they also define your best prospect's common structural and cultural/behavioural characteristics. Because it is much easier (and more far profitable) to sell to prospects that match your ICP, we believe that **organisational fit against ICP** is a **critical initial qualification factor**.

Close Date Confidence [CDC]

The final missing ingredient is our confidence in each opportunity's close date - is it based on when our prospect has told us they **must** commit to a solution by, when they have told us they **want** to commit by (but this could slip) or - as is so often the case - when the salesperson **hopes** they can close the sale by, without any supporting confirmation from the prospect? This - combined with weak opportunity qualification - is why so many close dates keep slipping, and why it takes **far longer** on average to recognise we have lost a deal than it takes to successfully close one.

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Key Principles

Regardless of which qualification methodology you choose to apply in your sales organisation, four key principles need to be applied:

First, opportunity qualification must be managed as a **continuous process** rather than a one-off event.

Second, similar types of opportunities must be qualified according to the same consistent rules.

Third, salespeople need to be **completely honest** with themselves and with their managers when assessing the status of every opportunity.

Fourth, and closely related to the previous principle, salespeople must **avoid** making unverified guesses or assumptions about any of the qualification criteria.

In other words, hope is **never** an acceptable opportunity qualification strategy.

Let's explore each of these in more detail ...

Qualification must be continuous

In complex B2B sales environments opportunity qualification must be managed as a continuous process, for a number of reasons:

- It is usually **impossible** to completely and accurately qualify any complex B2B sales opportunity in a single interaction
- Some important aspects of the qualification criteria are likely to be **initially unknown** to the salesperson
- It is highly likely that elements of the customer's circumstances and priorities will **change** during the course of a lengthy buying journey
- The initial assessment of a number of the qualification factors will often need to be **verified** through further investigation or dialogue

Every active opportunity must be **requalified regularly**, and in particular prior to advancing to the next stage of the pipeline or whenever either the customer's or the vendor's circumstances change.

Qualification must be consistent

Whilst there is often a case to be made for different opportunity types to be qualified against more or fewer parameters - for example, the qualification of a large net new opportunity with an organisation that is not currently a customer usually needs to be more rigorous than that of a relatively small upgrade to an existing project with an existing customer - but **every opportunity of the same type** must be qualified to the same consistent standard.

This also means that every salesperson must qualify every opportunity of a given type in the same consistent way as every other member of the sales team - using the same parameters, applying the same standards, and with the same rigour.

Honesty is vital

Salespeople need to be brutally honest with themselves and with their managers when qualifying sales opportunities - and managers need to make it clear that they expect absolute honesty from their salespeople.

There's no point in fooling ourselves or anyone else - any attempt to "gloss over the cracks", to avoid asking hard questions, to rely on hope rather than fact, or to ignore evidence of the true status of an opportunity will inevitably come back to haunt us.

Evidence is critical

Qualification without evidence is **worse than worthless** - we must always be able to show the evidence that supports our judgement.

Assumptions kill opportunities - we must always assess and justify

Unverified assumptions create unjustifiably positive projections about the chances of success, and they blindside the salesperson into believing they are doing well when they are not. They prevent salespeople from uncovering issues that - if acknowledged - could have been dealt with before they did serious harm.

By the time a false assumption has been uncovered, it's often too late to do anything about it. The golden rule is **"if you don't know, don't guess"**. It is far better to acknowledge and admit that a particular qualification factor is currently unknown or uncertain than to make a dangerous and unjustified assumption.

We strongly recommend that sales leaders require their salespeople to implement an **assess and justify** strategy: if the salesperson assesses any of the factors as anything other than "unsure", they must be prepared - and in most circumstances should be **required** - to document the **evidence** that underpins their conclusion.

Your Customer's Buying Journey - from FOMO to FOMU

Every significant buying decision journey starts from the same place (the status quo) and then something happens - a **catalyst** or trigger event - that causes our potential customer to recognise that staying on their current path may not be their best or safest option.

In the early stages of their buying decision journey, prospects are primarily driven forward by their Fear of Missing Out [**FOMO**] - the concern that if they **fail to take action**, painful consequences will follow.

But as the point of decision approaches and the need to make a commitment draws near, our prospect's attention turns towards their Fear of Messing Up [**FOMU**] - the concern that if they **make the wrong decision**, painful consequences will follow.

Principles + Process = effective qualification

If it is to be effective, sales opportunity qualification must be continuous, consistent, honest, evidence-based and free from any assumptions, and it must be implemented as a well-defined and universally adopted process.

Whether your organisation chooses one of the successors to BANT or one of the variations of MEDDIC, it is vital that every salesperson recognises their responsibilities to follow the guidelines and qualify every opportunity as accurately as they can.

In fact, we'd go further: accurate qualification is so important to the interests of the organisation that any persistent failure to embrace both the principle and the process, if it cannot be remedied through coaching, should result in disciplinary action.

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Introducing MEDDPICC+

If - like most of Inflexion-Point's clients - your sales organisation is typically involved in lengthy and complex B2B buying journeys, we recommend that you implement **MEDDPICC+** ("MEDDPICC PLUS") qualification for all significant new high-value business opportunities.

