



# • *6 Sins of Sales* •

Who, What, When, Why, Where, hoW



# Introduction

This is a list of 6 sins that salespeople should avoid at all cost. We'll also cover, of course, *how* to avoid them, and the exact actions to take to make sure they never occur at all.

Why is it important to avoid these sins? It's quite simple: Because you want to sell, and win more sales than you lose! We want that for you, too.

So without further ado, let's go through these sins.

## 1

# Who

The first sin of sales falls under *Who*. The first question any company needs to ask is, “Who is my buyer?” And the first sin is trying to sell to the *wrong* buyer, or someone who isn’t a buyer at all.

## Marketing

While we’re calling this a sin of sales (and the reason why will be obvious in a moment), not knowing who the buyer is actually the fault of marketing, not sales. Marketing—or the company’s founders performing the marketing function right at the beginning—are the ones that should find out all about the company’s basic potential buyer: Who they are, what their issues are, and how the company is going to address those issues with its products or services.

## Sales

Where the *Who* comes down to sales is in the case of more complex products or services that could affect or be needed by different areas of the company. In such a case the salesperson is going to have to know, “Is the buyer I’m speaking with actually the right person?”

Also with more complex products and services, you might even have cases in which different groups within your prospect company have different issues, that would be addressed by your product or service. Each of these groups might have different decision-makers involved with a purchase.

At the very least, a salesperson should know that the person they’re speaking with can get them to a decision maker or someone who matters and has relevance to a sale.

This sin can have several variations. For example, you might be speaking to someone empowered to make a decision—but they, in turn, are totally dependent on someone else for budget authority. In such

a case the salesperson needs to find this out very early on, and then of course find out all about the person who has that budget authority. The salesperson can then approach the budget authority themselves, or (often the better choice) arm the decision maker with great arguments in favor of the purchase, and allow the decision maker to convince the budget authority.

## Wasting Time, Energy...and Money

Is the person the salesperson speaking to an actual decision maker or someone who will actually influence the opportunity? As long as the salesperson doesn't have real insight into the person they're talking to, it's a waste of time and energy—and in sales both time and energy are extremely valuable commodities.

