



crunchbase

# It's Crunchtime: How To Make Sure You Hit Your End-Of-Year Sales Quota





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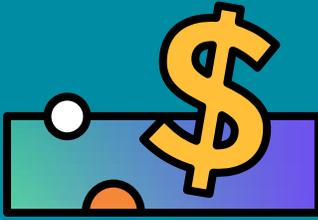
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# Making Sure You Hit Your End-Of-Year Sales Quota: An Overview

Looking at your fourth quarter sales forecast and strategizing how to reach your quota can require an all-out blitz. Between the holidays and the excessive PTO your leads seem to be taking, hitting your end-of-the-year quota requires a bit of planning, prioritization, and dedication.

We break out this guide into three parts

1. Time-management and prospecting in sales
2. Prioritization of prospects and how to reach out
3. Following up with prospects and closing the deal



# Time Management Tips for Salespeople

The ways that you nurture deals in Q4 can be different from the rest of the year. Not only because you want to reach your sales goals but also because prospects may have “use them or lose them” budgets that must be spent before the year ends.

Not sure where to begin? Take a deep breath, pour yourself some coffee, and follow these three time management tips.

Time Management Tip 1

# Find Out If Your Pipeline Is Top-Heavy or Bottom-Heavy

Take a look at the current deals in your pipeline and determine whether the majority of unclosed sales in your funnel are near closing [towards the bottom of your pipeline] or if they are predominantly unvetted prospects [towards the top of your pipeline]. Ideally, your sales pipeline is bottom-heavy with prospects close to converting.

You are less likely to acquire a new customer in Q4, so be sure to focus on trying to close the prospects near the bottom of your pipeline.



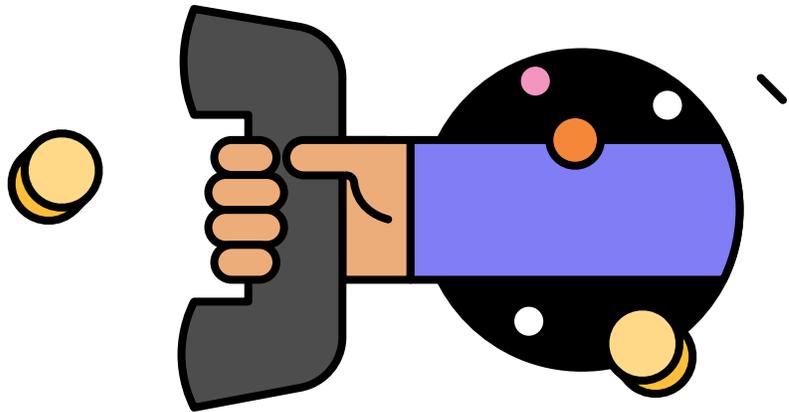


Time Management Tip 2

## **Segment Your Schedule to Match Your Pipeline Distribution**

Once you've determined the breakdown of your pipeline – let's say it's 50% deals that are one meeting away from a proposal, 25% prospects, and the remaining 25% falls in between – segment your calendar to mimic this breakdown. Spend half of your time on getting meetings to finalize proposals, a quarter of your time reaching out to prospects, and the remaining 25% on following up with the goal of moving them into the proposal stage.

Now, while the number of deals is one way to break down your sales funnel, the value of those deals is important too. If you have a large deal that will bring you significantly closer to your quota, do your best to close it. But, don't only rely on a few high-value deals to hit your number. It is better to extend your reach as much as possible to ensure that you have other options if those large deals fall through.



Time Management Tip 3

## Manage Open Deals Wisely

When looking to close open deals prior to year's end, first consider why a deal hasn't closed yet. Determine if it's because of something internal with the potential customer or if it's something you can control. Focus on the deals that you have control over.

Consider:

- Did you follow up?
- Does your prospect understand your value proposition?
- Did you schedule a demo?

Use these as opportunities to restart the conversation and progress your sale.

