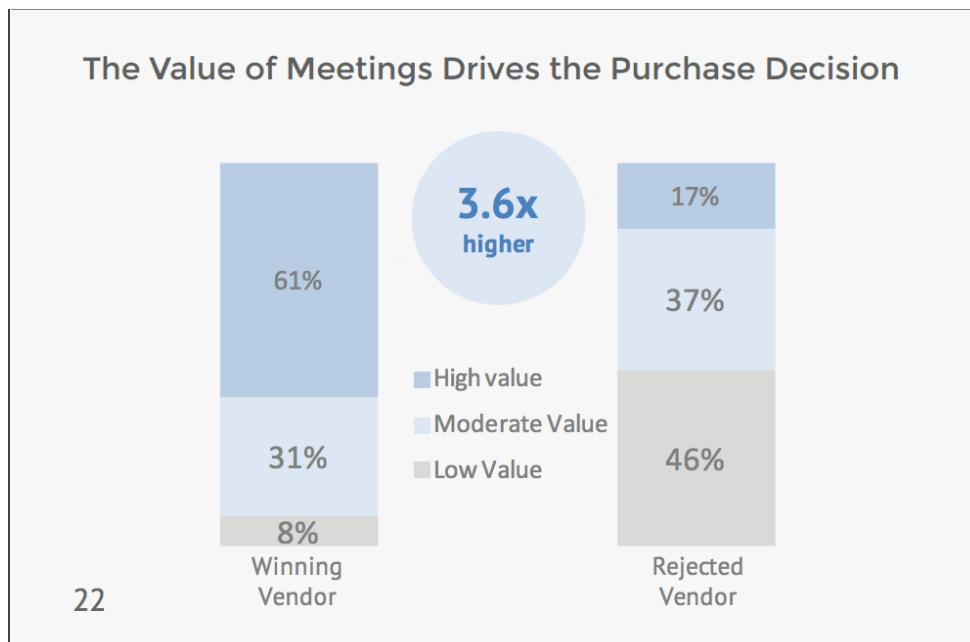


The 5 Characteristics of Sales Reps Who Get Prospects to Open Their Wallets [New Data]



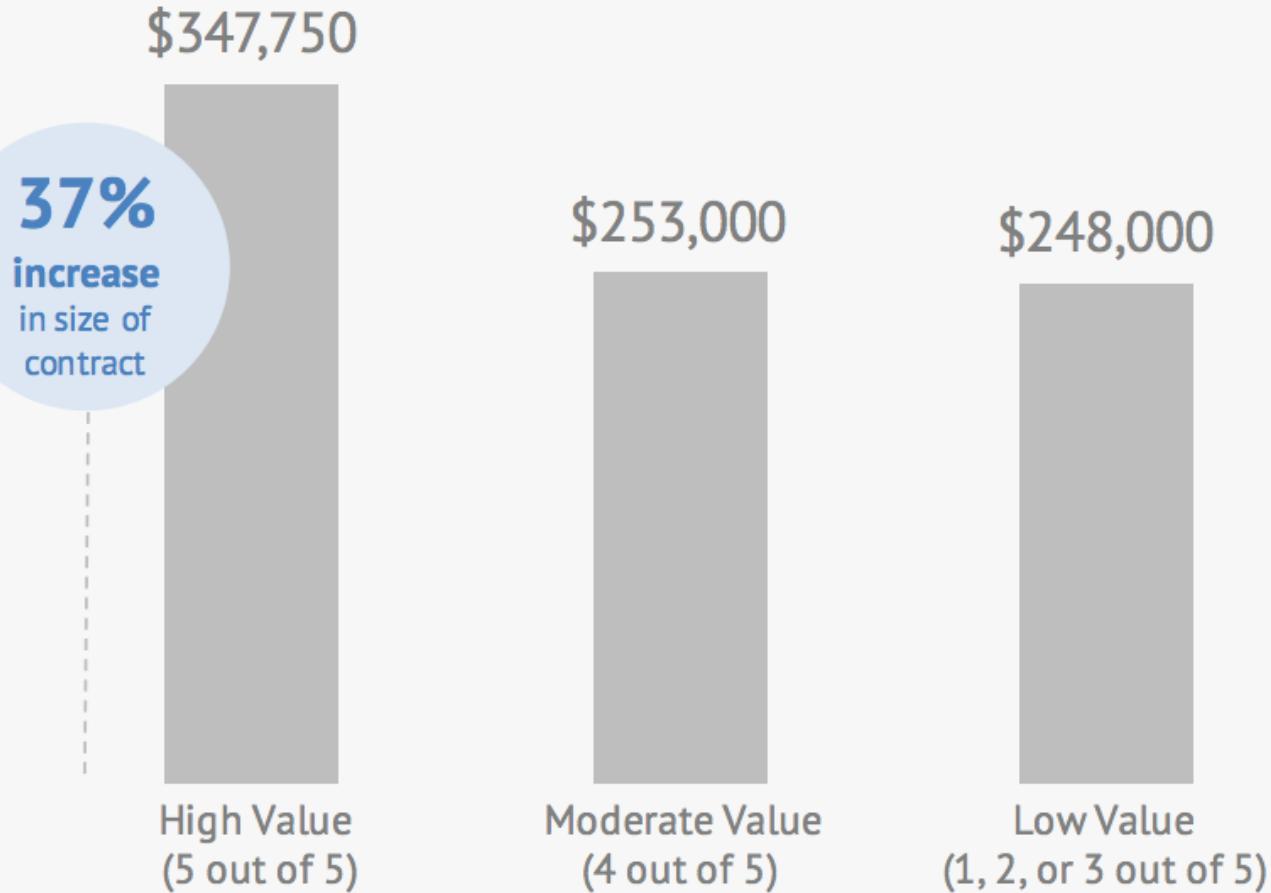
We always knew meetings were important to the sales process. But now, there's quantifiable evidence of just how important.