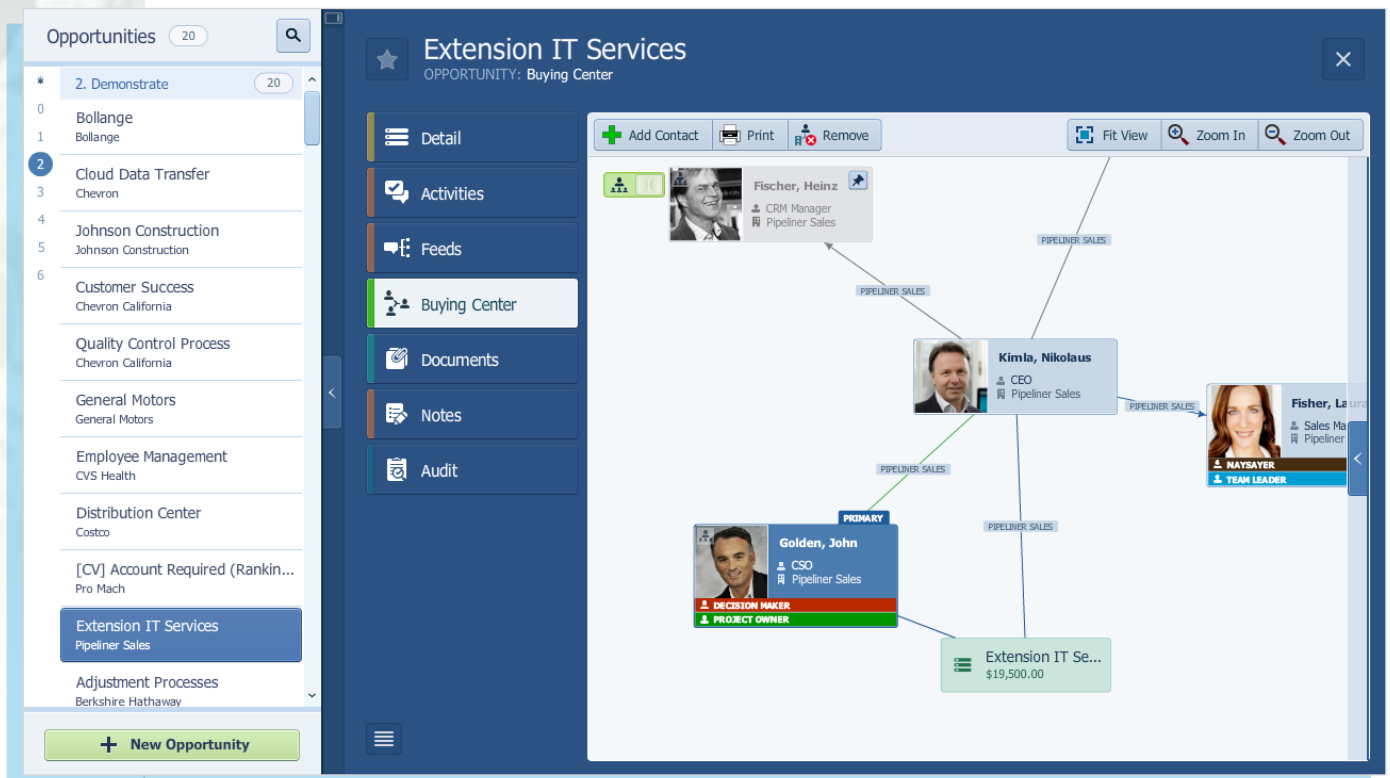
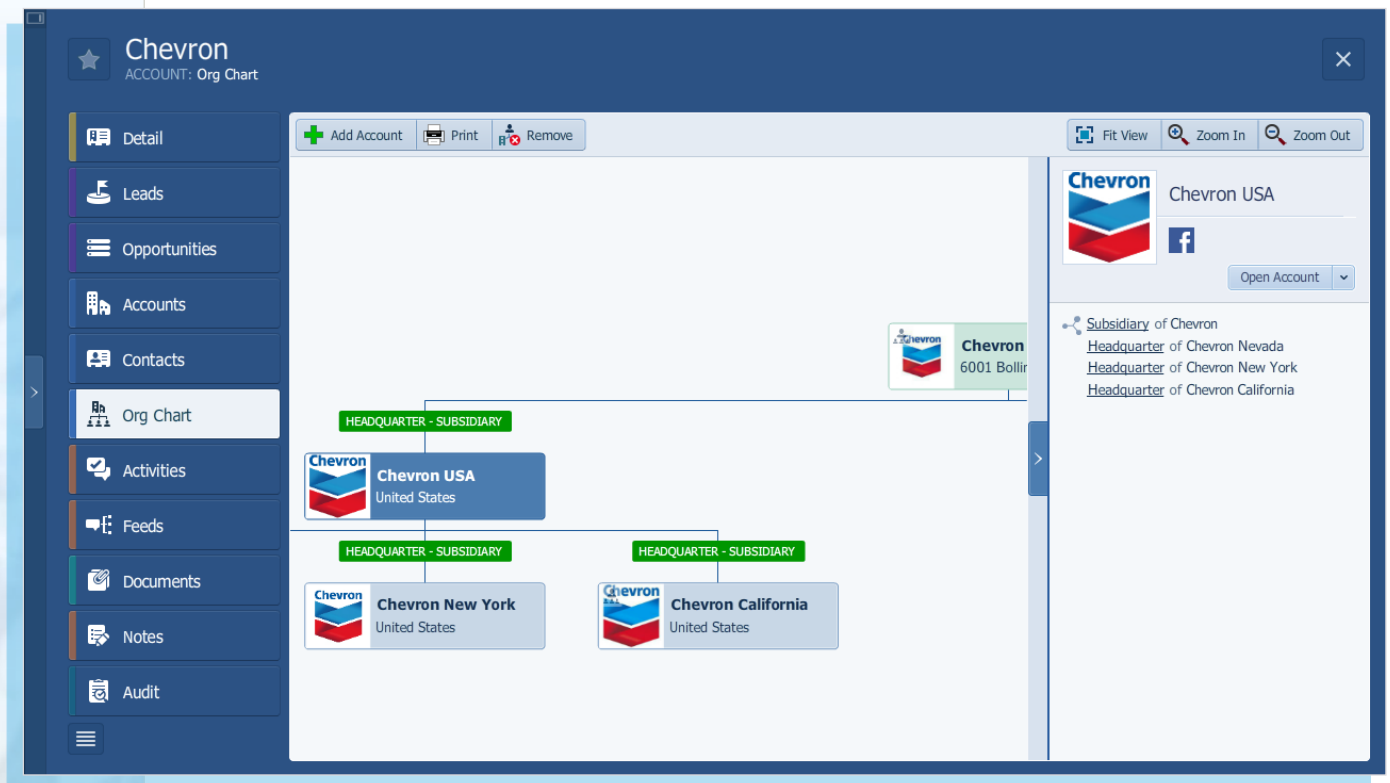
Being wrong about that *Who* could mean that the salesperson must go back to square one, discover the right *Who* and move up through the sales process all over again.

A wrong *Who* could also mean a lost sale, commission, and (repeated often enough) even a job.

## Pipeliner CRM

How does Pipeliner help address the question of *Who*? With its unique combination of the Visual Org Chart and Buying Center. These allow a salesperson to graphically show relationships within the prospect company—the hierarchy of decision-makers and influencers, and how each influences the sale. In our example above about the decision-maker who must depend on the budget authority, the salesperson, upon finding out about the budget authority, would then add that person to the Visual Org Chart to show the hierarchical relationship between the budget authority and the decision maker. They would then be added to the Buying Center to graphically show their relationship influence-wise.

Once those roles are established and understood, the salesperson will always be addressing the right person in moving any opportunity forward.





## 2

# What

The *What* of a sale is the product or service. Hence the sin of *What* would be attempting to sell the wrong product for that potential customer.

## Know Your Product

At the very bottom of this issue lies the salesperson's knowledge of their product or service. This knowledge must be first-rate and in-depth. The salesperson must know beyond a shadow of a doubt whether or not his or her company's product is going to solve that prospect's issues.

If a salesperson doesn't know their product, they probably won't be representing that product for very long.

## Know Your Market

Beyond just knowing the product or service, though, the salesperson should also be intimately familiar with the industry, market and competitors.

Within your market, what makes your product or service totally unique? Or in other words, what is your Unique Selling Proposition (USP)?

## Buyer Needs and Requirements

Once you have a firm understanding of your product or service, its market, your competitors and your USP, then it becomes a matter of knowing the vital needs and requirements of your buyer.

