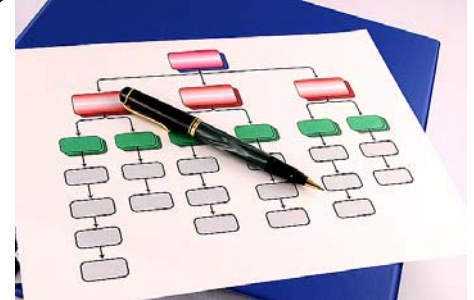




Why accept “No” from someone who can’t say “Yes”?

All too many times; however, we do! Why? There are a number of reasons. The biggest is that we just may not ever know who the true decision maker is. We call this person the economic buyer. The economic buyer is defined as the person who can approve your proposal without having to get permission from anyone else. In other words, the economic buyer is the final decision maker.



The road to reaching the economic buyer can be a long and winding one. While it would be nice if we only had to call on the economic buyer, we must deal with people in all levels and departments of our customer’s organizations and institutions. To increase the chances of winning an order one must deal with all of the various influences within an account. The influences risks, both real and perceived must be discovered, addressed and resolved.

The people of customer organizations can be dissected into four categories: Users, Technical Influences, Coaches and Economic Buyers. This holds true for large corporations, small businesses, educational institutions or the government. Let’s take a look at each one of the influences and how to reduce both their real and perceived risks:

- User:** The person(s) who will directly use your product or service.
To reduce their risks discuss and demonstrate training, safety, convenience, ease of use, error correction, time savings, and technical support. Show how you and your company will support them on a daily basis.
- Technical Influence:** The person(s) who will evaluate your product or service based upon their area of expertise. They may include engineers, technical specialist, general counsel, purchasing and other specialists.
To reduce their risks present data, specifications, white papers, performance benchmarks, research, studies, charts, graphs, testing procedures, logistics, contracts, pricing, etc. Make sure all questions have been answered.
- Economic Buyer:** The person who can say “Yes” to spending money on your product, service or solution without getting anyone else’s permission. They are usually found in the management or executive levels within organizations.
To reduce their perceived risk cover cost of ownership, return on investment, cost justification, alignment with their corporate objectives, payback, etc. Deliver a strong business case.
- Coach:** Anyone who will provide information about customer or project. They can be anyone and can be found anywhere. By definition they generally want to see you win. Their risk is that you don’t win, heed their advise.

The next tip — on or about March 1 — Asking Questions

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