

the buying journey: key indicators

PHASE	0:STATUS QUO	1:EXPLORING	2:DEFINING	3:SELECTING	4:VERIFYING	5:APPROVING
DESCRIPTION	The prospect appears to be unaware or unconcerned about any of the issues we have targeted	The prospect has become aware of a potentially significant issue and has started to explore their options	The prospect is in an active buying cycle and is defining their decision team, criteria and process	The prospect is actively evaluating their shortlisted options and trying to select the best solution	The prospect is verifying their chosen solution and trying to negotiate the best possible terms	The prospect has rejected all other options and submitted the project for final internal approval
INDICATORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - They appear to be satisfied with their current situation - They are passively absorbing potentially useful information - They are likely to attend industry events, read relevant publications, visit familiar information sources and network with colleagues and peers - They do not appear to be suffering any significant pain - They give no signs of being actively in the market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - They start to actively explore the issue - They seek to better understand the impact of the issue on their organisation - They may discuss the issue with colleagues and peers - They try to find out if other companies are suffering from the issue and how they are responding - They start to identify and research potential solutions - They are not yet fully clear about what they need 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - They seek to prioritise the problem and identify funding - They seek to further refine the business case - They start to form a decision making team - They start to define their decision criteria - They start to define their decision process - They identify and research potential solutions in significant detail - They attempt to come up with a shortlist of credible options for evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - They actively evaluate their shortlisted options in significant detail - They often issue an RFP at this stage - They seek clarification and reassurance from the bidding vendors - The playing field may not be even - they may have already established a preferred option without revealing this to other vendors - The decision team attempts to achieve consensus around their preferred option 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - They engage in detailed commercial and legal negotiations (often involving legal and procurement specialists) - They seek references and reassurance from other users - They may investigate the financial standing of the vendor and if necessary seek guarantees - They seek to reinforce the internal business case - They lobby the approval team to support the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The project is submitted for final formal approval - The business case is likely to come under detailed scrutiny - The focus of competition shifts to other projects that may be competing for the same resources - The project sponsor is likely to have to answer the question "why does this need to go ahead now?" - Internal systems may need to be set up with new vendor details prior to order
MILESTONE	Something changes in the prospect's environment and they start to actively explore the situation	The prospect concludes that there is a compelling reason to act and that suitable solutions are available	The prospect has a vision of a solution and has defined their decision team, criteria and process	The prospect has identified their preferred solution(s) and is ready to start negotiating the details	The prospect is satisfied that they have made the best choice and have negotiated the best possible terms	The project has been signed off, and the prospect has placed a firm order with the chosen vendor