The remainder of this document offers a detailed guide to putting MEDDPICC+ into practice.

Qualifying relatively simple opportunities

Applying all of these criteria may appear to be overkill for relatively small, simple opportunities.

If, on reflection, you conclude that some of the criteria are less significant when qualifying other opportunity types - for example small, simple, low-value and fast-to-close opportunities, or where you are expanding your presence in an existing customer - we recommend that you **implement a defined subset** of these factors for all opportunities of that type ...

The Core MEDDPICC+ Criteria

Here is a quick overview of each of the core MEDDPICC+ criteria:

- **ICP Fit:** How closely does the prospect fit with our **Ideal Customer Profile** for the relevant solution offering? This should be a key initial qualifying factor.
- **M=Metrics:** What are the specific **measurable business outcomes** our prospective customer requires the project to achieve, can we deliver them, and are the benefits strong enough to justify the project?
- **E=Economic Buyer:** have we identified and engaged the person or group of people with final decision authority over **whether** and if so **how** the project goes ahead, have they agreed to **fund** the project, and do they **trust** us?
- **D^c=Decision Criteria:** How will our prospective customer determine whether **urgent action** is required and decide between their potential **solution options**, have we managed to **influence** these criteria, and are they **favourable** to us?
- **D^p=Decision Process:** What are the processes and timetables our prospective customer will follow when deciding which **option** to choose, which **stakeholders** will be involved, and what **role(s)** they will play, have we managed to **influence** these processes, and are they **favourable** to us?
- **P=Paperwork Process:** Are we sure we fully understand - and have we successfully navigated - all of the complex **contractual, legal, approval, compliance** and **new vendor onboarding processes** our customer needs to complete before they can finalise their decision and **confirm** their order?
- **I²=Issues and Implications:** This is the **most important initial qualifying factor** - what are the customer's **primary business issues**, what are the **implications**, are they **painful** enough to drive urgent action, and are we well-positioned to **address** them?
- **C^h=Champion:** Have we cultivated one or more **powerful** and **enthusiastic** champion(s), are they **ready, willing** and **able** to promote both the project and our approach - and do they **trust** us enough to stick their neck(s) out in front of their colleagues when doing so?
- **C^o=Competition:** How we stand against all the other **solution options** being considered by the customer, have we positively differentiated ourselves against them, and what is the **relative priority** of this project against all the **other projects** that are currently competing for attention and funding?
- **CDC=Close Date Confidence:** Is the currently projected close date based on when the customer **must** act, when they **want** to act, or when we **hope** they will act?

You'll probably notice that these definitions recognise that it can be as important to qualify whether the project is likely to **go ahead at all** as it is to qualify - if it does go ahead - whether **we are likely to win**.

ICP=Ideal Customer Profile Fit

ICP	M	E	D ^c	D ^p	P	I ²	C ^H	C ^O	CDC
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Definition: How closely does the prospect fit with our **Ideal Customer Profile** for the relevant solution offering?

Explanation: Ideal Customer Profiles help to define the **common characteristics** of the most attractive potential customers for our key solution offerings. They are invaluable in allowing us to better **target** marketing and prospecting activities, and to **qualify** potential prospects at an **organisational** level.

Why this is important: prospects who match our **Ideal Customer Profile** are far more likely to **buy from us**, and to become **profitable long-term customers**.

Key Considerations:

Demographic factors - such as size, sector and location - help to define the outer boundaries of our target markets.

Structural factors - such as how they are organised, what key systems they use, their market focus and their position in their market - have a significant bearing on whether they will choose to do business with us.

Cultural and Behavioural factors - such as their attitude to innovation, their buying preferences, their vendor relationships and their reputation on the market - have a significant bearing on whether they have the potential to become good customers.

Finally, **Current Priorities** dictate whether an organisation that is otherwise a good ICP fit is likely to do business with us in the immediate future.

Potential Qualifying Questions:

- How closely does the prospect match our ICP **demographic** sweet spot?
- How closely does the prospect match our ICP **structural** sweet spot?
- How closely does the prospect match our ICP **cultural/behavioural** sweet spot?
- How closely do our prospect's **current priorities** match our ICP sweet spot?

Remember:

Although it may be possible to sell to an organisation that is not a good ICP Fit, the sale is likely to be **more difficult**, and it is less likely that they will become a profitable long-term customer. This is why ICP Fit should be one of the **earliest** factors you try to assess.

M=Metrics (Desired Outcomes)

ICP	M	E	D ^C	D ^P	P	I ²	C ^H	C ^O	CDC
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Definition: What are the **specific measurable business outcomes** your customer requires the project to deliver (and will use to justify their investment), can we deliver them, and are the benefits strong enough to justify the investment?

Explanation: These metrics are typically associated with significant improvements in business performance, such as increasing revenues, reducing costs, saving time, increasing productivity and/or measurably improving the organisation's market share.

Why this is important: If the projected business outcomes are either unclear or insufficiently significant, the project is unlikely to be approved.

