

The Sales Closing Guide: 3 Deal-Closing Methods to Teach Yourself

Here I 'Close' Again (On My Own)



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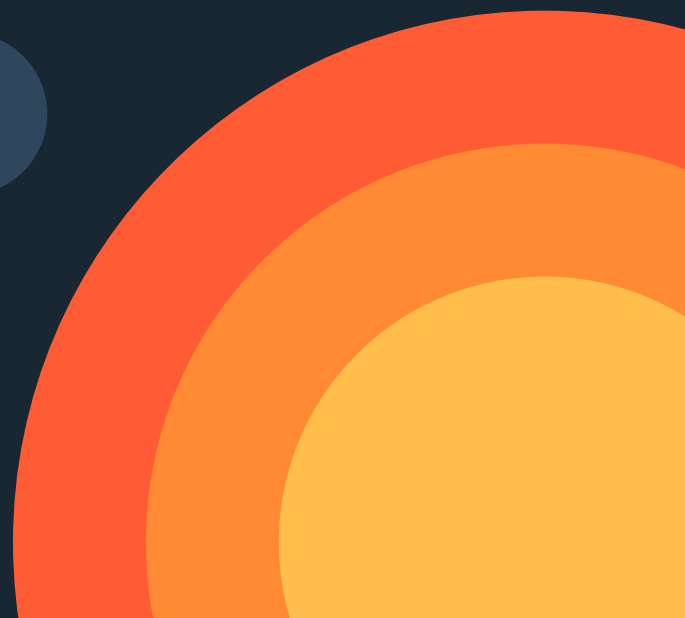
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Like a drifter, you were born to sell alone

If the title of this eBook doesn't make you want to slap on some spandex, leather chaps, and half-gloves to rock your next demo-well, then you can go ahead and stop reading this.

Just kidding. But seriously, after you jam through the tactics in this eBook you won't have to go down the only road you've ever known when it comes to closing deals.

The sales enablement leaders at **PandaDoc + HubSpot** compiled their most popular training for closing deals and packaged them for you to practice on your own time. In fact, we sifted through hours of sales training footage from our internal meetings in order to hand-pick the best tactics just for you.

A reminder that these methods were developed through decades of hard-fought sales learnings. They take our own reps months of ramping to perfect. Don't get too frustrated if you're not seeing results right away.

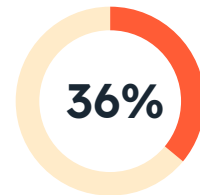
Practice. Refine. Repeat.

Nevertheless, we're confident that once you riff on these methods enough, you'll be crowd-surfing your way to many more 'closed-won' deals. Alright, you ready to rock this thing?

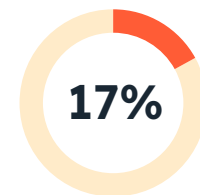
Source: <https://mailshake.com/blog/100-sales-statistics/>



of sales reps give up after four "no's," but 80% of prospects say "no" four times before they say "yes."



of sales reps agree that closing is the hardest part of their role.



In a recent study by Gong, using the word "discount" decreased the odds of successfully closing a sale by 17%.

Serenading the prospect with an ROI Calculator

Just like the rock legends of old, salespeople strive to wow the crowd.

And regardless if they are selling tickets to Madison Square Garden or seats for your best-in-class software solution - your buyer is probably asking themselves this question:

The buyer's inner monologue:

“Is this sort of project even worth looking at from a time and resource perspective?”

To begin your self-taught journey to closing more deals, we're going to share our wisdom and experience of leveraging the almighty Return on Investment (ROI) calculator to attack the logical side of your prospect's consideration.

Because whether you're talking to a multi-billion dollar enterprise or a small startup, business owners care about ROI.