PeopleMetrics recently conducted [a study on this topic](#) which found that prospects were 3.6 times more likely to rate meetings with the winning vendor as being high-value. Losing vendors, by comparison, were 5.6 times more likely to receive low-value ratings.



Not only do high value meetings lead to closed deals, they also lead to higher contract values. As prospects' ratings of meeting value move from good to excellent, the average size of won contracts increases by close to \$100,000.

The Value of Sales Meetings Correlates with the Size of the Resulting Contracts



Bottom line: Meetings matter! So what creates a “high-value” meeting in the eyes of your prospects? We dug into the data to find out and identified five characteristics common to sales reps who create valuable meetings for buyers.

The 5 Characteristics of Salespeople Who Run High-Value Meetings

1) Responsiveness

Responsiveness in sales is all about follow-up. Prospects want reps to follow up in a thorough, accurate, and timely manner both before and after meetings. And the expectation for high levels of responsiveness starts with the first inquiry. Research shows that “50% of buyers choose the vendor that responds first.”

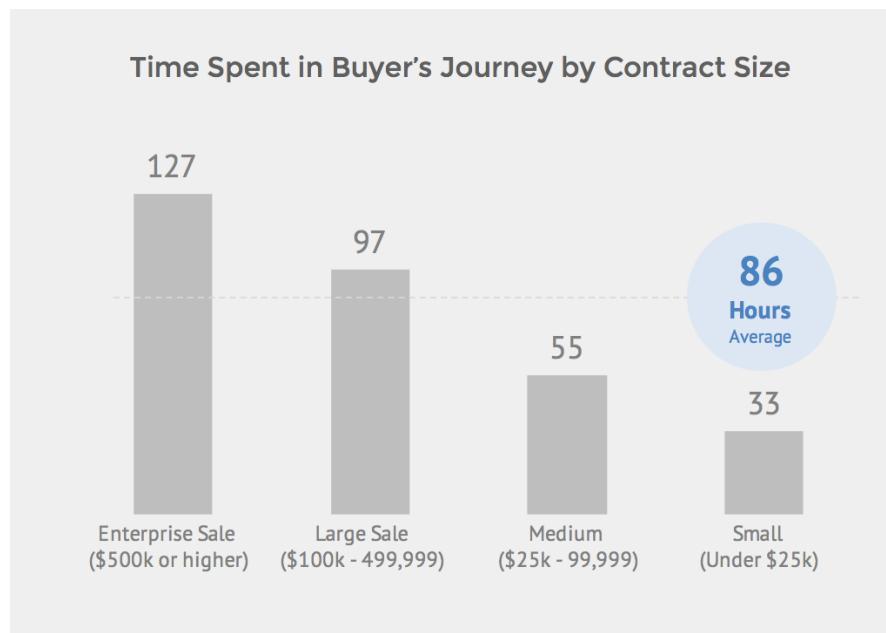
Here are some questions to ask yourself when you’re evaluating your responsiveness:

- Do you know your median response time after an inbound lead comes through your door?
- Do you know how quickly reps follow up after meetings?
- Is 24 hours the expected follow-up norm for your team? Can you do better?