What we need to know and do:

We need to be aware of the impact our products or services have on our customer's key business outcomes and metrics, and we need to proactively seek out opportunities where our potential value proposition is particularly strong.

We need to ensure that our prospective customer is fully aware of both the **costs of inaction** and the **benefits of change**, and that the **outcome gap** between the two must be strong enough to underpin their business case and drive urgent action.

Ask yourself the following:

- Have you fully explored the **costs and consequences of inaction** - and does your prospect agree?
- Have you fully explored the potential **benefits of change** - and does your prospect agree?
- Has your customer acknowledged the size of their **outcome gap** - and is it sufficient to support their internal business case and to justify urgent change?
- Are all the **key stakeholders** aligned around the costs and consequences of inaction, on the benefits of change, and on the size of the outcome gap - as far as their function is concerned?

Remember:

We must always provide the evidence to back up our assessment. If we are unsure about the metrics that underpin the customer's business case, or if we haven't yet confirmed them with the customer, we must not guess or make assumptions but categorise this factor as "unknown".

E=Economic Buyer(s)

ICP	M	E	D ^c	D ^p	P	I ²	C ^H	C ^o	CDC
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Definition: Who is the person or group with final decision authority over whether and how the project goes ahead, have they agreed to fund the project, do they regard it as a high priority, and do they trust our organisation and our proposed approach?

Explanation: These economic buyers are typically senior executives with the power to establish priorities, reallocate budgets and either approve or reject internal project proposals. Depending on the size of the organisation, they are likely to be at the C- or Senior VP-Levels, and sometimes they can take the form of approval **groups** (such as board directors or investment committees) rather than individuals.

Why this is important: If we are unable to access or influence the economic buyer(s), our chances of winning (and of the project going ahead) are likely to be dramatically reduced.

What we need to know and do:

How do decisions typically get final approval in our customers? Which roles tend to get involved? Is it typically a single individual or an approval group? What titles or responsibilities do they hold?

We need to do all we can to identify and directly engage these economic buyers in each active opportunity - and if for any reason we cannot, we need to be very confident that our champion(s) are able to strongly influence them.

Ask yourself the following:

Remember that economic buyers are not interested in the fine details of your “solutions” - they are interested in **achieving their business outcomes and priorities**

- Are you sure you have identified all the economic buyer(s) that have the **final say** regarding the project?
- Do the economic buyer(s) recognise and agree the **costs and consequences of inaction** - and are they determined to do something?
- Have the economic buyers recognised the **unique business advantages** of your proposed approach? ...

Remember:

We must always provide the **evidence** to back up our assessment. If we are unsure about who the economic buyers are, or if we haven't yet confirmed this with our contacts inside the customer, we must not guess or make assumptions but categorise this factor as “unknown”.

D^C=Decision Criteria

ICP	M	E	D^C	D ^P	P	I ²	C ^H	C ^O	CDC
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Definition: What are the criteria that the key stakeholders will use to decide whether urgent action is required and to decide between their potential solution options, have we managed to influence these criteria, and are they favourable to us?

Explanation: Our customer's decision criteria often include but are rarely restricted to the functionality of competing products or services. They will often take into account each vendor's market position and reputation and will reflect their **confidence** that the expected business outcomes will be achieved. They will often include both formal and informal criteria - not just the **facts** but also how they **feel** about each potential option.

Why this is important: We must both understand and influence their decision criteria if we are to maximise our chances of winning.

Key considerations:

Without an accurate understanding of their decision criteria (both formal and informal), it will be difficult to present our offering in the best possible light. It is important to try to **engage the customer early** and to influence their decision criteria in our favour - salespeople who successfully engage and influence the customer prior to these criteria being formalised stand a far better chance of winning the customer's business.

Ask yourself the following:

- Is your prospect involved in a **familiar** or **unfamiliar** buying decision journey (i.e., have they successfully bought something similar before)?
- Are your prospect's decision criteria **clear** - and are they **favourable** to you?
- Do all the key stakeholders share the **same** decision criteria - and if not, how do they differ?
- What have you done to **influence** your prospect's decision criteria in your favour?
- What is your strategy for **proving** that your approach addresses your prospect's decision criteria **better** than any other option?

Remember:

We must always provide the evidence to back up our assessment. If we are unsure about the customer's decision criteria, or if we haven't yet confirmed them with the customer, we must not guess or make assumptions but categorise this factor as "unknown".

D^P=Decision Process

ICP	M	E	D ^C	D^P	P	I ²	C ^H	C ^O	CDC
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Definition: What is the process and timetable the customer will follow when deciding which option to choose, which stakeholders will be involved and what roles will they play, have we managed to influence these processes, and are they favourable to us?

Explanation: In some situations - particularly in the public sector - the customer will be implementing a formally published RFP process, including defined milestones and timescales. At the other end of the scale, the customer's "process" may be poorly defined, opaque, have no obvious timeframe and be unlikely to result in a decision. If this is the case, we must take steps to help them manage the decision process more effectively.

Why this is important: We need to understand how they will decide and who will be involved to have a significant chance of winning.