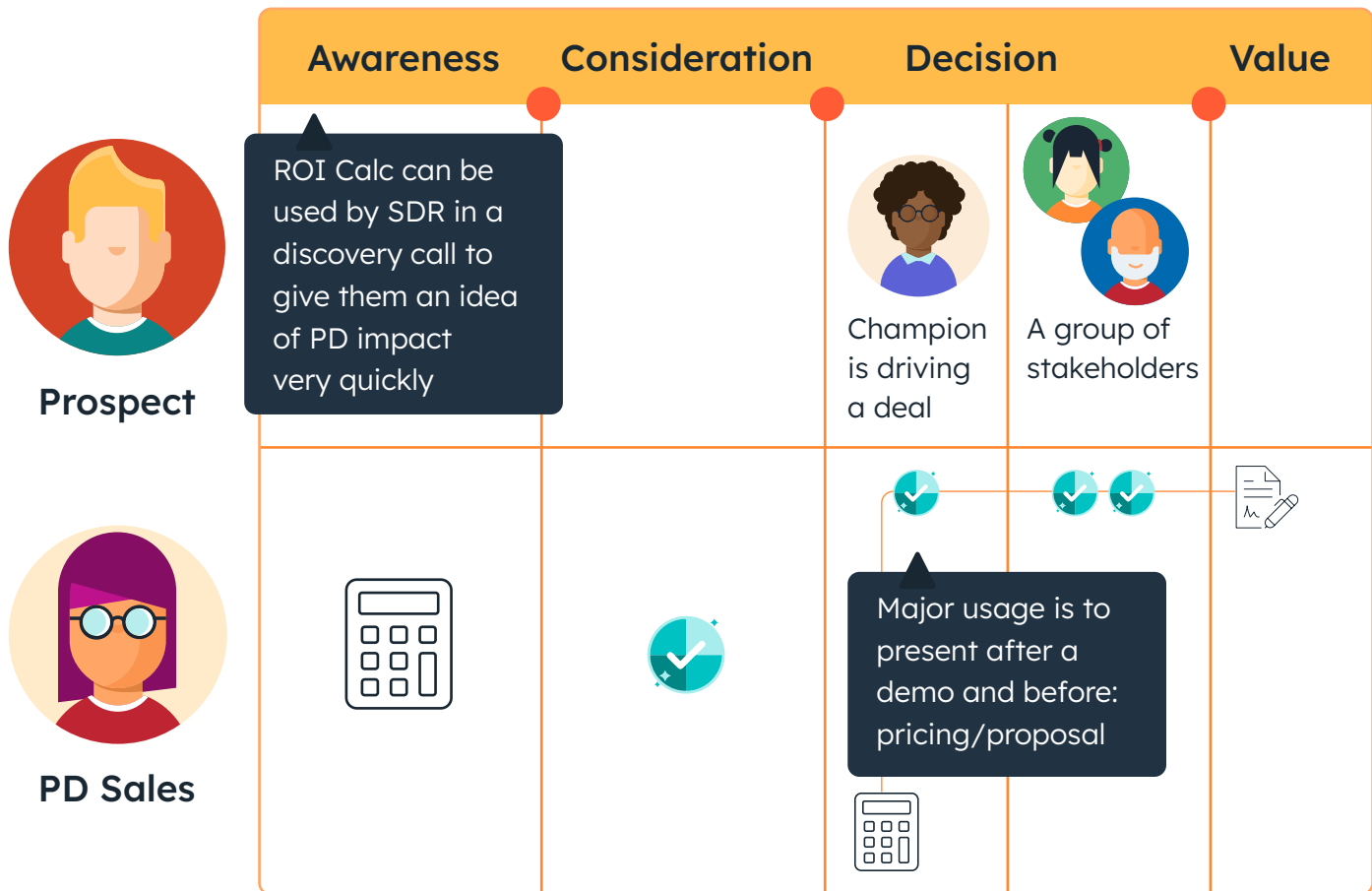


First, get the timing right

There are a few places in the buyer's journey where using the ROI calculator will be extremely useful.

For SDRs in the awareness stage, the ROI calculator can be used during a discovery call to give the prospect an idea of your solution's impact very quickly.

For AEs in the consideration stage, we recommend using the ROI calculator as part of your talk track after completing the demo, but before you mention pricing. The ROI calculator is a good method for linking the intellectual side of the sale and reinforcing the true value of the full price you're about to show them.



Next, build a natural talk track

The setlist for a band is critical for hosting a stellar event that makes the crowd go wild. Each song is selected to heighten the audience's engagement, designed to reach a big finale.

And for the seller, it's important to establish a flow for you dropping that fancy ROI calculator to close the deal.

So, here's our suggested talk track to introduce the ROI calculator.

After you've exchanged pleasantries, we recommend using this as your script.