2) Preparation

Preparation is the difference between showing up for a call with valuable insights and showing up and asking beginner questions like, “So, tell me a little about your business.” Prospects see preparation when reps show up having done the work to get to their company, and when they’re ready to deliver on any promises from prior meetings.

Prospects expect preparation because it reflects the energy they’ve put into the buying process. We found that on average, prospects invest 86 hours in choosing a B2B partner. They expect sales reps to put in a similar amount of effort.



3) Listening Skills

No, sitting quietly until it's time to give your product pitch doesn't count. Pete Caputa wrote a great post about the importance of active listening. He describes active listening as:

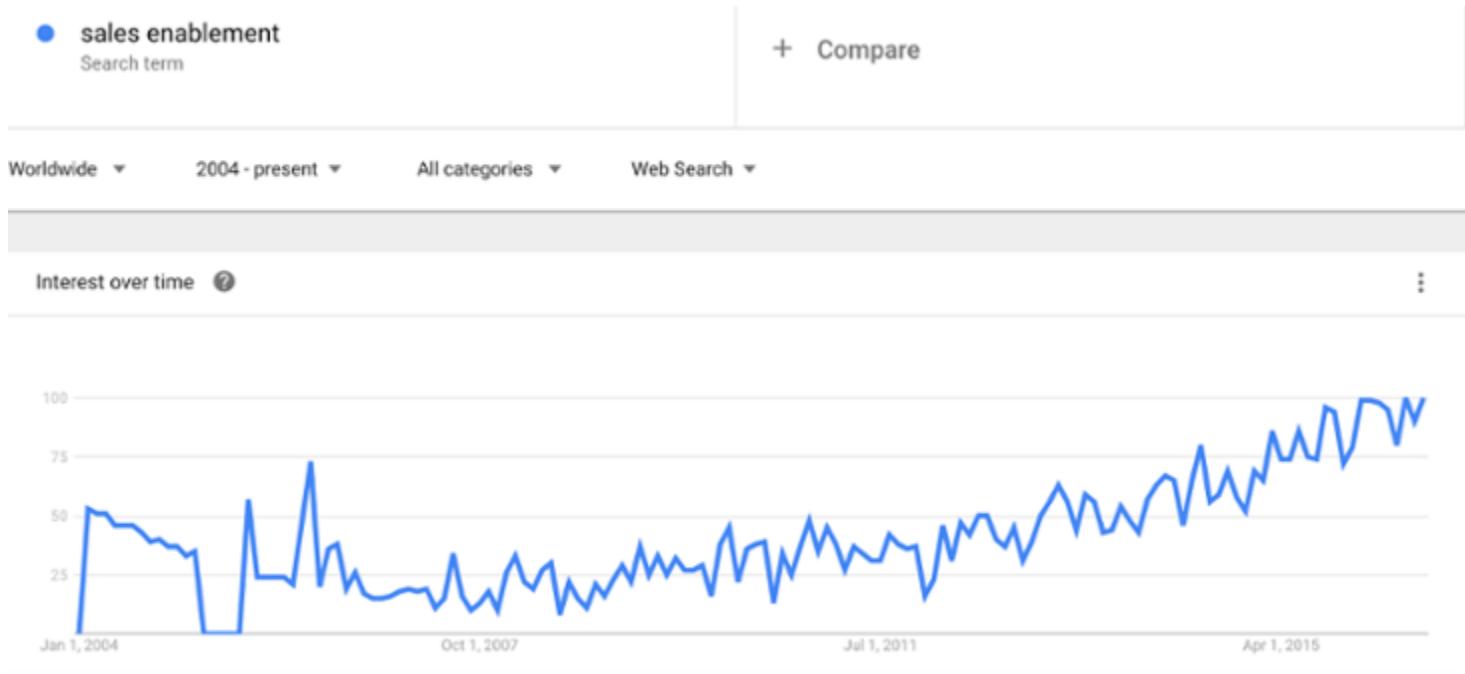
- Truly listening to the prospect
- Feeding back the content and feeling of the prospect's words
- Confirming you heard the prospect correctly
- Asking a relevant follow-up question to further clarify your understanding of their situation

Again, prospects invest hours into choosing the right vendor. Active listening is a simple show of respect that demonstrates you care and are engaged in helping them build a better business.

4) Consultative Knowledge

Knowledge is demonstrated in a deep understanding of the company's solutions and services and the ability to relate them to the buyer's current needs. This is harder than it sounds. Add a few new product lines, questions about competitor's services and pricing, layer in a highly technical solution, and it's no surprise that onboarding salespeople can take months. Salespeople have incredible amount of knowledge to keep tabs on.