The general needs and issues should have already been sorted out by Marketing as part of the process of identifying the buyer. But now the salesperson needs to dive in further and isolate the issues specific to this particular company, so that it can be shown how your product or service will address them.

*Not* knowing exactly what the buyer needs and requirements are may very well mean that you're selling them the wrong product—a wrong *What*.

## Buyer Understanding

But it even goes further than that—for there can be *explicit* needs and *implied* needs. The explicit needs are the real obvious ones, and are probably expressed to you by the prospect right at the beginning of the sale.

But it can and often does happen that the buyer doesn't totally understand their issues and their needs—and the salesperson, with greater experience when it comes to their product or service, sees things the buyer doesn't. It then falls on the salesperson to gently but firmly raise the buyer's awareness of these issues, so the buyer then fully understands them. The *implied* needs thus become *explicit* needs.

The most important word in discovering these things is *Why*—a word we're going to explore more in depth in its own section later on. But right here, the salesperson needs to be asking in-depth questions intended to uncover fully and exactly *why* the prospect needs that product or service.

## Honesty

The best salespeople in the world are those who are honest with their prospects. When they discover what their prospect's issues are, if it is obvious that the salesperson's product or service won't solve those issues, they inform the prospect right away. They say, "I'm sorry, but my product won't solve those problems for you." While the prospect may be disappointed, they're also going to be quite happy that the salesperson was honest and wasted no more of their time and, more importantly, money. And, of course, didn't sell them the wrong product.

## Bring the Buyer to Action

A salesperson is after that large goal—a closed sale. But that close is made up of smaller actions, movements along the sales process. And those movements are made by the prospect. If those movements are not made, the sale isn't going to move, either.

I am always saying that sales is highly instrumental for wealth and peace, because you cannot force people to buy anything. A buyer only buys if they understand why they should buy. They cannot be forced.

What, then, causes the prospect to move? Some kind of urgency, created in the prospect, to *take action*. These are stimuli utilized by the salesperson—and this is fully explained in our next section: *When*.

## Pipeliner CRM

How does Pipeliner CRM ensure that a salesperson is selling the right product?

First, the sales process for a product should be constructed in a way that the prospect is fully qualified, and that as the opportunity moves through the steps of the process it is further qualified. Technically, a wrong product sale should never proceed past the lead qualifying stage.

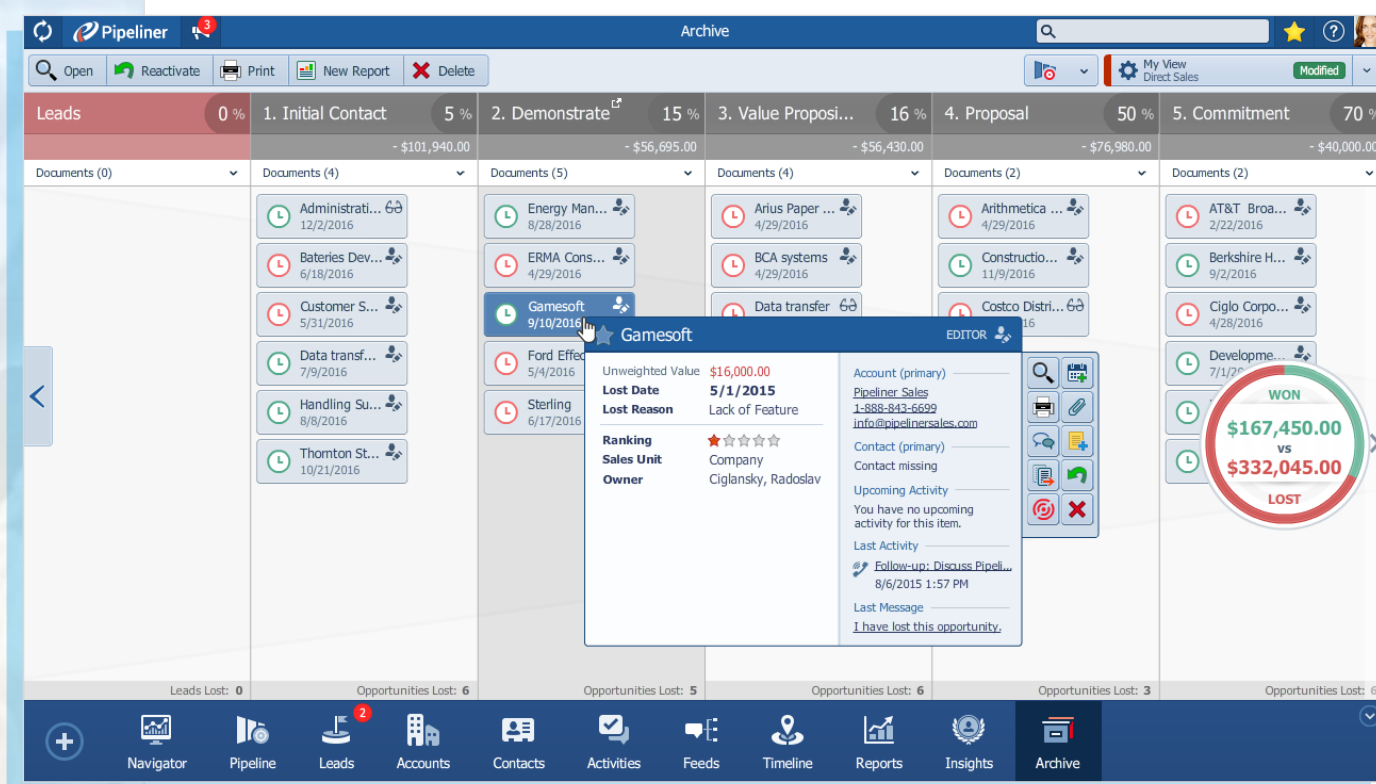
Pipeliner allows a company to totally tailor the pipeline steps to its sales process. A salesperson following this process through Pipeliner, if the process has been well-researched and is correct, shouldn't have a choice but to sell a prospect the correct product.