Seller

"At this point, I'm going to sit back and listen to the problems your business is currently experiencing to figure out what's happening. Then I'll give you a demo. Afterward, I'll show you an ROI calculator based on how we can improve the problems in your business. And then from there, I'll introduce pricing. Sound good?"

Buyer

"Yeah, sure."

Seller

"I just have a few questions for you to make sure I'm giving you the best insights, OK?"

Buyer

"OK"
[Begins answering questions for your calculator]

Finally, customize a calculator on your selling points

Here at PandaDoc and HubSpot, our internal calculators are built using real client data that we can show the prospect if need be. That's because it's powerful to prove that your ROI data is real. It assuages the naysayers and the cynics. When someone calls BS, and they will, you can verify and remind them these are conservative, legitimate averages that your customers are experiencing.

If possible, build your calculator using customer data unique to your selling framework.

For PandaDoc we focus on metrics such as time-to-close, time-to-sign, close rates, and completion rates to help sell our document automation software.

You can build a calculator to look and feel like HubSpot's using some simple formulas in a spreadsheet. Graphs are key to visualizing the comparison of where they are now vs. where they will be in the future.

Try HubSpot's free ROI calculator.

Once the prospect is able to visualize the impact of your solution to their business, you can create a sales proposal template unique to their business goals and potential solutions.

**Get started with PandaDoc's
customizeable proposal templates.**

Best Closing Questions in Sales

1. Which of these two options would you prefer?

Customers always like options. Whether it's product features, payment plans, delivery terms, or other details, people like to feel they have the power to choose. As a professional closer, asking a question such as "do you prefer delivery on Tuesday or Thursday?" let you guide the sales call while letting the client have some choice. You see, you could ask "when would you like the item delivered?", but that type of open-ended question may lead you to an abandoned purchase. The option-based question doesn't give the prospect a chance to respond in any way that doesn't assume the deal has already been made.

2. What do you think?

Asking prospects what they think is beneficial for several reasons. First, it helps to keep the potential buyer engaged with the sales call or meeting. It also helps you to better understand any potential objections or other issues that could hold up the sale. Lastly, it shows the client that you're concerned about them and how they think and feel about the product or services your company offers. This demonstrates that you're not just focused on the sale but on helping the client solve a problem for themselves or their business.

3. Do you need this functionality or that?

Discussing functionality is especially important if you're a SaaS business or offer IT solutions. But even if you're selling laptop bags, you can use features and capabilities as transition statements to help close the deal. This is accomplished by asking an option question as mentioned before (only in this case the subject matter is more specific). Going with the laptop bag example you could ask a question like "Do you need laptop bags that are TSA-approved or EU-compliant?". Now here comes the kicker; you've given them a choice and they'll answer with the most preferred functionality. What the client doesn't know is that your product covers both options. Once you let them know, you'll have demonstrated the value of your product and nudged them closer to sealing the deal.





Soundcheck your deals with champion confirmed

While a salesperson and a musician might have completely different wardrobes, they were both born to perform. But gig after gig and dial after dial can take a real toll on their outcomes.

Which is why it's vitally important for both rockstars and salespeople to have a foundational framework they can always go back to when the going gets tough. For the singer/songwriter it's a soundcheck.

But for a salesperson, it's the champion confirmed and the time-based incentive that ensures they bring down the house with their performance.

What is a champion?

So, what exactly is a champion? And why are they important for the sales process?

We're glad you asked.

Joseph Patti, Senior Sales Manager at HubSpot, put it beautifully when he said,

“A champion is a person that believes in the value of what you're selling and the problem you're helping them solve. This individual will be alongside you during the buying journey, helping you identify and convince decision-makers to move forward on the deal.”

Think of the champion as your jungle guide during the sales process. Without a champion, it's nearly impossible to get your deal done.

Where salespeople often get confused is understanding the difference between a decision-maker and a champion. Are they the same?

The answer is usually, no.

Frankly, decision-makers are typically not doing the grunt work of shopping around for a tool/product/service that you're selling. One exception might be for small businesses, where the CEO might be both the champion and the decision-maker.

Why do you need a champion?

Before we teach you how to trial close by confirming the champion, it's important you understand why this method is so vitally important to closing your deal.