Key considerations:

If our customer has a rigidly defined decision process, and in particular if they have issued an RFP, we must make sure that we comply with their required approach whilst at the same time finding ways of showing how and why you are different. If their process is clearly biased against us, we should carefully consider whether it is worth continuing.

And if their decision process is poorly defined or managed - or if they are embarked on an unfamiliar buying journey - we must find ways to help them manage the process more effectively.

Ask yourself the following:

- Is your prospect involved in a **familiar** or **unfamiliar** buying decision journey (i.e., have they successfully bought something similar before)?
- Are you sure you have a **complete** and accurate **picture** of your prospect's buying decision process (if they have one)?
- If they **don't** have a clear buying decision process, what have you done to help them craft one?
- Are you sure you have identified all the **key stakeholders**, and that you know what **phase** they have reached in their process?
- Are you confident that your prospect is actually **able** to make a decision to buy?

Remember:

We must always provide the evidence to back up our assessment. If we are unsure about the customer's decision process, or if we haven't yet confirmed this with the customer, we must not guess or make assumptions but categorise this factor as "unknown".

P=Paperwork Process

ICP	M	E	D ^c	D ^p	P	I ²	C ^H	C ^o	CDC
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Definition: Are we sure we fully understand - and have we successfully navigated - all of the complex **contractual, legal, approval, compliance** and **new vendor onboarding processes** our customer needs to complete before they can finalise their decision and **confirm** their order?

Explanation: The “paperwork process” (much of which may actually be completed digitally) includes all the other things the customer needs to do before a project can be approved and an order issued to the successful vendor. This typically includes legal and commercial negotiations, and often includes a technical evaluation to ensure that any new systems satisfy the organisation’s IT and security standards. A new vendor may also need to go through a vendor approval and onboarding process before an order can be generated.

Why this is important: We need to understand what they need to do to negotiate, verify and approve the final decision.

Key considerations:

Unexpected late stage delays in closing what appears to have been a well-qualified opportunity can often be attributed to a failure to fully understand or facilitate the customer’s final approval and paperwork processes.

Our champion - particularly if they are an inexperienced buyer - may be unaware of all the elements of this “paperwork process”. It is our responsibility to find out exactly how the paperwork process actually works.

Ask yourself the following:

- Are you sure that you fully understand all of your prospective customer’s **verification** and approval **processes**, and the **time** that will be required to complete them?
- Are you sure that your **champion** fully **understands** this process, and how to **navigate** it?
- Have you factored all of this into your **realistic projected close date**?
- Have you taken steps to **eliminate** potential delays by **pre-empting** as much of this process as you can?

Remember:

We must always provide the evidence to back up our assessment. If we are unsure about the customer’s paperwork process, or if we haven’t yet confirmed it with the customer, we must not guess or make assumptions but categorise this factor as “unknown”.

I²=Issues and Implications

ICP	M	E	D ^c	D ^p	P	I²	C ^H	C ^O	CDC
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Definition: What are the customer's **primary business issues**, what are the **implications**, are they **painful** enough to drive urgent action, and are we well-positioned to **address** them? This is the **most important initial qualifying factor** - without a significant and painful issue, they are likely to **stick with the status quo**

Explanation: Behavioural science tells us that people and organisations are 2-3 times more likely to commit to change to avoid or eliminate **pain** than they are to invest in the hope of a **future gain**. Salespeople need to identify the customer's sources of pain, and understand who is affected by the pain, and how.

Why this is important: If the cost and consequences of inaction are not sufficiently high, and if the pain is not seen as serious, the customer is likely to stick with the status quo.

Key considerations:

Current pain is a **far more powerful driver** of change than the hope of future gain. That's why any qualification methodology needs to start by identifying a business issue that is associated with a significant (and hopefully growing) pain.

In fact, **no other qualification factor matters** until and unless the customer acknowledges a significant pain - even if they appear to be "in the market".

Ask yourself the following:

- Does your prospect have a **key business issue** that you have a proven track record of addressing?
- Is it a **problem** they need to **fix**, a **risk** they need to **avoid** or an **objective** they want to **achieve**?
- Would addressing the issue clearly support their **key corporate initiatives** and **priorities**?
- Is the issue associated with **implications** at the **organisational**, **functional** and **stakeholder** levels that are likely to compel them to take **urgent action**?
- How does this **issue** and its **implications** rank against all their **other potential projects** when it comes to **relative priority**?

Remember:

We must always provide the evidence to back up our assessment. If we are unsure about our customer's key business issue and the pain that is associated with it, or if we haven't yet confirmed this with the customer, we must not guess or make assumptions but categorise this factor as "unknown".

C^H=Champion(s)

ICP	M	E	D ^C	D ^P	P	I ²	C^H	C ^O	CDC
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Definition: Have we cultivated one or more **powerful** and **enthusiastic** champion(s), are they **ready**, **willing** and **able** to promote both the project and our approach - and do they **trust** us enough to stick their neck(s) out in front of their colleagues when doing so?