The Archive—a feature totally unique to Pipeliner CRM—is where lost deals can be saved, within the sales stages in which they were lost, with all their data intact. It is a direct reflection of the company's live sales pipeline, and is a fantastic analysis tool for gauging the accuracy of a sales process. If too many deals are being lost, the Archive can be consulted and it will probably be discovered that the *implied needs* are not being found.



Not only is process accuracy seen to in Pipeliner's pipeline, but also through each activity within each sales stage. Each activity can be arranged in such a way that the opportunity cannot be moved unless the prospect has taken the necessary actions to be qualified for the next activity, and then ultimately the next sales stage.

Additionally, documents can be added to each stage of the sales process for the purpose of further qualifying and assisting and moving the prospect along.



The screenshot displays the Pipeliner CRM interface. The top navigation bar includes the Pipeliner logo, a search bar, and user profile information. Below the navigation bar is a toolbar with buttons for Open, Reactivate, Print, New Report, and Delete. The main area shows a sales pipeline with stages: Leads (0%), 1. Initial Contact (5%), 2. Demonstrate (15%), 3. Value Proposi... (16%), 4. Proposal (50%), and 5. Commitment (70%). Each stage has a list of documents. A modal window for 'Gamesoft' is open, showing details: Unweighted Value \$16,000.00, Lost Date 5/1/2015, Lost Reason Lack of Feature, Ranking ★☆☆☆☆, Sales Unit Company, and Owner Ciglansky, Radoslav. A comparison graphic on the right shows 'WON \$167,450.00 vs \$332,045.00 LOST'.

Archive – Lost Opportunities

## 3

# When

Trying to push the wrong timeframe becomes the next sin, that of *When*.

Once you know *Who* the buyer is, and you are certain of *What* to sell them, it then becomes a question of *When* to sell it to them.

In life, timing is everything. Mikhail Gorbachev once said, “He who comes too late is punished by life.” If a salesperson is too late on a call, and that call could have been made, the sale could go cold. Or, if the salesperson is too pushy and wants to proceed too fast, the buyer feels pushed and hates it.

Prospects don’t want to be pushed. They want to be respected and cared for.

You do, however, want that prospect to go into action, to move. If the prospect doesn’t move, neither does the opportunity and neither do you.

What causes the prospect to go into action? As mentioned a moment ago, various stimuli provided by you. These stimuli could consist of price points, special offers, or convincing arguments that you bring to the table. It could be an invitation to a nice event. It could be a white paper, a case study, or a seasonal offer. It totally depends on the industry.

The basic idea of *When* is:

- ✓ Have a realistic time frame for the opportunity, agreed to by the prospect.
- ✓ Do everything you can to move the opportunity along through the tasks, activities and sales stages to bring the opportunity to a close within that time frame.

## Pipeliner CRM

The proper *When* is literally built into Pipeliner. Each opportunity has its own close date. Each sales stage also has its own time frame, based on the close date and on the usual amount of time needed for an opportunity to move through that stage. We call that *sales velocity*.

Pipeliner greatly helps salespeople keep an accurate *When* through its use of sales activity versus buyer actions. Within a sales stage, the seller will conduct a specific activity which is designed to motivate the buyer into action. If the buyer doesn't take that action, the opportunity doesn't move—meaning, the seller cannot make a wrong choice as to *When*. The seller must then cause the buyer to move in some way, so that the opportunity proceeds along the pipeline once more.



Bubble Chart View — Opportunities Velocity

## 4

# Why

The *Why* of selling comes about by the seller discovering *why* a buyer would buy that product or service. The sin comes about through a failure to discover why a prospect didn't purchase.

This *Why* lies in the mindset of the buyer.

A buyer today is sitting in a data overload, and a natural reaction to that overload is to make assumptions that they already know what they need to know. A major challenge for a salesperson is to bring a prospect out of these assumptions—which could also be seen as a “comfort zone”—and into a learning zone in which they're open to insight.

How is this transition made? Through asking the right questions, demonstrations of product effectiveness, and other tools.

You're asking questions to discover exactly what the buyer is looking for, what the issues are with their company, and how a product or service like yours could solve them. You then provide solutions in response to answers, demonstrating how well your product solves problems. Whenever possible you back up your statements with documentation, and also by showing how many of your clients have had that same issue and how it has been solved with your product or service.