Most sales processes look something like this:

- 01 You get a lead.
- 02 You reach out and do some light discovery.
- 03 You show them the tech in an abbreviated demo.
- 04 **You wait. You push. You fumble your way through some closing questions.**



If you try to close without confirming your champion, you will waste a lot of time as you try to figure out where your deal stands. That can be frustrating for you and awkward for the buyer. So here's where our methodology comes into play.

Asking the confirmation question

Instead of fumbling your closing, after your demo, you must confirm your champion. And you do that by asking this EXACT question.

"So [prospect's name],
Are you ready to recommend your company purchase [insert your company's name]?"

Why do you ask this question? And why do you ask it this way?

- 01 Because you have the right to ask. If you've done the discovery, learned what problems they need solving, and showed them the demo-this is the best way to find out where your deal stands.
- 02 You ask it this way because other variations such as "Do you think this meeting went well?" or "Do you think you would consider our business?" don't set you up to close on the next call. These other questions give you false positives and murky pipeline. Asking it our way also helps spot deals that aren't worth your time or you shouldn't be working on.

And what types of responses can you expect from this question?

- If we get a "yes" we create a mutual action plan.
- If we get a "no" we identify blockers and a plan to overcome.
- If we get "maybe" (which we hate) then we gently remind them that we are not asking if their boss will sign off on it today. We're just asking if they are ready to recommend today (based on what they've seen). That's all. Nothing more.

Once you've confirmed your champion, you'll want to arm them to win approval from decision-makers. It's imperative you understand that most champions have never had to go out and get approval from a higher-up to buy software. So, figure out what they are going to need from you (such as an ROI business case) to get that approval.



Overcoming objections

Different objections require different approaches to overcome. If you build these five tactics into your objection-handling, you'll close more deals.

How to turn a 'no' into a 'yes'

- Identify the real reason
- Use active listening
- Mirror the objection
- Use proof and data
- Be ready to adapt your offer

Of course, that takes time and practice. Make a habit of doing each of these one at a time, and eventually build up to using them all. It sounds like a lot, but as you grow in your sales ability you'll get better at each one:



- Pause after the prospect raises an objection.
- Ask questions when addressing objections.
- Validate prospects' objections Isolate the true objection to your pitch.
- Get permission to address the objection.
- Reframe the objection Finish handling objections with an unbiased resolution.

Creating momentum with a timebased incentive

Before we dive into the time-based incentive (TBI) method here's a quick disclaimer.

Disclaimer: The TBI can never replace the champion confirmed step. If you skip to the TBI without confirming that your champion is ready to recommend your product for purchase, you will most likely lose the deal. That's because you're cramming a date on them when you're not even sure they are prepared to buy.

Ok, on with the show.

So, you busted out the ROI calculator. You've confirmed your champion. And you've armed them to sell this internally. Now what? Cue the time-based incentive. Here are the most common questions we hear about deploying a TBI with a prospect.



Typical questions about the Time-Based Incentive (TBI)

What is a TBI?	A TBI is a mutually-agreed-upon purchase date used by the seller so the buyer can secure a discounted purchase price.
Why is it important?	A TBI gives you (the seller) some measure of control in the sales process. Without a TBI you run the risk of having too much pipeline to properly manage it and deliver the right type of experience to the prospect. Without having a compelling event (such as a TBI) in a land and expand sales model, you don't really have any control to drive deal velocity.

What does the TBI do?	It creates momentum. - It expedites the sale. - It creates mutual commitment. - It holds the customer accountable. - It allows for accurate forecasting.
How do I phrase the TBI?	Say something like: “We do not sell our best in class solution on price. But we are excited to invest by ways of savings, to facilitate our partnership. Our one ask is that you sign our agreement on or before [insert specific date].”
Does a TBI devalue the solution?	We don’t think so. Every prospect has a price they are willing to pay, but they also want a good deal. Timing is key. If you get them the right price at the right time, a TBI can be invaluable.
How much discount can I give? And how long should the TBI be?	Most organizations have discounting power based on role. For example, an individual rep might be able to discount up to 20% of the price. A sales leader might be able to discount up to 30%. And a CRO/CEO would need to discount anything more. When your TBI gets outside of the 5-6 week timeframe, the number of deals and the probability of deals closing decreases dramatically. Don’t set it to be longer than that.’
What are some examples of a TBI?	Usually, a TBI is a discounted price or free seats/features bundled into a contract only given if a deal is signed by a future, mutually-agreed-upon date.
Are TBIs always about money?	Not necessarily. You can get creative with the economic points of someone’s business. Maybe they want an altered payment schedule. Or perhaps you can provide them a review on their business page. Also, you can offer them a featured case study or a press release.

