



Digging Deep

# Creating the Right Question Flow for Effective Discovery

When you are trying to drill down on a business issue with the largest impact, you have to execute a great sales discovery process. You need solid questions, if you want to effectively map your value to high-level business issues. Asking those questions however, isn't always easy. We created this tip sheet to help you in creating a solid question flow that helps you dig deep into the business pain.

## 1. Start Broad, but Not Generic

You have to earn the right to ask the questions that uncover the business pain. Don't just go into the conversation with the hard-hitting, "what are you going to do if..." type question. Your prospect will shut down. Start with general, warm up questions or statements that get your prospect talking about the area that's relevant to your solution.

- Walk me through the process for X.
- How do you handle X right now?
- Describe for me how your organization executes X.

## 2. Move to the Positive

Once you understand the process, then ask what's working well.

- When this process works well, what does that look like?
- What outcomes do you achieve?

Asking the positive earns you the right to then pivot to the challenges the prospect may be experiencing.

## 3. Pivot to the Negative

With the information of what's working well, you create a natural turning point in the conversation to ask what happens when it doesn't. Here are a few questions to help you make that shift and dig deep on the problem:

- When it's not working well, what does that look like?
- What are the typical bottlenecks in that process?
- **What are the impacts on:**
  - the team?
  - the department?
  - your position?
  - the lines of business that you support?
- What do you have in place to address this?
- What are the results to the business if this doesn't get addressed well?

## 4. Create the Tie to Different Individuals

Then, look for the others that may impact the decision.

- Who else has a stake in this?
- How would we get their perspective on the problem so that we can make sure that anything we talk about takes into account what they care about?

## 5. Be Ready to Back Up the Conversation

The prevalence of digital information channels means buyers have never been more informed. When your buyers come to you with a specific problem, be ready to lead the conversation away from jumping straight to your solution. Your job is to expand the vision of the problem. Here are some additional questions that will help you steer the conversation to customer-focused value:

- Why is X important to you?"
- "How do you know what great looks like for X?"
- What are you trying to solve for and what does great look like on the back end?
- How will you/others measure success against these?

Then you've now earned the right to ask:

- Why is this such a problem that it deserves this attention?
- What happens if you don't take action?

Use those answers to dig deeper on the problem.

When you have a great conversation, don't forget to finish strong. Don't let the customer define the next steps. Drive what happens next based on the great information you uncovered.