



Institute of
Sales Professionals

HELP TO GROW
MANAGEMENT ALUMNI

HELP TO GROW · 50-MINUTE SESSION

Generating and converting leads for Scottish SMEs

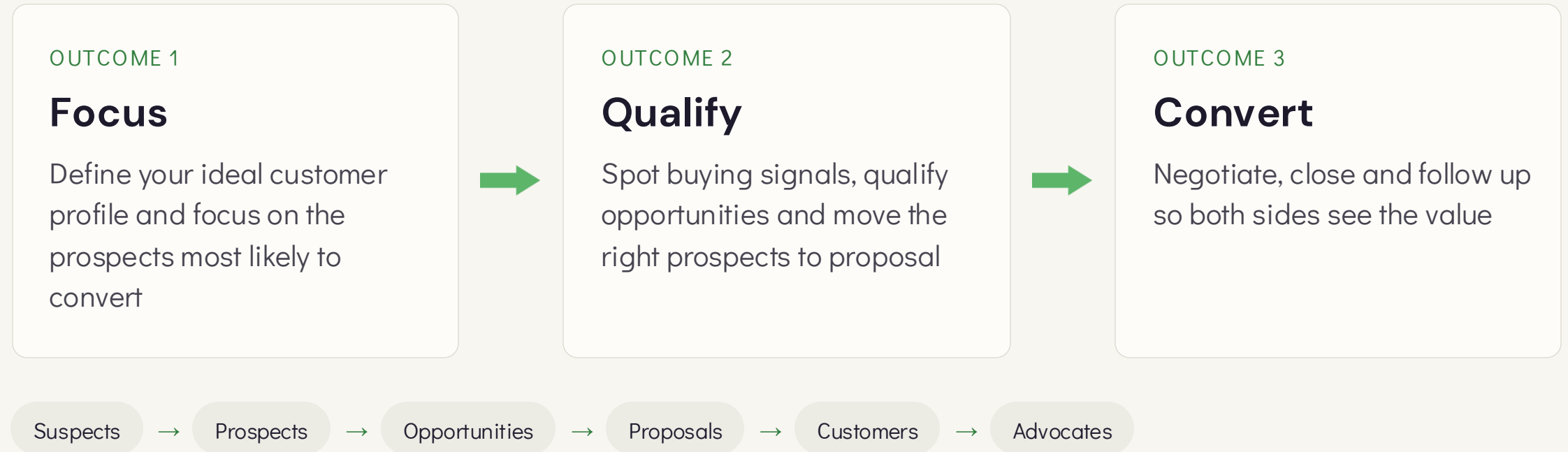
From first conversation to signed business, with a clear and repeatable sales process

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THE SESSION

Growth comes from a repeatable process



Define your ideal customer in three layers

Firmographic

Who they are

- Sector and niche
- Size and turnover
- Location
- Ownership type

Situational

What is happening to them

- Growing or stretched
- New owner or leader
- Regulation change
- Contract renewal due

Behavioural

How they buy

- Who decides
- Where they research
- What they value
- How long they take

Exercise: what do your five best customers share that your worst don't?

Go where your ideal customers gather

Where they gather

- Chambers of commerce and sector networks
- Business Gateway and Scottish Enterprise events
- Trade associations and shows
- LinkedIn and online communities
- Your best customers' own networks

Suspect

Fits your ICP. No sign of need yet.

Listen and add value

Prospect

Fits your ICP and has shown interest.

Start a conversation

Listen to the questions they ask in public: those are the problems you solve.

OUTCOME 2 · QUALIFY

3%

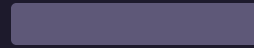
of your market is buying right now

The other 97% need nurture, not pressure. Your job is to spot the 3% early.

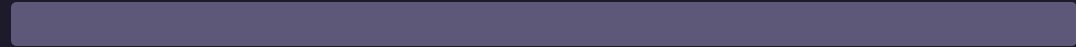
Buying now · 3%



Open to it · 7%



Not thinking about it · 30%



Think they're not interested · 30%



Know they're not interested · 30%



Read the buying signals, not the smiles

Buying signal	Polite interest
Asks how and when it would start	Asks you to "send something over"
Brings in colleagues or the decision-maker	Stays your only contact
Shares what the problem is costing them	Talks only about features and price
Agrees a next step with a date	Says "let's keep in touch"
Raises specific objections	Agrees with everything

A signal earns a qualifying conversation, not a proposal.

Qualify with the acid test

“What happens if they **never do this?”**

“Not much”

Interest, not an opportunity. Nurture it.

“It costs us”

A real problem with a price. Qualify it.

Then confirm:

Problem

Cost of doing nothing

Who decides

Timing

Budget

From interest to proposal in four agreements



If you are still discovering while you write it, it is too early to propose.

Negotiate by trading, never by conceding

Know your walk-away

Set your lowest acceptable terms before you meet.

Value before price

Restate the cost of their problem before you discuss yours.

“If you..., then I...”

Every give gets a get: “If you commit to 12 months, I can hold this rate.”

Be the teacher, not the pusher: explain the options so the buyer chooses well.

Close by confirming, not persuading

The confirming close

1. Summarise the problem, its cost and the agreed solution
2. Ask directly: “Shall we go ahead?”
3. Agree the first step and its date together

Prevent buyer remorse

- Ask: “What might make you doubt this tomorrow?”
- Explain exactly what happens next
- Send a short recap within 24 hours

Follow up after every answer

After a yes

- Deliver an early win
- Check in before they chase you
- Ask for a referral

After a not yet

- Agree when to revisit
- Share useful insight
- Watch for trigger events

After a no

- Ask what tipped it
- Thank them, stay in touch
- Feed the lesson into your ICP

Every answer feeds the next cycle, which makes the process repeatable.

BEFORE YOU LEAVE

Choose one action for Monday

FOCUS

Write your ideal customer profile
in three lines

QUALIFY

Apply the acid test to your top
three deals

CONVERT

Plan one “If you..., then I...” trade
for your next negotiation