# MEDDPICC

## Idea In Short

The MEDDPICC sales methodology is a comprehensive approach to sales that focuses on understanding customer Metrics, identifying Economic Buyers, determining Decision Criteria and Paper Process, identifying Pain points, finding a Champion within the customer organization, and analyzing Competition to tailor the sales pitch to the customer's specific needs and concerns.

Sales is a complex process that involves many steps, including prospecting, qualifying, presenting, and closing deals. While there are many different sales methodologies, one that has gained popularity in recent years is the MEDDPICC sales methodology. MEDDPICC is an acronym that stands for Metrics, Economic Buyer, Decision Criteria, Decision Process, Identify Pain, Champion, and Competition. In this article, we will explore each of these components of the MEDDPICC sales methodology and provide examples of how they can be applied in a real-world sales scenario.

## Origin

The earliest known reference to MEDDIC (an earlier version of the MEDDPICC methodology) was made by Dick Dunkel who was working under the leadership of John McMahon and in collaboration with teammate Jack Napoli at Parametric Technology Corporation [PTC]. In his 1993 book, MEDDPICC: The Ultimate Guide to Staying One Step Ahead in the Complex Sale, Napoli describes MEDDIC as a methodology for selling strategic deals in a business-to-business (B2B) environment by identifying and selling to the key decision-makers within a customer organization.

According to McMahon:

> Before the acronym MEDDIC existed, I always taught specific items as qualification parameters on every forecasted deal. Things like, do we have a Champion or just a

> coach? Has the Champion helped us get to the Economic Buyer to qualify the deal further and help us "frame" the Decision Criteria and fully understand the Decision Process? And, as our product evolved and eventually worked – since it didn't work until version 7 – we focused on what Pain we were solving; how could we quantify the customer's pain, and quantify the tangible business value of our solution.

Over time, the methodology evolved to include additional components, such as the Champion and Competition elements, and the double "D" in MEDDPICC was added to emphasize the importance of identifying and addressing the customer's pain points. The methodology gained popularity in the tech industry, particularly among software companies selling to enterprise customers, and has been used by companies such as Salesforce and HubSpot to train their sales teams.

## Metrics

The first component of the MEDDPICC sales methodology is Metrics. Everything starts with metrics. This refers to the quantifiable results that the customer expects to achieve by using your product or service:

- What does your prospect hope to accomplish using your product or service?
- How can you quantify that outcome?

Metrics can include revenue growth, cost reduction, time savings, or any other measurable benefit. As a sales professional, it is important to understand what metrics are important to your customer and how your product or service can help them achieve these metrics. It's all about defining the results you can provide.

> For instance, if you're selling sales software, your buyer probably has a target just like you. They're buying your product to help them reach that goal, and understanding how far they have to go and what your product can add is critical to your sale and future success.

In most cases, metrics come in many shapes and sizes. First, there are the ultimate goals that your economic buyer has, which are often directly tied to their compensation.

While you may have a set of metrics that generally apply to customers, it's important to fundamentally understand the specific buyer and tailor metrics to them. This is also where product data becomes extra critical, as it gives you a whole new perspective on who and how your prospect is thinking about using your product—information you can tie back into the metrics you're looking to drive for them.

> For example, if you are selling a project management tool, you might learn that your customer's primary metric is completing projects on time and within budget. You can then demonstrate how your tool can help them achieve this metric by showing how it streamlines communication, reduces errors, and enables better project tracking.

Questions to ask to understand Metrics:

- What are your overall goals?
- How are you doing against your overall goals?
- What is the most critical metric for the company?
- How would a new solution impact your goals?
- What is the business case?
- Have you quantified the challenge[s] the customer is having and the impact to the organization?
- What quantifiable metrics/measurements have been identified?
- Top-line metrics include quicker time to market, higher quality (improvements towards sales and revenue)
- Bottom line metrics include reduction in operating costs
- How will you prove the business benefits of the solution?
- Has the customer bought into your Metrics?
- Are your Metrics aligned with the desired business outcomes?
- Is your Champion[s] leveraging your Metrics?
- Are your Metrics in the business justification or decision criteria (or both)?
- Has the Economic Buyer made reference calls based on your Metrics?