Explanation: Most sales methodologies encourage salespeople to identify at least one champion within the customer. But finding an enthusiastic fan isn't enough. Champions also need to be respected by all the other stakeholders and be capable of influencing their thinking. This means that the most effective champions tend to be highly placed business executives with responsibility for addressing the identified business issues.

Why this is important: If we do not have at least one powerful and influential champion, we will struggle to emerge as the winning option.

Key considerations:

Are the people we are hoping to rely on as potential internal champion(s) sufficiently powerful, politically astute and influential enough to be able to promote both the project itself and your proposed approach to their fellow stakeholders as the most attractive option?

Or are they merely “fans” who appear to love what we do but are unable to convince their fellow stakeholders? If so, they **cannot** be categorised as champions.

Ask yourself the following:

- Have you identified **at least one effective champion** (and are you sure they are not just a fan)?
- Have they been able to **introduce** you directly to the other key stakeholders?
- Is your champion **experienced** in steering similar projects to a successful conclusion?
- Is your champion prepared to **stick their neck out** to steer the project to a successful conclusion?
- Have you done all that you can to **equip** and **encourage** your champion to **promote** both the **project** and **approach**?

Remember:

We must always provide the evidence to back up our assessment. If we are unsure about whether we have identified and engaged at least one true champion (as opposed to a “fan”), and if we haven't yet confirmed their status, we must not guess or make assumptions but categorise this factor as “unknown”.

C^o=Competition

ICP	M	E	D ^c	D ^p	P	I ²	C ^H	C^o	CDC
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Definition: How we stand against all the other **solution options** being considered by the customer, have we positively differentiated ourselves against them, and what is the **relative priority** of this project against all the **other projects** that are currently competing for attention and funding?

Explanation: Our competition includes all the other credible options your customer may be seriously considering - not just other similar vendors. We need to identify all these options and understand how to position ourselves against them in terms that are relevant and meaningful to the customer.

Why this is important: We need to clearly and distinctively stand out from all their other credible solution options.

Key considerations:

Our opinion of the competition does not matter - in fact, it can be dangerous if we underestimate them. The only thing that matters is the customer's perception of our relative strengths, weaknesses, advantages and disadvantages - and of our relative credibility as potential partners.

Ask yourself the following:

- Have you identified all their **alternative shortlisted solution options** - and do you understand what **they** think of your **relative merits**?
- Do all the **key stakeholders** in the project agree that your approach clearly represents their **best available option**?
- Have you identified all the **other projects** that may be competing for their organisation's **attention** and **resources**?
- Do all the **ultimate economic buyers** agree that this project is a **top current priority**?

Remember:

We must always provide the evidence to back up our assessment. If we are unsure about our customer's alternative options, or if we haven't yet confirmed them with the customer, we must not guess or make assumptions but categorise this factor as "unknown".

CDC=Close Date Confidence

ICP	M	E	D ^c	D ^p	P	I ²	C ^H	C ^o	CDC
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Definition: Is the currently projected close date based on when the customer **must** act, when they **want** to act, or when we **hope** they will act?

Explanation: Every CRM system requires the salesperson to enter a close date when creating a new sales opportunity, but far too few CRM implementations require the salesperson to **explain or justify** where the date came from.

Why this is important: If the projected close date is based on hope or guesswork, the close date (and the associated revenue forecasts) is likely to be inaccurate. These hope-based close dates have a tendency to keep slipping.

Key Considerations: There are three potential levels of confidence in the currently recorded close date (level 1 is the highest confidence):

1. **Customer Must:** someone in the customer with decision authority has **confirmed** that they have a **genuinely compelling event** that means they **must** make a commitment no later than this date
2. **Customer Wants:** Someone with decision authority has **told us** that they **want** to make a commitment no later than this date, but there is **no** genuinely compelling event and there is a **risk** that this date could slip
3. **You Hope:** You have had no documented conversations with anyone in authority about when they are likely to commit, so this date is based on what you **hope** will happen

Potential Qualifying Questions:

- Does the currently projected close date accurately reflect the progress of **similar opportunities** under **similar circumstances**?
- Has the close date been **discussed** with someone in a position of authority in the customer, and have they confirmed that it is **realistic**?
- What is the current **close date confidence [CDC]**, and what is this based on?
- Has a truly **compelling event** been identified that will inevitably force the customer to **take action** (and if so, what is it)?
- Does the **current close date** reflect both the customer's **current situation** and the typical progress of other **similar opportunities** - or does it rely on a **miracle**?

Remember:

We must always provide the evidence to back up a “**customer must**” or “**customer wants**” **CDC** assessment. In the absence of such evidence, the **close date confidence** must default to “**you hope**”.

04

Putting MEDDPICC+ into practice

Finally, we would like to offer some simple guidelines for putting MEDDPICC+ into practice in your own sales organisation ...

Is MEDDPICC+ overkill?

Salespeople sometimes claim that MEDDPICC+ is “too complicated”, particularly for small, simple, fast-closing, low-value sales opportunities.