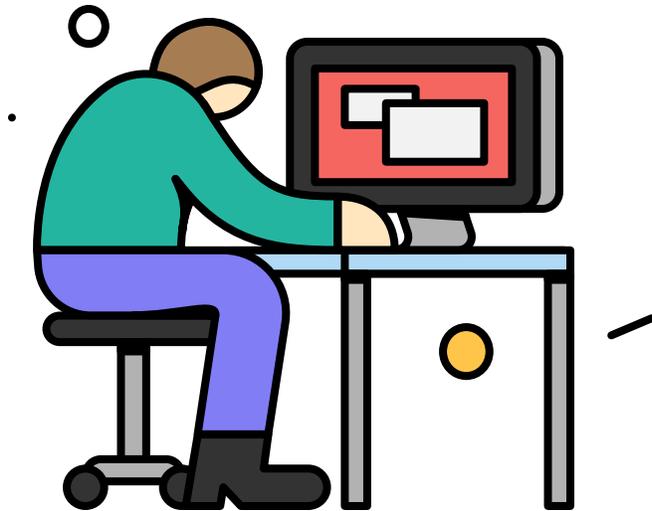
Delays caused by the prospective customer may be beyond your control. Factors like staff changes or budgetary issues could be why a deal isn't progressing through your sales funnel. If that's the case, still reach out and see if they're any closer to making a purchase, but don't waste too much energy on this group at this time.



# Don't Get Desperate and Avoid Overly Aggressive Tactics

Refrain from being overly pushy with slow-moving prospects. A study conducted by InsideSales.com shows that due to overly aggressive sales techniques at the end of a month, companies can lose 11.4x more prospects than normal.



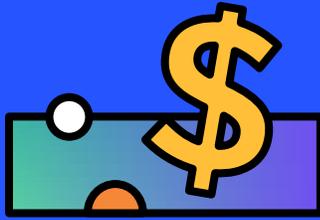


# Moving a Deal to Close-Won Before The End of the Year

Once you've identified why a deal is still open, you can then strategize how to close the deal. Leverage notes from your previous meetings to refresh yourself on the history of your interactions and what gaps your product or service fills for the potential customer.:

Whatever the situation, these tips can help jumpstart your deal closing:

- Reframe your original pitch to align with a prospect's needs for the new year
- Offer a discount to incentivize a purchase decision
- Look to up-sell or cross-sell existing clients
- Ask for client referrals to generate qualified leads
- Provide case studies or testimonials to ease prospect concerns



# Prioritize Your Sales Leads

Time is of the essence, so weeding out bad sales leads is probably most important in the fourth quarter. Once you've determined the distribution of your pipeline (top-heavy or bottom-heavy), you'll want to score your opportunities by their probability of closing. This will determine where you should focus your efforts.

Here are the categories to consider for grouping your prospects:

Quick wins	Short term	Medium term	Long term
<p>Sales leads that permitted you to re-engage.</p> <p>- Tactic: Take the initiative and reach back out</p>	<p>Sales leads that match your ideal customer profile.</p> <p>- Tactic: Share case studies and testimonials from similar companies</p>	<p>Review all inbound sales leads</p> <p>- Tactic: If some inbound leads slipped through the cracks throughout the year, now is the time reach out.</p>	<p>Reach out to any uncontacted prospects</p> <p>- Tactic: Score and rank the prospects that you've already built some rapport with at the top of your list. From there, add any new opportunities from the buckets above to round out your pipeline.</p>



# Tips on Reaching Out to Prospects

## 1. Remind them of prior conversations.

For companies that you've already pitched, briefly remind them of who you are, what your company offers, how it can address their specific needs, and where the conversation ended. Whether by phone or email, this introduction enables you to start a new conversation without having to begin from square one.

## 2. Package up supplemental information.

The quality of your supplemental documentation can be very helpful at the end of the year. Sharing relevant information like one-sheets or case studies with decision makers can be a great way to start (or restart) the sales conversation. Be prepared to speak to this material as necessary.



# Tips on Reaching Out to Prospects

## 3. Always follow up.

Once you get a lead on the phone and the call is coming to a close, agree on a firm timeframe to follow up. When you're faced with an end of year deadline, there's no time for tentative plans. Most deals require multiple follow ups, so the quicker you can progress your deal the better.