## Economic Buyer

The next component of the MEDDPICC sales methodology is the Economic Buyer. The

economic buyer is a key role in any sales process. This is the person within the customer organization who has the authority to make purchasing decisions and ultimately hold the budget to make the go/no-go on your deal.

It is important to identify the Economic Buyer early in the sales process to ensure that you are focusing your efforts on the person who can actually make the buying decision. Therefore, identifying your economic buyer early in the process is critical, as without them it's nearly impossible to answer the rest of the questions MEDDPICC requires.

Sometimes you won't have a direct connection with the ultimate economic buyer and you need to work through a proxy. Understanding who that proxy is, how close they are to the actual buyer, and whether they have different needs and motivations is critical for success.

> For example, if you are selling a marketing automation tool to a large organization, you might initially engage with a marketing manager who is interested in your product. However, it is important to determine who the Economic Buyer is and build a relationship with that person to ensure that your efforts are not wasted.

Questions to ask to identify your Economic Buyer:

- Have you identified and met with the Economic Buyer[s] [EB] (the individual[s] who has the power to spend and/or has profit/loss responsibility for this solution)?
- How do you know they're actually the EB (versus someone higher in the organization)?
- How can you leverage your Champion to gain access?
- What does the Economic Buyer[s] care about most?
- How do you establish credibility with your EB[s]?
- How will you leverage your EB[s] during key decision events and milestones?
- Who is responsible for the final signoff?
- Would they need to see the product?
- Does the buyer need to use the product before signature?
- Are the buyer's metrics and goals different than yours?
- If buyer's metrics are different, how can you achieve their metrics?

## Decision Criteria

The third component of the MEDDPICC sales methodology is Decision Criteria. This refers to the specific factors that the customer will consider when making a buying decision. Decision criteria are one of those things that are hard to define without just using the words again.

In any competitive situation, a prospect will evaluate multiple solutions against a set of criteria (objectives, key functionality, etc.). Sometimes this is all detailed in an RFP. Sometimes, it is just in someone's head.

These criteria can include features, pricing, support, ease of use, implementation time, price and any other factors that are important to the customer. Knowing which criteria are most important to your economic buyer (and the other stakeholders in the deal) can help you identify the levers you have in the deal and negotiation.

Decision criteria are also critical for competitive positioning. If you know there is one crucial criterion you excel at, you can play that up throughout the process.

> For example, if you are selling a software product, your customer might be considering factors such as ease of use, integration with existing systems, and the availability of support. By understanding the customer's decision criteria, you can tailor your sales pitch to address these factors and increase your chances of closing the deal.

Questions to ask to understand the Decision Criteria:

- Are there multiple buyers that are defining your criteria?
- What is the most important decision you need to make in your process?
- Have you laid out how you will make sure all of your criteria areas are met during our evaluation process?
- What is the customer's criteria for selection?
- What is the Business Decision Criteria [BDC]?
- What is the Technical Decision Criteria [TDC]?
- What are the highest priority Required Capabilities?
- How will these criteria be weighted during the decision process?
- Have all key customer stakeholders helped shape the above requirements?
- How have you influenced (or how are you actively influencing) the Decision Criteria

in favor of the product or service?
- How does our technology align with their technical wish list?
- How does our subscription model align with how they usually buy software?
- What other criteria have they told us about?

## Decision Process

Increasingly, proof of concept [POC] and trials are part of the sales process. This makes sense: a POC/trial helps a buyer de-risk their investment by proving that it can work for their situation, organization, data, and users.The fourth component of the MEDDPICC sales methodology is Decision Process. This refers to the steps that the customer will go through in order to make a buying decision. Understanding the customer's decision process is important because it allows you to anticipate objections and provide the right information at each stage of the process:

- What are the steps your prospect will go through to make a final decision?
- Who needs to be involved?
- What do they need to see?
- Who do they need to talk to?