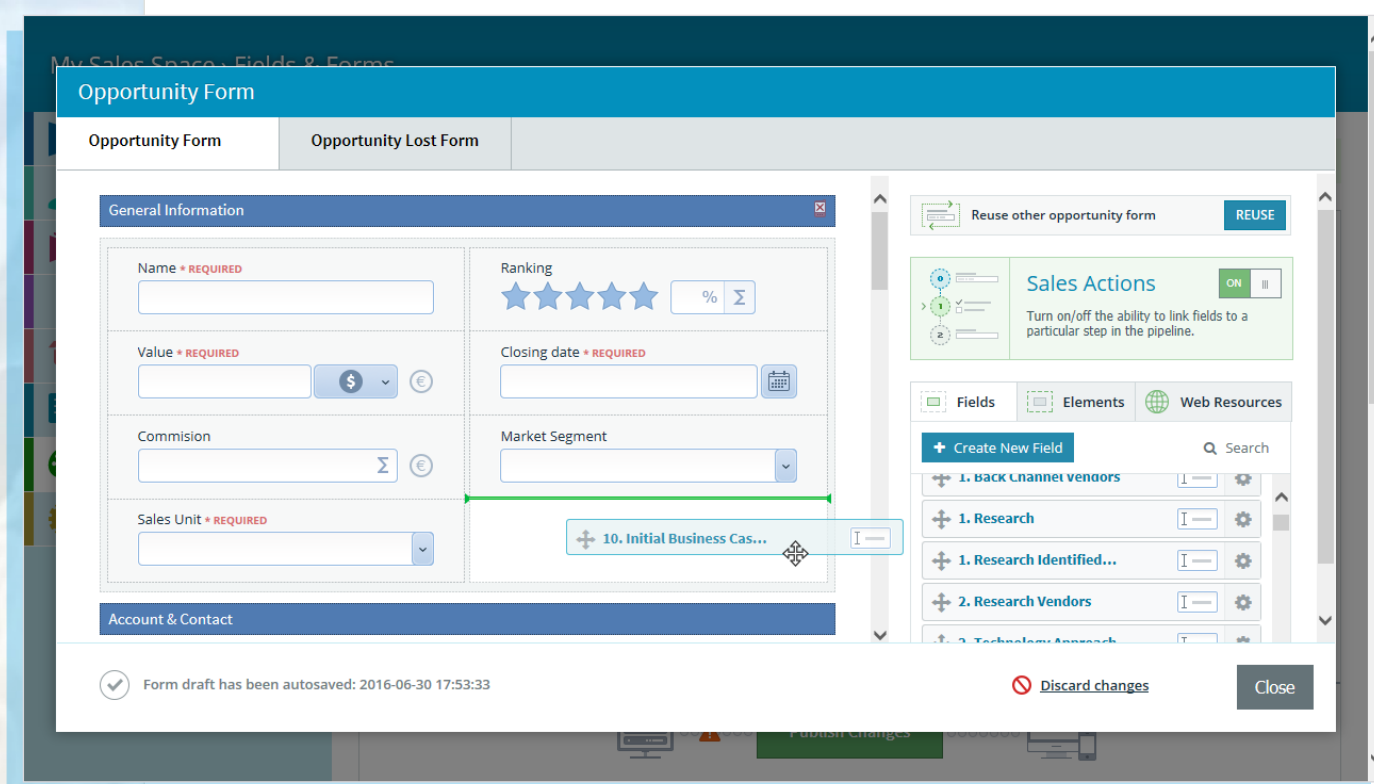
## Pipeliner CRM

Pipeliner CRM is a customizable framework—from the pipeline (sales process) itself, through the tasks and activities taken within each sales process stage, and through each and every form and field used by salespeople.

When CRM is so customized, salespeople are carefully guided through the process. The right questions are going to be asked every time, and answers backed up with collateral and documentation that is attached to each sales stage for instant access.

Utilizing Pipeliner, the buyer can be rapidly transitioned from “assumptions” to being receptive to new data and solutions, in a majority of cases. When this occurs, the seller and the buyer become a partnership, and together brainstorm solutions for the buyer’s issues—based on what the seller is offering, of course.

When a seller isn’t doing this, but is instead just conducting product demonstrations, there is no challenge to the buyer to learn something new. Hence, it is ineffective.



The screenshot displays the 'Opportunity Form' template in the Pipeliner Template Designer. The interface is divided into several sections:

- Opportunity Form Header:** Includes tabs for 'Opportunity Form' and 'Opportunity Lost Form'.
- General Information Panel:** Contains fields for 'Name \* REQUIRED', 'Value \* REQUIRED' (with currency dropdowns for \$ and €), 'Commission' (with a sum symbol), 'Sales Unit \* REQUIRED' (with a dropdown), 'Ranking' (with a star rating and percentage symbol), 'Closing date \* REQUIRED' (with a calendar icon), and 'Market Segment' (with a dropdown).
- Account & Contact Panel:** Located at the bottom of the form.
- Right Sidebar:**
  - Reuse other opportunity form:** A button labeled 'REUSE'.
  - Sales Actions:** A section with a toggle switch labeled 'ON' and a description: 'Turn on/off the ability to link fields to a particular step in the pipeline.'
  - Fields, Elements, Web Resources:** A section with a 'Create New Field' button and a search bar.
  - Field List:** A list of fields including '1. BACK Channel vendors', '1. Research', '1. Research Identified...', '2. Research Vendors', and '3. Technology Approach'.
- Footer:** A status bar indicating 'Form draft has been autosaved: 2016-06-30 17:53:33' and buttons for 'Discard changes' and 'Close'.

Template Designer — Manage and customize all forms and their fields.

## 5

# Where

The sin of *Where* doesn't, in this case, deal with a location. It deals with *where* your prospect stands in their own process, and your address of the prospect in relation to where they are in that process.