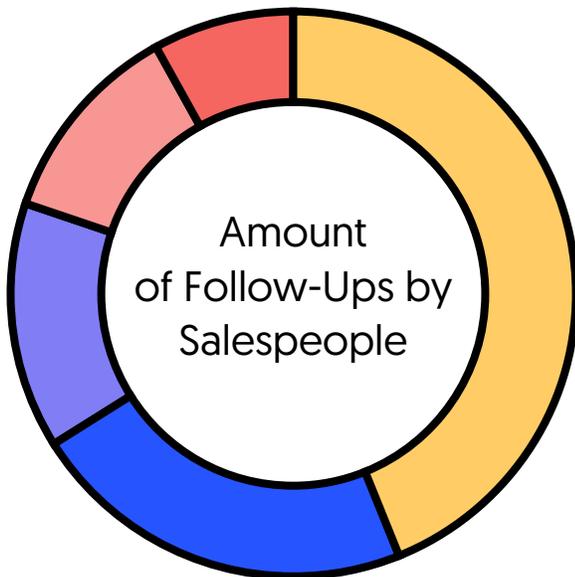
## 4. Cold call if necessary.

Relying on [cold calling techniques](#) to meet your sales quota is risky; especially on a shortened timeline. Cold calls often take several different touches, [well-tailored scripts](#), and a little luck to see valuable returns. But according to [Salesforce](#), 92% of all customer interactions still take place over the telephone. Cold calling may not be ideal for trying to close end-of-quarter deals, but it is one of your better options if you've run out of leads.



# The Importance of Following Up

Having [an effective follow up strategy](#) (and sticking to it) is the key to remaining relevant in the eyes of a sales prospect. Keep in mind that this pertains to prospects that have been contacted and have left the door open to working with you. This doesn't include prospects that are uncontacted or have closed the door.



**80% of sales require five follow-ups after the initial contact, but 44% of sales people give up after one.**

- 44% stop following-up after one rejection
- 22% stop following-up after two rejections
- 14% stop following-up after three
- 12% stop following-up after four
- 8% do follow up five times



Follow Up Tip 1

## Secure a Follow-Up Date

If you find yourself nearing the end of a conversation and the prospect is still not ready to do business with you, start steering the conversation towards next steps and when you can follow up. Obviously, you'll want to follow up as soon as possible, so work with the prospect to find a time that works for everyone. Be direct with your intention to follow up and even offer a concrete timeframe to eliminate the potential for uncertainty.

“We’re getting close to our time so I’d like to schedule another meeting next week to keep the conversation going. How does your Thursday look?”

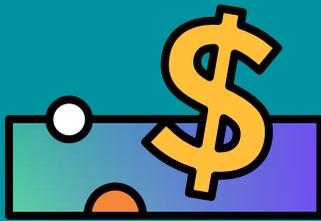
**70% of People**  
will make a buying decision  
after 5 points of contact

Follow Up Tip 2

# Send Calendar Invitations Immediately

Once you secure a meeting or agree to an additional touchpoint, send a calendar invitation right away. Setting a formal appointment makes it more difficult for a potential customer to avoid your outreach efforts. In addition, by having a follow-up meeting on the books, you can better manage the timeline of your deal. When time is of the essence, an organized calendar can make or break your ability to hit your quota.





Follow Up Tip 3

## Pick Up The Phone

Email communication may be preferred by many in sales, but it lacks the timeliness and personal touch needed to close a deal at the end of the quarter. Given the time sensitivity faced by sales teams at the end of the year, there is no substitute for picking up the phone and wooing your prospect over the finish line. Who has time to wait for an email reply?





# Close the Deal: What to Address on Your Closing Call

Here are a few things you should be ready to address on your closing call:

- **Cold Feet** : Be ready to make a final “pitch” that reminds buyers of your value.
- **Review Onboarding** : Walk the prospect through the onboarding process so they know exactly what to expect after signing.
- **Finalize Pricing** : Make any last minute negotiations and agree to a price point.
- **Next Steps** : Discuss immediate next steps to keep things moving forward

# How Crunchbase Pro Can Help You Close More Deals Before the End of the Year

Circumstances can change at a company quickly. From personnel shuffling to increased funding, [trigger events](#) can turn a cold prospect into a hot lead in no time at all.

With [Crunchbase Pro](#), you can quickly research the prospects in your pipeline to make the most of your limited time at the end of the year. Use Crunchbase Pro filters and [marketplace apps](#) to quickly assess your prospects and gain the information you need to start closing deals in Q4.