The last few years have seen a rise in software aimed at helping sales reps manage rising volumes of information. Google Trends provides a quick snapshot of just how important of an issue sales enablement has become over the past five years.



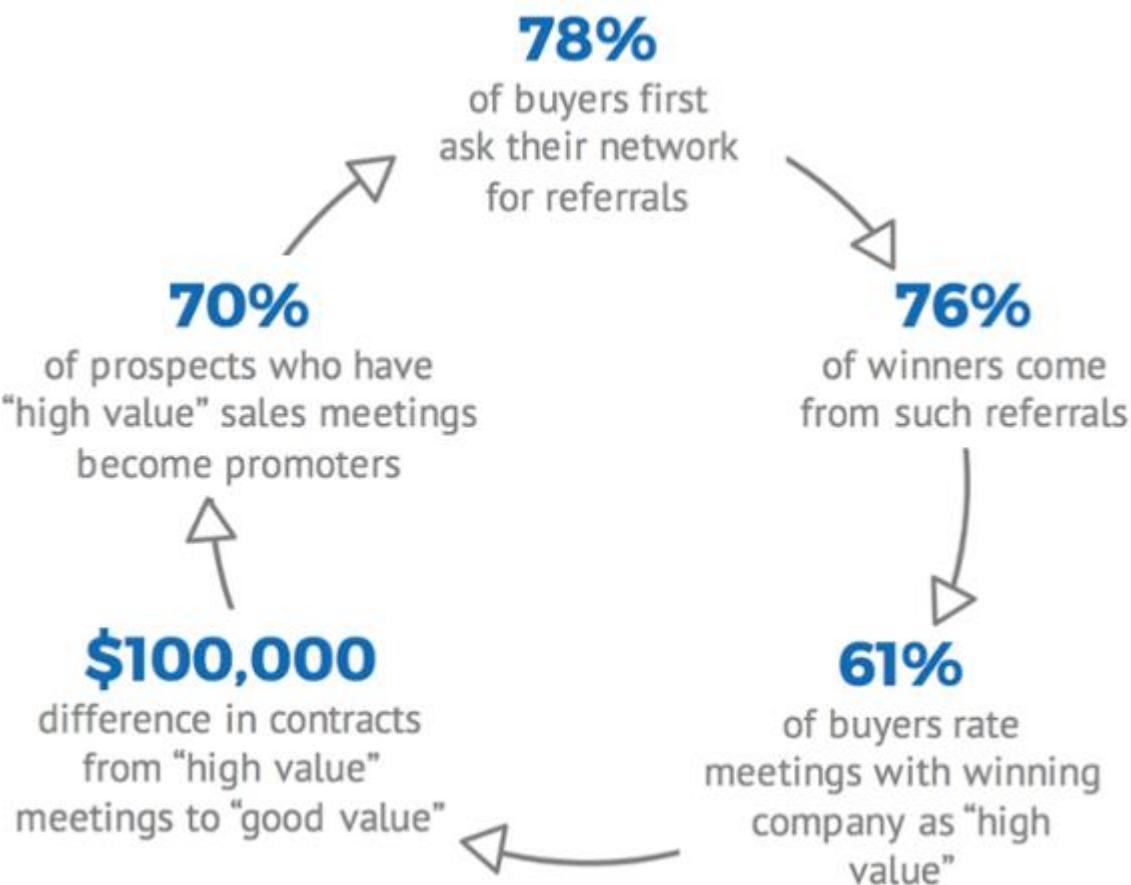
What tools could you provide your team to help them better manage the volumes of information they need to deliver high value meetings?

5) Unexpected Insights

And at the very top of the pinnacle we have unexpected insights. This is value-add advice and guidance that reflects a unique understanding of the buyer's situation. There are no quick tips here. Delivering unexpected insights comes from deep sales experience and also genuine caring on the part of the rep. This is the magic sauce that comes out of years of experience and/or careful preparation for each call, and it pays off.

The Champion Cycle

High-value meetings lead to more closed deals, higher contracts, and guess what else? Referrals. 70% of prospects that report having high value meetings become promoters. 78% of buyers start their search process by asking their network for references. 76% of winning deals are sourced from referrals. See what's happening here? We call this The Champion Cycle.



Delivering a great customer experience starts with the sales process. The perceptions formed at this stage of the relationship will forever shape how someone thinks about your brand and the value you deliver to your clients.