Your failure to understand precisely where they are is the sin that can almost immediately lose you a sale. For example, the prospect is in the product evaluation phase, and you're sending them pricing info with a special, time limited offer attached to it. The prospect is obviously not ready for that, and it will only serve to irritate them.

How do you avoid such errors? By *understanding the buyer's process*. Any company, and any sales organization, should be totally aware of their buyers' processes, and should strive to make their own sales processes mirror those buyer processes. Each phase of the sales process should correspond to each stage of the buyer's process.

Additionally, each stage of the sales process should be designed to increasingly maximize the value of your offering, in correspondence to each stage of the buying cycle. In doing so, a momentum is created for the opportunity through the sales pipeline.

## Pipelinier CRM

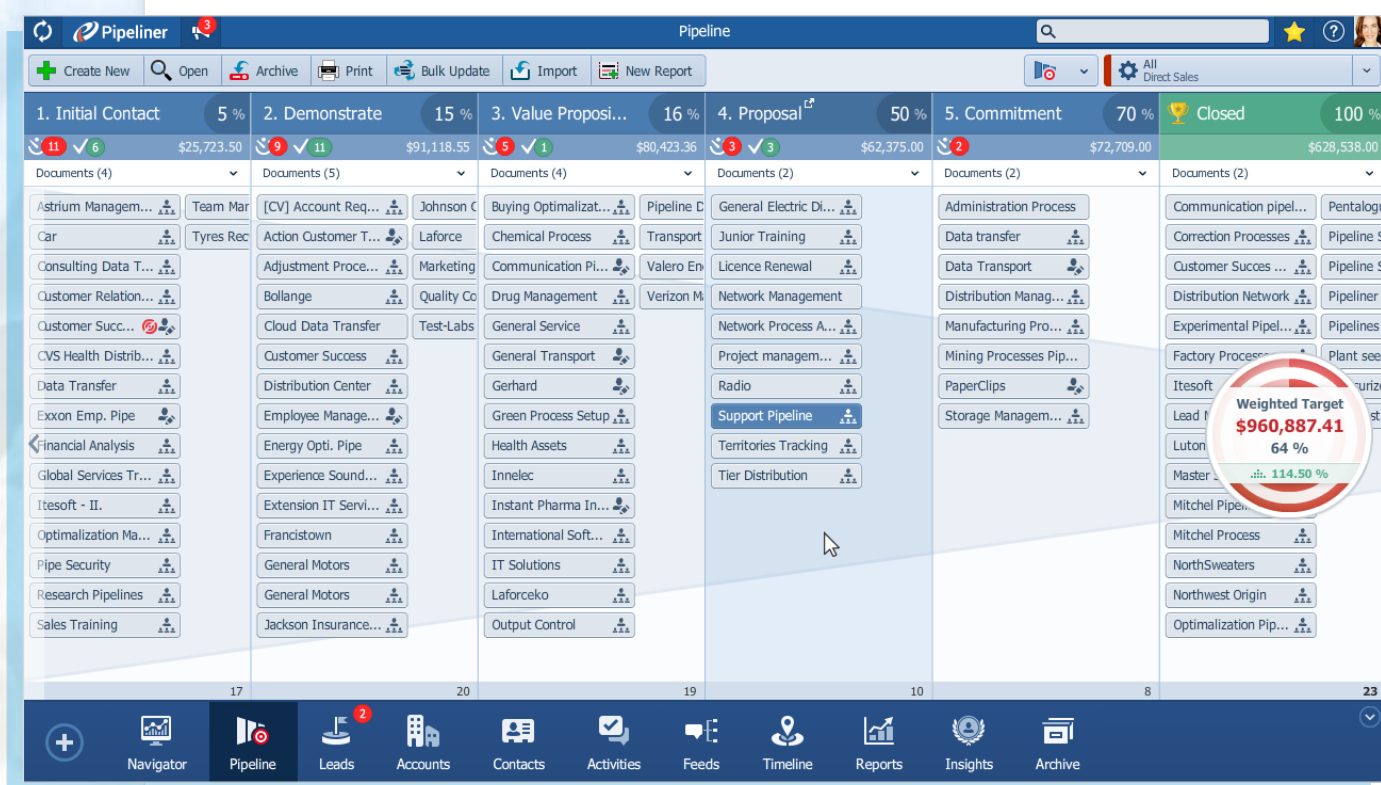
Pipelinier allows the seller to coordinate the sales process with the buying process in 2 ways.

1. When you know the buyer process, you can exactly and rapidly tailor the sales process within Pipelinier exactly to the buyer process. If for some reason it is discovered, up the line, that the sales process needs to be adjusted or amended, it only takes seconds to do so. Your process always remains current.



2. Within Pipeliner, you can set it up so that various buyer actions must occur before an opportunity is moved forward. When tasks and activities are so arranged, that means a salesperson cannot “jump ahead” of the prospect in the buyer process, but must wait until the buyer is truly ready to move forward.

Additionally, each of these steps can be fully and accurately measured through Pipeliner, so that there is little to no error with moving the opportunity into the next stage.