If the project is **high-value, complex, lengthy**, involves **multiple stakeholders** and/or an **unfamiliar buying process**, or if there is any chance that the customer might decide to “do nothing”, then **MEDDPICC+** (including **ICP Fit** and **Close Date Confidence**) is the most effective way of accurately **qualifying** (or **disqualifying**) such opportunities.

But - if the project is **small, uncomplicated** and **low value**, here are **two potential alternatives**:

Implement an updated version of BANT

- Reinterpret **budget** so that currently unfunded projects that nevertheless have a strong business case don't get discarded
- Reinterpret **authority** so that if your current contact could offer a credible path to authority, you don't immediately discard the opportunity
- Add **Ideal Customer Fit** and **Close Date Confidence** as significant qualifying considerations

Implement a simplified version of MEDDPICC+

This is our recommended approach - eliminate any MEDDPICC+ factors that are not relevant to these sort of situations, for example:

- Eliminate **Paperwork Process [P]** if the approval is always uncomplicated (but make sure this is true)
- Eliminate **Champion [C^H]** if your single point of contact always has full budgetary and decision-making authority
- Eliminate **Competition [C^O]** if you are sure you have neither external nor internal competition
- Continue to assess **Ideal Customer Fit** and **Close Date Confidence**

Whatever you decide to do, you must ensure that **all similar opportunities** are assessed using the **same consistent criteria**.

Progressive Qualifying

MEDDIC (and its derivatives) might have memorable acronyms, but the sequence of the letters should not be taken too literally. For example, it is impossible to have a meaningful discussion around **metrics** if the customer hasn't yet acknowledged a serious business **issue** that has significant implications. Uncovering the prospect's primary business issue, calibrating the associated **pain**, and assessing whether we have a potential solution fit should, therefore, generally be our **first priority** when qualifying.

It should also be obvious that it is very unlikely that **all** the MEDDPICC+ qualifying criteria will be visible from our first interaction with the customer, and that some may only be capable of being assessed as the customer moves through their buying journey, but there are other factors where an initial judgement can and should be made - even if it has to be revised later.

Most complex B2B buying decisions pass through the following phases **at least once**:

- **Status Quo**: they appear to be **satisfied** with their current situation and are not thinking of changing
- **Concerned**: they have become concerned about their **situation**
- **Exploring**: they are actively **investigating** the **situation**, the **implications**, and their **options**
- **Defining**: they are defining **what they need**, which **options** to **shortlist**, and how to **decide** between them
- **Selecting**: they are evaluating their shortlisted options and trying to agree on a **single preferred option**
- **Verifying**: they are trying to confirm that they have made the **best possible choice**
- **Confirming**: the project is being submitted for **final approval**

Our goal, of course, should be to get involved **as early as possible** in their journey, because this is when we can have the **greatest influence** over the outcome.

We need to recognise that - according to Gartner - up to **50%** of all successful projects start off as unbudgeted opportunities. This is an obvious reason for not automatically disqualifying potential opportunities that are currently unbudgeted (as a literal application of BANT would suggest). Instead of rejecting them, we should instead investigate whether a **strong business case** based on **compelling metrics** can be established.

We also need to recognise that if the first time we get involved in an opportunity is as a result of an **unexpected RFP**, this is a clear indication that the prospect is already in "**selecting**" mode. If we find ourselves in this situation, we must quickly and carefully qualify **all** of the MEDDPICC+ factors **before** investing any significant resource in the "opportunity".

Here's how the various MEDDPICC+ qualification factors are likely to play out during each phase of our customer's buying decision journey ...

Status Quo | Concerned | Exploring | Defining | Selecting | Verifying | Confirming

ICP	M	E	D ^c	D ^p	P	I ²	C ^H	C ^o	CDC
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Our prospective customer appears to fit our Ideal Customer Profile but may not yet be **concerned** about any of the key business issues we have chosen to target

This is, of course, the phase that most of our long-term potential customers are in, most of the time - but the **sooner** we can engage them, the **stronger** our chances when they subsequently find themselves involved in an **active buying decision journey** - even better, of course, if our activities helped to **trigger** the process.

While our prospective customer still appears to be satisfied with the **status quo**, the **most important questions** for our **marketing** and **outbound prospecting** activities are “do they appear to fit our ideal customer profile [ICP]?” and “are they likely to have a potentially urgent business issue [I²] we can address?”

Status Quo | **Concerned** | Exploring | Defining | Selecting | Verifying | Confirming

ICP	M	E	D ^c	D ^p	P	I ²	C ^H	C ^o	CDC
-----	---	---	----------------	----------------	---	----------------	----------------	----------------	-----

Our prospective customer has just started to become **concerned** about a key business issue, potentially as a result of a recent **trigger event**.

If we manage to engage with our prospective customer while they are still in the **concerned** phase, we need to confirm their **ICP Fit** and the **issue** [I²] that triggered their interest, start to explore the **implications**, try to assess whether our current primary contact is a potential **champion** [C^H] and try to make a realistic initial judgement about the likely **close date** [CDC].