	<p>Case studies can really get potential customers interested in what you're selling. Show them how your product made a difference for someone like them - maybe it transformed their life or their work? Talk about the emotional impact it had, not just the stats. If a customer said your product was a game-changer or changed their business for the better, make sure to tell your future customers about it!</p> <p>Obviously, we don't recommend ever doing anything unethical. But if working with the buyer was a pleasant experience why not offer them something valuable to their business? Sometimes exposure is worth more than a discount.</p>
When should I deploy a TBI?	The moment you have a champion confirmed and understand their buying process (decision-makers needed, ROI needed, etc.).
What is NOT a TBI?	<p>These common phrases are NOT TBIs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• "I want to get started ASAP."• "I want to make a decision by the end of the month."• "I have a project start date goal of XX/XX/XXXX."• "I want to make a selection in the first quarter."• "I choose your product."• "I love your product."• "My boss wants us to have a solution in place by XX/XX/XXXX."
Should all deals have a TBI?	<p>Yes.</p> <p>And all TBIs/next steps should be kept in writing and documented with the buyer and in your CRM. This is how you control your deals and ensure quota achievement.</p>

What should I do if a prospect goes radio silent after deploying the TBI?	Have your CRO, Sales VP, or someone above you send a TBI love note. These notes ensure the TBI isn't some cooked-up BS from the sales rep. It's a commitment you're making to facilitating the success of the partnership between you and the buyer.
What if the buyer misses the TBI date?	<p>You touch base with them. Remind them you had pricing incentives to do something by the agreed date. You can push it once. Tell them "You're operating based on the timeline that they have up until 5 pm on the last day of the new TBI."</p> <p>Or you can tell them "If you'd like to set a new date, I can recommend you give me a hard date. Finance is much more likely to accept that than if you try to push this by a few weeks or something ambiguous."</p>
What if I get pushback on the TBI?	<p>You should become comfortable challenging the prospect back.</p> <p>Tell them:</p> <p>"We've worked with many customers and evaluating a decision for this tool is most effective when they are boxed in such a way that they have a shorter time period. Anything outside of a month is problematic. These savings we're offering are a meaningful investment by us to help you in a reasonable amount of time."</p>
What if they are really adamant about pushing back on the TBI?	<p>Have the CRO love letter gently say something like:</p> <p>"Our business model is not predicated on open-ended discounts that last indefinitely. The discount cannot exist in perpetuity."</p>

The sale is done; What next?

You've signed the customer, and your job is done... Or is it?

Actually, there are a few ways that your new client relationship can continue providing value.

★ Leverage referrals

Better leads add another avenue for you to use a sales pipeline to boost revenue. You never know when a customer might bring in a potential buyer, but you can always simply ask for referrals! A quick call or an email to say hi and ask for referrals will do the trick.

Even if the client doesn't have one immediately, they'll hopefully keep an eye out for referrals in the future.

★ Upsell

Once a deal has been closed, both parties will be in an elevated mood about this new and promising partnership. Such camaraderie provides a great opportunity to upsell your products and services.

Upselling can be done as part of a follow-up or customer onboarding. During this time, customers will be experiencing firsthand the benefits of your service.

There's no greater time to suggest a few add-ons that will drive those benefits even further.

★ Ask for feedback

Another important facet of post-sale interaction is to gain feedback from your new customers.

A follow-up survey sent via email will give you and your team a greater understanding of how the closing process is going. Take client feedback and gain valuable insights into how to improve the overall experience for prospects.

You can also use customer feedback to gather testimonials about the way your company conducts business and closes deals.

In the still of the night, you hear deals closing

Look, if you actually made it to the end of this eBook on closing, well then you're one passionate son of a gun. It will be no surprise to us when you're succeeding with these deal-closing methods.

Hopefully you found our ROI calculator advice, champion confirmed tactic, and TBI Q&A actionable and helpful. At the end of the month, you want as much control over the sales process as possible. Closing deals takes courage, grit, and skill.

Keeping your pipe honest and accurate happens when you implement these practices. It's why we teach it to our reps over and over.

Rock on salespeople, you got this.





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