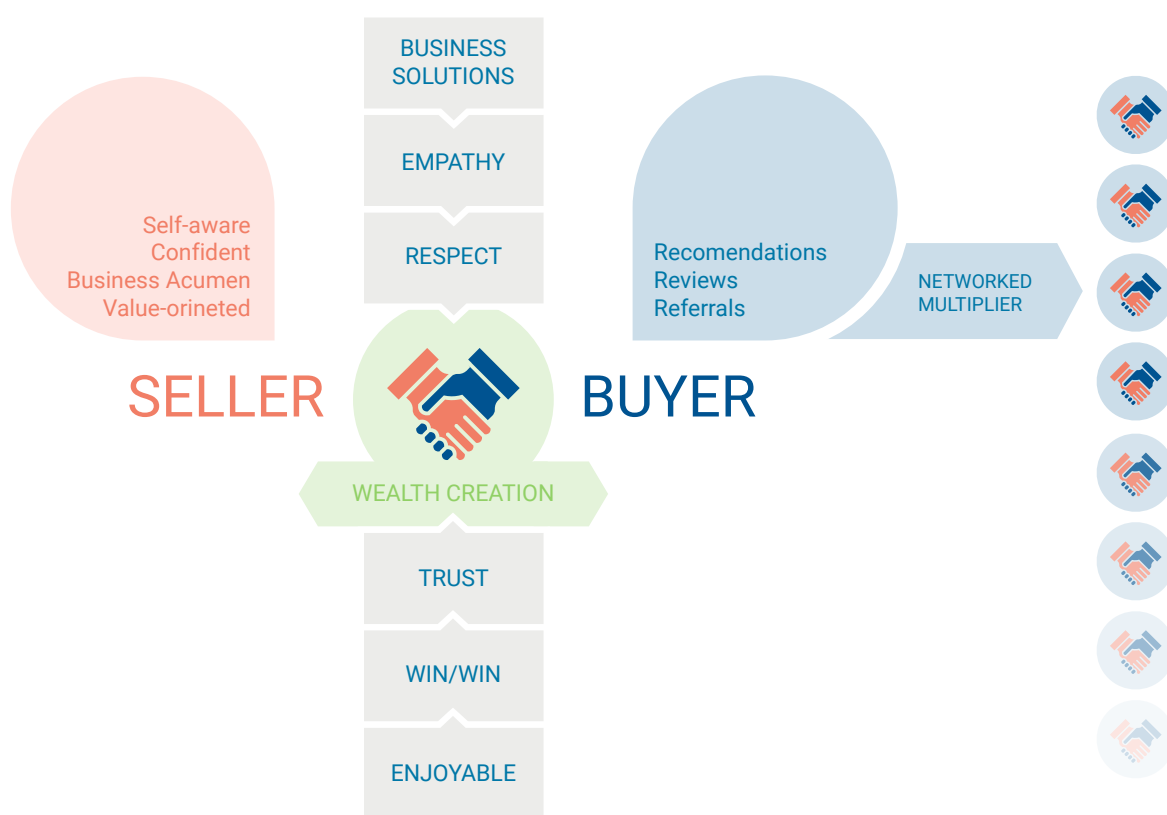
Sales Pipeline

## 6

## hoW

The sin of hoW deals with *how* you are selling. No matter what sales methodology you use, there are factors that must be part of it that today you cannot do without.

These factors are described well in this illustration of our **Network Selling philosophy**:



As you can see, the elements the seller brings to the table are:

- ✓ Self-aware
- ✓ Confident
- ✓ Business Acumen
- ✓ Value-oriented

The buyer, on the other hand, brings:

- ✓ Recommendations
- ✓ Reviews
- ✓ Referrals

Additionally, the buyer acts as a networked multiplier—experiences good or bad are going to be passed along to friends and colleagues. As you can see, that seller is only going to succeed if that shared data reflects positively on the seller.

You can see in this graphic that the elements shared between the seller and the buyer are those things on which they both must firmly agree for the sale to be a total success and, more importantly, for further successes to follow:

- |                      |             |
|----------------------|-------------|
| ✓ Business Solutions | ✓ Trust     |
| ✓ Empathy            | ✓ Win/Win   |
| ✓ Respect            | ✓ Enjoyable |

Of paramount importance is that second to the last item, “Win/Win.” In today’s networked selling environment, both the buyer and the seller have to win for sales to be a real success.

## Empathy

A major element that must be part of all sales today is *empathy*. You must listen to what the buyer has to say. You should take the time to understand their needs and problems, and respond to them.

And please...when practicing empathy, be *authentic*. That empathy must be genuine. Phony empathy can be spotted a mile away, and nothing will lose you a sale faster than when it is.

## PARES

To express this use of empathy, we have created a new acronym: *PARES*. It stands for *Pipeliner Authentic Respect Empathy Strategy*. This acronym fully describes the proper use of empathy—for empathy won’t be effective without authenticity and respect.

This is a strategy you need! The punishment for not utilizing it is to live without customers.