Status Quo | Concerned | **Exploring** | Defining | Selecting | Verifying | Confirming

ICP	M	E	D ^c	D ^p	P	I ²	C ^H	C ^o	CDC
-----	---	---	----------------	----------------	---	----------------	----------------	----------------	-----

Our prospective customer is now actively **investigating** the **issue** and its **implications**, assessing whether **urgent action** might be necessary, and trying to identify their potential **options**.

While our prospect is in the **exploring** phase, we need to confirm their **ICP Fit** and the **implications** of their **issue(s)** [I²], start to explore whether the associated **metrics** [M] are sufficient to justify **change**, assess whether our current primary contact is a potential **champion** [C^H], identify other **stakeholders** in the **decision process** [D^p], and make a (preferably evidence-based) judgement about the likely **close date** [CDC].

Status Quo | Concerned | Exploring | **Defining** | Selecting | Verifying | Confirming

ICP	M	E	D ^c	D ^p	P	I ²	C ^H	C ^o	CDC
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Our prospective customer is trying to define **what they need**, which **options** to **shortlist**, how to **decide** between them, and **who** needs to be **involved**.

While our prospect is in the **defining** phase, we need to identify every **key stakeholder**, understand their personal **issues & implications** [I²] and **metrics** [M], understand and influence their **decision criteria** [D^c] and **process** [D^p], understand their other options [C^o], seek to identify, engage and influence the **economic buyer(s)** [E], try and establish one or more **champions** [C^H], and reconfirm their likely close date [CDC].

In other words, by the end of this phase, we must have assessed most qualification factors apart from their **paperwork process** [P] (and it would do no harm to start to try and understand this).

Status Quo | Concerned | Exploring | Defining | **Selecting** | Verifying | Confirming

ICP	M	E	D ^c	D ^p	P	I ²	C ^H	C ^o	CDC
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The **key stakeholders** are evaluating their **shortlisted options** (often including “do nothing”) and trying to reach a consensus around a **single preferred option**.

While our prospect is in this **selecting** phase, we need to **requalify every factor**, paying particular attention to ensuring that the **issue** [I²] is seen as **urgent**, the **metrics** [M] are **compelling**, the **decision criteria** [D^c] and **process** [D^p] are **favourable**, that we are seen to have a strong **competitive advantage** [C^o], that our **champion(s)** [C^H] are **active** and **persuasive**, that the **economic buyer(s)** [E] are **supportive** and that our **close date** [CDC] is based on **evidence**. We also need to understand and anticipate the “**paperwork process**” [P] they will go through when **verifying** and **confirming** their decision.

Status Quo | Concerned | Exploring | Defining | Selecting | **Verifying** | Confirming

ICP	M	E	D ^c	D ^p	P	I ²	C ^H	C ^o	CDC
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The **key stakeholders** are trying to verify they have made the **best possible choice**, that they have secured the **best possible deal** and that it **complies** with **company policies**.

While our prospect is in the **verifying** phase, we need to ensure that the business **issue** [I²] remains a **top priority**, that business case **metrics** [M] are **strong** as possible, that our **champion(s)** [C^H] are energetically and effectively promoting the project, that the **economic** [E] buyer(s) believe the project is a **top priority**, that we understand and are following the “**paperwork process**” [P] they will go through and that the projected **close date** [CDC] remains realistic and based on **evidence**.

Status Quo | Concerned | Exploring | Defining | Selecting | Verifying | **Confirming**

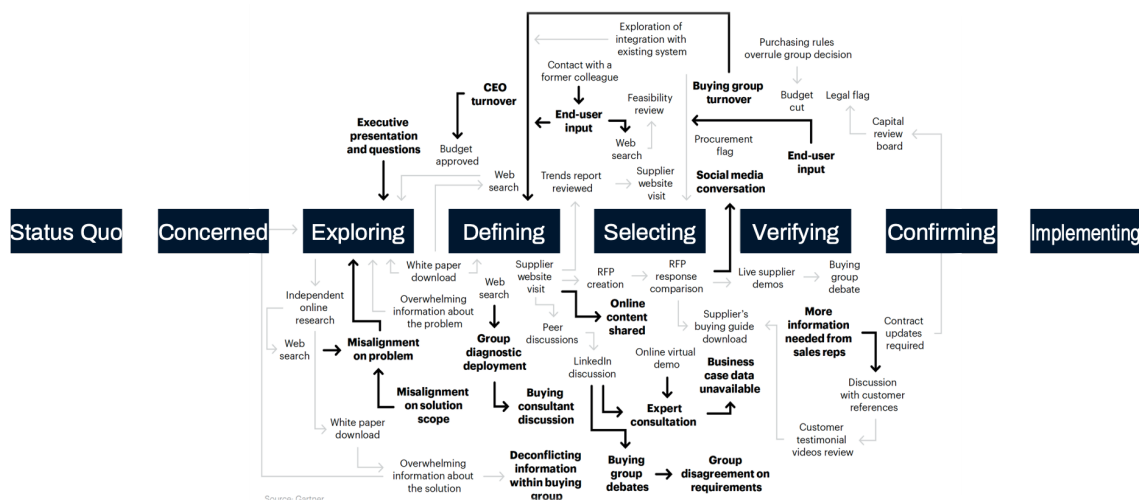
ICP	M	E	D ^c	D ^p	P	I ²	C ^H	C ^O	CDC
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The **key project champions** are trying to ensure that the project (and our approach to it) is confirmed as a **top priority** by the **ultimate approvers** and secures **final formal approval**.