The earlier you find out there's a security review, for instance, the earlier you can schedule the conversation so that it doesn't become a last-minute blocker.

> For example, if you are selling a complex enterprise software solution, your customer might go through several stages of evaluation before making a final decision. By understanding the customer's decision process, you can provide the right information at each stage of the process and address objections before they arise.

Questions to ask to understand the Decision Process:

- What will the decision-making process look like?
- Can you take me through the steps you want to take to make a decision?
- Do you have an estimated date you want to decide by?
- Is it possible to lay out how we can engage with you at different stages of the

decision process?

- What steps are included in the customer's decision process?
- What key stakeholders are involved in the Decision Process and what do we know about them?
- How will the decision ultimately be made (e.g. one person's influence, decision by committee)?
- How have you influenced the Decision Process in favor of the product or service?
- Have you documented all of the validation and approval activities/steps?
- Have you developed a reverse timeline and workback plan?
- Are you and the customer vested in the above workback plan?
- Have you reviewed and socialized the timeline with all interested parties?
- Who can change the process?

## Paper Process

The Paper Process is the series of steps that follow the Decision Process in how you will go from Decision to signature.

The larger the organization, the more complex the paperwork. You need to get through all the red tape to ensure your deal is able to close. Your goal in the paper process is to uncover any obstacles in getting contracts, NDA, security questionnaires, and similar reviewed and approved by appropriate stakeholders.

So, it's better to sort the paperwork details ASAP and stay ahead of legal departments and administrative tasks, avoiding further delays.

- How do we actually get a deal done?
- Is it our paper or yours?
- Who will be involved?

Questions to ask to understand the Paper Process:

- Can you help me understand the contracting process at your company?
- Who will be involved and what does it typically entail?
- Is there anything I can share ahead of time that would make the legal process simpler?

- Are there any new people I should be introduced to that would help us get this signature done faster?
- How much time does the legal process typically take?
- When could I get introduced to your procurement team to start the process?
- What does the purchasing (budget and funding release) process entail?
- What paperwork will be required to make the purchase happen?
- Do you know how each step gets approved?
- Are there any SLAs we need to be aware of along the way?
- Does the purchasing process include a board or committee review/approval?
- How has this process and timeline expectations for each step been documented and communicated?
- Is there a legal team involved in contract negotiations?
- Who is involved in this and how long does it take?
- What does a purchase of this size look like?
- Has a purchase of this size happened before?
- Do you know who the actual signer is?
- Is there more than one signatory?
- Do you know if the Purchase Order [PO] gets automatically generated once the business approves the order form?
- Should the PO also get approved by someone in purchasing/procurement?
- Is there enough time left in the quarter to complete this?

## Identify Pain

The fifth component of the MEDDPICC sales methodology is to Identify Pain. The goal is to figure out what pains your product is solving. There''s long been talk of vitamins versus painkillers in sales, with the former being nice to have while the latter is a must-have. Understanding the specific hard pain points your customer has and how your product might be able to solve them can help you tailor your pitch.

This refers to understanding the customer's pain points, or the problems that they are trying to solve with your product or service. By understanding the customer's pain points, you can demonstrate how your product or service can help them address these issues.

> For example, if you are selling a sales enablement tool, your customer might be struggling with a lack of visibility into their sales pipeline. By understanding this pain

point, you can demonstrate how your tool can provide better visibility and improve their sales performance.