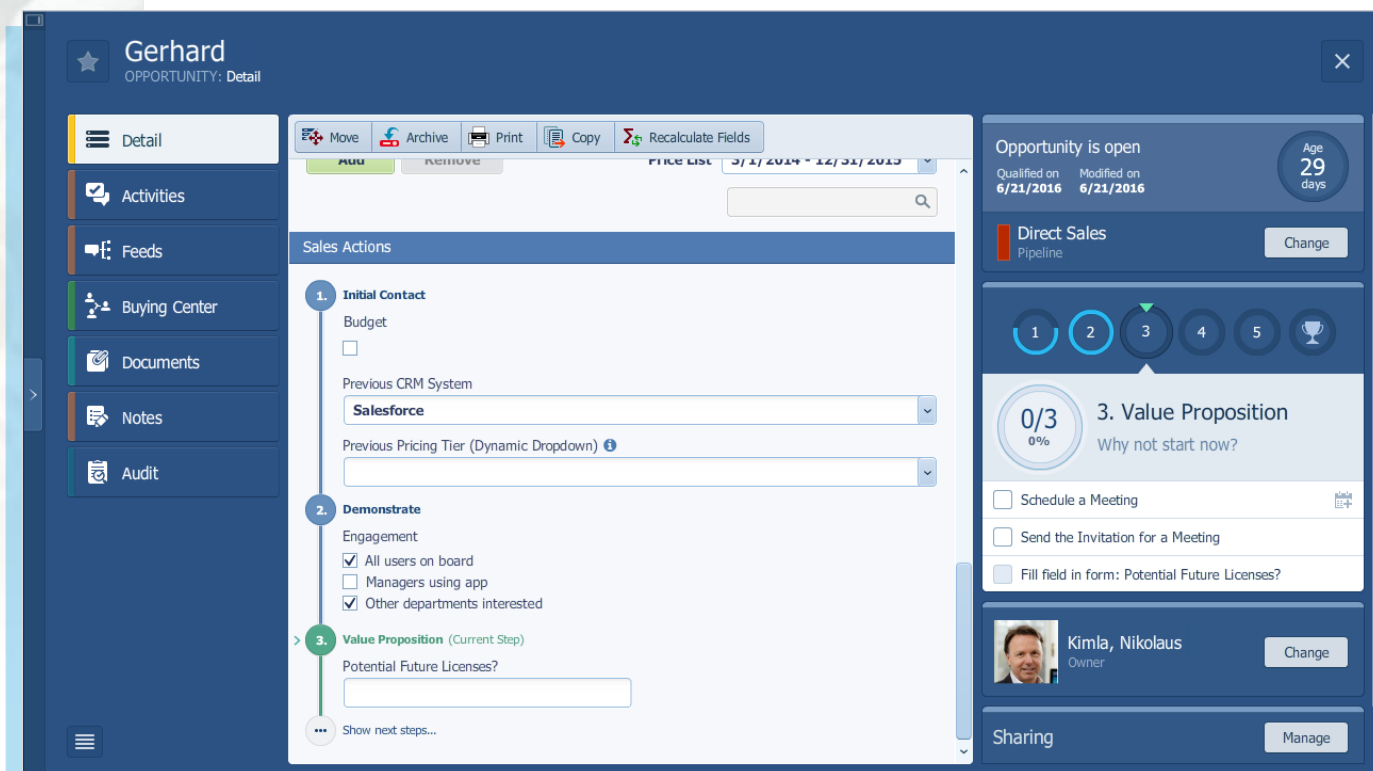
## Combination

As we've covered at length elsewhere, the digital world is fully transparent. Your reputation precedes you. If you're not practicing Network Selling as described above, along with *PARES*, you'll have customers leaving you and providing negative comments that will block future business from you.

If you *are* truly practicing Network Selling as described above, along with *PARES*, you'll then have recommendations and future business, and the sky's the limit.

## Pipeliner CRM

While Pipeliner CRM certainly cannot apply Network Selling and *PARES* for salespeople, it supports them in every way possible. Through the sales process, and then through carefully laid out tasks and activities within each sales stage, a salesperson is carefully guided and encouraged to practice *PARES* and all the various parts of Network Selling.



The screenshot displays the 'Opportunity Detail - Sales Actions' view in the Pipeliner CRM. The interface is divided into several sections:

- Header:** Shows the user 'Gerhard' and the 'OPPORTUNITY: Detail' view.
- Left Sidebar:** Contains navigation links for Detail, Activities, Feeds, Buying Center, Documents, Notes, and Audit.
- Top Action Bar:** Includes buttons for Move, Archive, Print, Copy, and Recalculate Fields, along with a date range filter set to '3/1/2014 - 12/31/2015'.
- Sales Actions Section:** A vertical timeline with three steps:
  - 1. Initial Contact:** Includes a 'Budget' checkbox, a 'Previous CRM System' dropdown menu (set to 'Salesforce'), and a 'Previous Pricing Tier (Dynamic Dropdown)' dropdown menu.
  - 2. Demonstrate:** Includes an 'Engagement' section with checkboxes for 'All users on board' (checked), 'Managers using app' (unchecked), and 'Other departments interested' (checked).
  - 3. Value Proposition (Current Step):** Includes a 'Potential Future Licenses?' text input field.
- Right Sidebar:**
  - Opportunity is open:** Shows 'Qualified on 6/21/2016' and 'Modified on 6/21/2016', with a circular timer indicating 'Age 29 days'.
  - Direct Sales Pipeline:** A progress bar with five stages (1-5) and a trophy icon. Stage 3 is currently active.
  - 3. Value Proposition:** A section titled 'Why not start now?' with a progress indicator '0/3 0%' and three checkboxes: 'Schedule a Meeting', 'Send the Invitation for a Meeting', and 'Fill field in form: Potential Future Licenses?'.
  - User Profile:** Displays a profile picture and the name 'Kimla, Nikolaus' with the role 'Owner'.
  - Sharing:** A button labeled 'Manage'.

Opportunity Detail – Sales Actions



# CRM (R)Evolutionized – Instant Intelligence, Visualized!

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