While our prospect is in this final **confirming** phase, it is particularly important that the **economic buyers [E]** and **ultimate approvers** agree that the **issue [I]** is **urgent**, that the **metrics [M]** that underpin the internal business case are **strong**, and (with the help of our **champion(s) [C^H]**) that the project is seen as a top corporate priority [**C^O**], that the “paperwork process” [**P**] is fully completed and that the close date [**CDC**] remains realistic.

Buying journeys are often non-linear

Of course, we also need to recognise that our prospect's buying journeys are often **non-linear**. As Gartner points out, at and from any point in the journey, our prospective customer can choose to **move forwards**, **go backwards**, **stay where they are**, **go around** in circles or **abandon the journey completely**.



If we detect that our prospective customer's buying decision may have **stalled** or gone into **reverse**, we need to carefully requalify the opportunity, paying particular attention to the factors that may indicate that the **relative priority** of the project may have changed.

Equally, if it appears that our customer may be **getting ahead of themselves**, we need to help them think through any **missing elements** in their buying decision journey.

Qualification is a **two-way street** - we need to be aware that while we are qualifying them, our customer is also qualifying both us and the project itself.

The Process of Qualification

When it comes to complex B2B sales environments, it should by now be obvious that opportunity qualification must always be managed as an **ongoing process**, and never seen as a one-off event.

Sales organisations need to establish consistent guidelines and processes, with the objective that every member of the sales organisation qualifies every similar opportunity in the same way, and to the same standards of proof.

This is why it is important that salespeople avoid guesswork, and are always expected to provide supporting evidence for their qualification decisions. Implementing clearly defined qualification frameworks - such as the ones described on the following pages - can help ensure consistency.

Qualification and the opportunity review process

Unfortunately, many pipeline and opportunity reviews (when they are held at all) focus on just a handful of data points - commonly restricted to deal value, pipeline stage, close date, probability and next step. This is a waste of an invaluable chance to coach the salesperson and assess the quality of their thinking.

For the most significant deals, opportunity reviews provide an invaluable chance to **dig beneath the surface** and to **verify** the supporting evidence that underpins the salesperson's MEDDPICC+ qualification conclusions, and to test whether the customer's circumstances may have changed.

This is particularly important when trying to assess the accuracy of the predicted close date, and the probability of winning. If the projected close date is earlier than would normally be expected for a similar deal at the equivalent stage, the salesperson should be asked to explain why this deal is an outlier, and what their plan for closing the deal by the projected date is.

If the opportunity close date is "past due", the salesperson must be required to immediately requalify all the MEDDPICC+ criteria, and to update the close date and update the probability with a conservative, evidence-based projection.

The following tools can help ...

MEDDPICC+ Opportunity Qualification Worksheet

Whichever opportunity qualification methodology you decide to implement, it must be consistently applied and embedded into the fabric of how your salespeople manage sales opportunities - and **MEDDPICC+** is no different.

For most organisations, this means integrating the methodology into the opportunity management module of your CRM. An initial integration might simply involve adopting our qualification spreadsheet and attaching a copy to every opportunity, and this can certainly be effective as a short-term stop gap measure.

Clients of Inflexion-Point's Outcome-Centric Selling® system have access to our easy-to-use spreadsheet-based **MEDDPICC+** opportunity qualification worksheet and associated training materials.

Outcome-Centric Selling® Opportunity Qualification Worksheet				
Last Updated	Organisation			Opportunity
12-Mar-25				
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	
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	
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	
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	
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	
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	
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	
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	
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	
 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	
				Score
				0
				0
				0
				0
				0
				0
				0
				0
				0

As well as helping your salespeople get into the habit of consistent and disciplined opportunity qualification, this spreadsheet-based approach can help to validate and adjust the definitions of each factor to match your specific sales environment.

But of course, an even more effective long-term approach is to implement custom fields in your CRM opportunity management module, since this will offer greater visibility and allow direct reporting and analysis. We can help you implement this.

05 About us

Inflexion-Point is a leading B2B sales consultancy. Our clients include ambitious scale-ups, established mid-market sales organisations and the entrepreneurial business units of established corporates. We equip, encourage and enable them to sell more effectively into today's increasingly challenging B2B buying environments.

Our **Outcome-Centric Selling®** methodology is particularly effective in situations that involve high-value discretionary B2B purchases, multiple stakeholders and complex, lengthy and often unfamiliar buying decision journeys.

As we hope this document demonstrates, we have a great deal of practical experience in what it takes to implement an accurate and robust opportunity qualification regime in complex high-value B2B sales environments.

If you like what you have read in this guide, if you believe what we believe about the future of B2B selling, and you are curious enough to want to find out more, please give me a call, send me an email or book a Zoom (www.inflexion-point.com/book-a-zoom-call).

Regards



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