Questions to ask to Implicate the Pain:

- How are your goals tied to the broader company goals?
- What happens if you meet/exceed your goals?
- What is holding you back the most right now?
- What frustrates you most in your current situation?
- What do you fear most about the next year in your role?
- What would need to happen for you if you could "blue-sky" a great year?
- What are the customer's primary objectives with this project or initiative?
- What are the biggest business and technical pains?
- Are those pains resulting in lost productivity, reduced revenues, increased costs, etc.?
- How severe is the pain?
- How long have they been dealing with this pain?
- Who has the pain and who is in charge of fixing it?
- What happens if they don't fix it?
- How does your Champion and Economic Buyer prioritize this pain?
- Where have we solved this pain before?
- Does the customer perceive that the pain of change is less than the pain of doing nothing and sticking with the status quo?
- What is the customer's compelling event and how does that add to the pain they are experiencing?
- What information do we have to justify the recommended solution?

## Champion

The sixth component of the MEDDPICC sales methodology is Champion. This refers to identifying a champion within the customer organization who will advocate for your product or service. This is the person inside the prospect who is rooting for you to win. They are the ones who would benefit most from your solution and can be an essential voice around the table when the decision is made.

The champion is someone within the customer's organization who has a vested interest in the success of the project and is willing to champion your product or service internally. This person can be anyone from a department manager to a C-level executive. The champion is crucial because they can help you navigate the customer's organization, provide access to decision-makers, and help overcome objections.

Although most often the champion and decision-maker are different people, your champion is your best advocate back to the decision-maker. While it''s helpful to hear from a salesperson about all the value their product can provide, it''s even more important to hear it from an employee at the company who is aligned with you.

Helping the champion to understand the value to them and the broader organization and arming them to articulate that internally is an integral part of the sales process.

Like the economic buyer, identifying your champion using product data is an increasingly important part of the buying process. We use Milestones in Variance to identify a sub-set of champions we call superusers.

> For example, if you are selling a cybersecurity solution to a large organization, you might identify a security manager who is passionate about protecting the company's assets. This person can help you navigate the customer's organization, provide access to decision-makers, and help overcome objections from other stakeholders.

Questions to ask to identify your Champion:

- Who is your Champion?
- Does this person know they are your Champion?
- How do you know if you're working with a champion vs. a coach?
- Is your Champion strong enough to help you connect the dots, give you access to people, and tell you if you're on track or not?
- How is your Champion[s] aligned within the organization?
- How have you tested them to ensure they are a true Champion?
- Who are your other potential Champions?
- Will you introduce me to the most important people in the buying process?
- Are you willing to go to bat for us against any detractors?

- Have there been examples where you could successfully sell in a solution like this?
- Do you have the faith of your boss?
- What are the key objections you know we need to overcome?
- What is the best way to sell in this solution to the most senior folks in the room?

## Competition

The final component of the MEDDPICC sales methodology is Competition. This refers to understanding your competition and how to differentiate yourself from them. Understanding your competition is important because it allows you to address objections and demonstrate why your product or service is superior.

There are obvious direct competitors. Still, it''s also crucial to understand other products that do partial or similar jobs, consultants who are delivering services to help solve this problem, and even employees at the company who may be displaced by a product like yours. All of these are competitors, and mapping the landscape and understanding your competitive advantages and disadvantages could be the difference between getting the deal done and missing out.

> For example, if you are selling a marketing automation tool, you might be competing against other solutions that offer similar features. To differentiate yourself, you might demonstrate how your tool provides better analytics or integrates more seamlessly with other systems.

Questions to ask to understand your Competition:

- What other companies besides us are you thinking about?
- Who is our top competition in this opportunity?
- Who are your internal and external competitors?
- Where are we strong (Differentiators)?
- Where are we weak relative to the competition as perceived by the customer?
- Have you discussed this with your client?
- Who are your competitors' Champions and what is their champion's role and level of influence?
- What is the competition's relative power and influence in the account?

- What is your plan to counter your competition's sales strategy?
- Are there things you wish we did differently?
- Why would we not win this deal?
- We respect our competition, and I''d be interested in what you think of them?
- Would you let me know if we were running behind a competitor in this evaluation?

## Real-world Examples of the MEDDPICC Sales Methodology

Now that we have explored each component of the MEDDPICC sales methodology, let's look at some real-world examples of how it can be applied.

### Selling a CRM Solution

Imagine you are selling a CRM solution to a small business owner. Here's how you might apply the MEDDPICC sales methodology

- **Metrics:** You learn that the customer's primary metric is revenue growth
- **Economic Buyer:** You identify the business owner as the Economic Buyer
- **Decision Criteria:** You learn that the customer is primarily concerned with ease of use and affordability
- **Decision Process:** You learn that the customer will evaluate several solutions before making a decision
- **Identify Pain:** You learn that the customer is struggling to manage customer data and track sales leads
- **Champion:** You identify the sales manager as a potential champion who is passionate about improving sales performance
- **Competition:** You learn that the customer is considering several other CRM solutions

Using this information, you can tailor your sales pitch to address the customer's specific needs and concerns. For example, you might demonstrate how your CRM solution can help the customer track leads more effectively, provide better reporting on sales performance, and is more affordable than competing solutions.

### Selling an Enterprise Software Solution

Imagine you are selling an enterprise software solution to a large organization. Here's how

you might apply the MEDDPICC sales methodology

- **Metrics:** You learn that the customer's primary metric is cost reduction
- **Economic Buyer:** You identify the CIO as the Economic Buyer
- **Decision Criteria:** You learn that the customer is primarily concerned with ease of integration and scalability
- **Decision Process:** You learn that the customer will go through several stages of evaluation before making a decision
- **Identify Pain:** You learn that the customer is struggling to manage a complex IT environment
- **Champion:** You identify the IT director as a potential champion who is passionate about improving IT efficiency
- **Competition:** You learn that the customer is considering several other software solutions.

Using this information, you can tailor your sales pitch to address the customer's specific needs and concerns. For example, you might demonstrate how your software solution can integrate more seamlessly with existing systems, reduce the need for manual processes, and scale to meet the organization's needs.

The MEDDPICC sales methodology is a powerful framework for understanding your customer's needs, addressing objections, and closing deals. By focusing on Metrics, Economic Buyer, Decision Criteria, Decision Process, Identify Pain, Champion, and Competition, you can tailor your sales pitch to address the specific needs and concerns of your customer. The key to success with the MEDDPICC sales methodology is to be thorough in your research and preparation, and to be flexible in how you apply the methodology to different sales situations. Remember that the MEDDPICC methodology is not a one-size-fits-all solution, and you will need to adapt it to fit the specific needs and concerns of each customer.

## Best Practices

In addition to the components of the MEDDPICC methodology, there are a few other tips and best practices that can help you be successful in your sales efforts. Here are some additional considerations

### Build trust

Building trust with your customer is crucial to success in sales. Be transparent about what your product or service can do, and be honest about any limitations or potential drawbacks. If you make promises that you can't keep, you risk losing the customer's trust and damaging your reputation. Listen carefully: Listening carefully to your customer's needs and concerns is critical. Resist the temptation to jump in and start pitching your product or service before you have fully understood the customer's situation. By listening carefully, you can tailor your pitch to address the specific needs and concerns of the customer.

### Be patient

Closing a sale can take time, and you may need to be patient and persistent in your efforts. Be respectful of the customer's time and schedule, and be prepared to follow up regularly to stay top-of-mind.

### Collaborate with your team

Selling can be a team effort, and you may need to collaborate with other members of your organization to close a sale. Make sure you are aligned with your team and that everyone is working together to address the customer's needs.

### Learn from your mistakes

Even the most experienced sales professionals make mistakes. When a sale doesn't go as planned, take the time to reflect on what went wrong and how you can improve in the future.

## Summary

The MEDDPICC sales methodology is a powerful tool for understanding your customer's needs and closing deals. By focusing on Metrics, Economic Buyer, Decision Criteria, Decision Process, Identify Pain, Champion, and Competition, you can tailor your sales pitch to address the specific needs and concerns of your customer. But remember that the key to success in sales is to build trust, listen carefully, be patient, collaborate with your team, and learn from your mistakes. With these best practices in mind, you can be a successful sales

professional and close more deals.